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Editor's Letter

The New Year's holidays offered a good break to reflect and recharge. As we slowly return to the reality of life, many have probably struck a deal or two with themselves, committing to New Year's resolutions to improve their health, increase their income, or enhance relationships. Although studies show that most of the resolutions sort of slip away within a few months into the new year, it is still important not to feel discouraged and lose hope. Hope is, by far, the most important drive that pushes people out of their boundaries and keeps them going regardless of the obstacles or challenges one might be facing. The simple truth is that life is tough. It takes more than guts, brain and energy to make it through, so never give up hope.

There are tons of advice out there about how to make the resolutions more achievable, but some rings truer than others. Write down smaller, tangible commitments with shorter-term goals; appreciate small achievements and accept that failure is inevitable along the way; and eliminate distractions and focus on starting right away.

In this issue, we have several timely stories on the theme of renewal and rejuvenation. Just back from the Himalayas recently, Dave encourages us to live out our dreams and give life something a little more out of the ordinary. J. Pakchuen ushers us into a world of meditation, confident that this will work wonders for not only your mind, but body as well. And Ploylada checks out BASE, one of the top fitness venues to try out and achieve better health we've promised ourselves every year.

We've got a recap of who's who in the second edition of *The Michelin Guide, Bangkok* with Dave providing a new list of must-go eateries. Christopher then takes us on a tour of Rod Fai Market that's ideal for going on an evening shopping spree, but not before following Naam's historical trail that leads to Baan Mowaaan where it's tempting to buy some *yahom* as traditional New Year's gifts for our Thai elders. The issue wraps up with our fashion editor, Pekky The Angel, introducing "PM." – Pomelo's new take on fashion for males.

Wishing you good health, wealth and happiness in 2019!

-VT

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PHOTOGRAPHS: TEERAT YAEMNGAMLUEA

Rod Fai Market Ratchada

BY CHRISTOPHER SCOTT DIXON

Tucked away behind the Esplanade shopping complex is the Rod Fai Market Ratchada, or the “Ratchada Train Market”, one the most colorful and lively night venues of its kind in Bangkok.

The original Rod Fai Market was located in Chatuchak area where old warehouse spaces owned by the State Railway of Thailand was rented out to Paired Roikaew, a street vendor-turned-millionaire, to create a vintage night market selling antiques and second-hand goods. The market was a huge success being right next to the Chatuchak Weekend Market but was forced to relocate in 2013 to make way for a new BTS Station.

The market moved to Srinakarin (Srinagarindra), but held on to its name “Rod Fai Market”, and later opened a second branch in Ratchada in 2015. Previously a car parking space, the space has been converted into a market where people can shop, eat, drink, and hang out after work.

The market is divided into three main sections: the food zone nearer to Esplanade, the shops zone in the center, and the chillout zone in the back and on the sides with bars and hangout venues. Climb up to the second or third floors of the adjacent car parking areas to get a better view of the market layout and take some great pictures of the massed ranks of colorful and brightly illuminated tent roofs below.

In the food zone, there is an incredible selection of national and international cuisines from traditional Thai dishes such as fresh seafood, *som tam*, boat noodles, and scrumptious local desserts, to *yakitori*, sushi and the ubiquitous pizzas and pastas. Look out for the sweet potato balls and

laeng saeb spicy pork rib soup as these are must-try food items. Halal food stalls are also in abundance here.

Past the food zone, shoppers are greeted with an instant banquet for the senses with rows of multi-hued stalls selling a vast range of goods: from gadgets, books, furniture, accessories and souvenirs, handbags, to the latest fashion accessories, antiques, and second-hand items. There are hundreds of stalls here, so be prepared to shop until you drop.

There are live bands and music from several of the many quaint and quirky pubs which surround the market, all creating a great vibe which is not replicated anywhere else. You can enjoy cocktails, smoothies and other drinks here.

Access is easy via the nearby Thailand Cultural Centre MRT underground station, take the number three exit, turn left when going down the stairs, walk for about a minute, you will see the Esplanade shopping complex, go down the adjoining *soi* and there it is. You can also cut through Esplanade itself to enter the market. Parking spaces are available at Esplanade.

Open daily from about 5 pm to 1 am and the Rod Fai Market has earned a deserved reputation as one of the hippest evening locations in the capital. If possible, it is best to go early to avoid the crush. The market gets really busy when the office workers arrive around 7 pm after working hours.

At Rod Fai Market Ratchada, the spirit of city life is well and truly displayed in this cool, atmospheric and exciting venue – a welcome antidote for Bangkok’s urban dwellers!



PHOTOGRAPHS: TEERARAT YAEMNGAMLUEA



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Michelin is Back

BY DAVE STAMBOULIS

A year ago, Bangkok foodies had much to celebrate, with the launching of *The Michelin Guide, Bangkok*, and a worldwide recognition and celebration of Thai cuisine and fine dining in Bangkok, spotlighting it as one of the culinary hotspots on the planet. One year on, the second edition of the guide has been released, expanding outside of the city as well as welcoming several newcomers into the fold. For you gastronomes, here's a synopsis of the latest winners and top choices.

While nobody received the coveted three stars, last year's two-star top dogs **Mezzaluna**, **Gaggan**, and **Le Normandie** all repeated, and in a big step up, the German twin master chefs Mathias and Thomas Sührling went from one-star to two for their contemporary German and European kitchen **Sührling**. The one-star winners also repeated, with fan favorite **Jay Fai** remaining as the only starred Thai street food eatery.

There are plenty of new entries to get excited about as well. **Canvas**, run by young American chef Riley Sanders (who did a stint at the three-starred L20 in Chicago), and featuring organic local produce and highly artistic production combining Thai and Western cuisine, received one star.

Also awarded a star was one of the city's oldest standbys, **Methavalai Sorndaeng**, where the food has kept loyal customers coming back for more than 60 years. Other Thai one-star winners include **Saawaan**, where 10-course authentic Thai tasting menus take guests on a journey through Thai flavors, and **R-Haan**, a restaurant featuring Royal Thai cuisine, using ingredients from all over the country. Southern Thai cuisine joins the top restaurants, with **Sorn**, run by Baan Ice founder Supakorn Jongsiri, elevating top southern eats to the fine dining level, with all ingredients sourced straight from farmers and fisheries down south.

Two winners of Plate awards from last year moved up. **Le Du**, which features colorful French influenced cuisine created by Thai master chef Ton (Thitid Tassanakajohn, who was trained at the Culinary Institute of America), received one star, as did **Gaa**, the progressive and eclectic restaurant run by Indian chef Garima Arora, the former sous chef at Gaggan.

Perhaps in its boldest move, the Michelin inspectors also went out of central Bangkok to make some selections. **Rucan Panya**, a family-run restaurant in Samut Sakhon that combines food and art and is noted for its seafood, was recognized as a hidden gem and given one

star, as was **Suan Thip** in Nonthaburi. Set amidst a lush garden of trees and ponds, Suan Thip features refined cuisine inspired by royal recipes.

Even further afield, the inspectors chose **Pru**, a farm to table experience led by touted Dutch chef Jimmy Ophorst and set in the elegant Trisara Resort in Phuket, for a one-star award. Additionally, 14 other restaurants in both Phuket and Phang Nga received Plate and Bib Gourmand awards, ensuring that foodies don't only have to stay in Bangkok to eat the best of Thai cuisine.

Gwendal Poullennec, international director of *The Michelin Guides*, said "This year's selection highlights the diversity of culinary experiences, both within and outside of Bangkok," and also noted the uniqueness of Southern Thai cuisine. Poullennec also commented on the excellent experience diners have these days of getting personally created meals, stating "We have also seen the blooming trend of the degustation menu, whereby chefs carefully design a complete gastronomic experience for diners."

Even a few places that have had turnover at the helm retained their one-star awards, meaning that the head chef's proteges or replacements have been every bit as good as their predecessors. While renowned chef David Thompson left **Nahm**, the fine Thai dining experience still retained its star with chef Pim Techamuanvivit at the helm. **Elements** and **Saneh Jaan** also changed their head chefs but still were given one-star awards yet again.

In addition to southern fare, northern Thai food was honored, with the inclusion of **Baan Benjarong Pai**, an eatery that has opened a second branch in Bangkok, which received a Bib Gourmand award. Other Bib Gourmand standouts include the addition of **Jidori Cuisine Ken**, a Japanese *izakaya* with the best chicken *yakitori* skewers in town, **Kor Panich**, the century old mango and sticky rice shop over in the Old City, and the *khao man gai* Hainanese chicken and rice restaurant **Phan Fa**, among others.

This second edition of the Bangkok, Phuket, and Phang Nga guide features a whopping 217 dining selections to choose from. The Bib Gourmand entries, which often are far more accessible to the average diner as they don't focus on fine dining but on places that meet the criterion for excellent food at good value, have increased from 42 establishments to 72 in the new book.

The new guide has focused far more on inclusion than exclusion, which bodes well, as it encourages all types of food lovers to get out and explore the Thai capital and elsewhere, sampling everything from *pad thai* at local haunts to southern and northern cuisine, and plenty more. Hopefully, next year's guide will be even thicker, with top restaurants in Chiang Mai most likely thrown into the mix, and hey, perhaps a three-star award for some lucky spot may be in the offing. At any rate, all this focus on good food can only mean one thing – a hearty *bon appétit* to all!

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF THE MICHELIN GUIDE



All About That Base

BY PLOYLADA SIRACHADAPONG



It's all about that base. Building a strong, solid foundation is essential for every physical training, whether you're planning to join a marathon, take up weight-training or just maintain a healthy body at the gym. It's a mantra that BASE Bangkok, one of the leading fitness brands in town, abides by.

Voted "Gym of the Year 2018" by the Fitness Best Asia Awards, BASE offers a complete fitness experience that is leading the way in a very competitive and fast-growing industry. With three branches now up and running – Thonglor, Sathorn and Chidlom – and connected with BTS stations, there's no excuse for skipping the gym.

BASE's signature session is a combination of High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) and strength training to burn off fat and tone muscles. The gym offers a range of fitness programs including group sessions (45- and 60-minute classes including ones for private groups) delivered through a variety of classes, personal training, body composition assessment, and special classes such as pre- and post-natal training.

BASE, however, is not just another place to work out. Members here have formed a close-knitted community

that supports each other in attaining their unique personal goals from fulfilling their new year's resolution of getting stronger and healthier, to training for a Spartan race.

BASE thrives with a dedicated, energetic team of professional trainers. Keeping members engaged and entertained while they work up a sweat is chiefly BASE's standard *modus operandi*.

"I want to create excitement for people to come and try BASE," said BASE's founder and CEO Jack Thomas, adding, that "If you are enjoying what you're doing, you will love doing it!"

BASE has one of the finest facilities and equipment, not only in Thailand but in Asia. The services here are 5-star and trainers ensure that every member is constantly motivated on their journeys to good health. So, the sooner you start, the better. Start with a class you love and enjoy, and make regular exercise the base of your lifestyle.

BASE Bangkok

Branches: Thonglor, Sathorn and Chidlom

Tel. 02 160 6065

www.basebangkok.com



PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF BASE

Siamese Traditional Medicine

BY NAAM SOMBATANANTAKORN

PHOTOGRAPHS: NAAM SOMBATANANTAKORN



One of the Buddha's greatest teachings is *Arogya Parama Labha*, meaning "Health is the greatest gift." This means that people should take care of their health and never take it for granted. In the old days, it was customary to give traditional, herbal medicines as gifts to the elders as a way to wish them health and longevity. Traditional medicine practitioners have been around for ages and are here to stay despite the popularity of modern medicine.

1

Knowledge Etched in Stone

In the past, traditional remedies were taken to prevent and cure illnesses and simply maintain good health. The knowledge of traditional Thai medicine has been passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth and through apprenticeships, but there was no proper record until King Nangklao (Rama III) ordered scholars to inscribe the vast body of knowledge of Thai healing practices into a collection of 1,431 stone inscriptions called the Epigraphic Archives of Wat Pho, and install them along the walls of Wat Pho for the sake of public learning. This led to the foundation of what was considered the first university of Siam.

It took scholars ten years, from 1831 to 1841, to record this canon of traditional Thai medicine and other ancient art and skills, including Buddhist precepts, literary works, poetry, and massage therapies and yoga. In 2011, the stone inscriptions of Wat Pho were recognized by Unesco as registered “Memory of the World”.



2



3

Introduction of Medicine Men

In 1923, the government issued the Medical Profession Act to register all traditional medicine practitioners and those related to the medical profession so that it could systematically regulate the profession. The practitioners were divided into four areas of expertise: physician, apothecary, midwife and chiropractor (or masseuse). However, to register, the practitioners would have to set off on a time-consuming, arduous journey to Bangkok given limited public transportation back then.

To avoid the hassle of traveling and endless red tape, they decided not to venture to the capital and instead styled themselves as unofficial tradition healers who used herbal remedies to treat health conditions among villagers. With no real support from the government and the modern medicine making inroads into different strata of Thai society, the popularity of traditional herbal medicine slowly waned.

1 The entrance to Bamrungchat Satsanayathai, or Baan Mowaan.

2 Part of the Epigraphic Archives at Wat Pho.

3 Traditional medicine packaging at Baan Mowaan is done by hand.

Baan Mowaan – Back to Nature

Only until a few decades ago when many were experiencing the negative side effects of modern medicine, people began to turn to traditional or herbal medicine for alternative therapies.

Bamrungchat Satsanayathai, or more commonly known as “Baan Mowaan” (*baan* means “house”, *mo* means “doctor” and *Waan* is the name of the owner) is an example of how practitioners of traditional medicine learn to adapt to the changing times and thrive.

A colonial-style building situated near Bangkok’s Giant Swing, Baan Mowaan is where traditional medicines have been sold since its inception in 1920. Founder Mo Waan Rod-Muang who did not register his business as required but provided traditional cures through herbal medicines as well as the accoutrements of modern medicine such as stethoscopes found in those days.

Many traditional medicines were liquids and it was quite hard to prepare and consume, so Mo Waan developed different techniques to turn these potions into pills. He designed his own tablets and branded his logo on them in order to prevent fake drugs.

Today, Baan Mowaan serves as a semi-museum and a traditional Thai pharmacy, selling four famous *yahom* (cordial) recipes that are still regarded as perfect goodwill presents for the elderly. The main ingredients are jasmine root, bulletwood, ironwood, negkassar, and lotus root or saffron, mixed with other ingredients.

Herbal or botanical medicine is widely used around the world nowadays. The Thai Food and Drug Administration has registered many herbs as medicine, such as aloe vera, mints, cinnamon, etc. Since many traditional herbs have been scientifically proven to cure certain symptoms, more people are taking these herbs as alternative cures. However, please discuss with your doctor or pharmacist before you take any traditional or herbal medicines. And remember that the best medicine is no medicine at all – maintain good health, eat well, exercise regularly, and never take health for granted.

Bamrungchat Satsanayathai (Baan Mowaan)

9 Soi Thesa Bamroongmuang Rd., Phranakorn District

Tel. 02 221 8070

www.mowaan.com

PHOTOGRAPHS: NAAM SOMBATANANTAKORN





5



6

4 Baan Mowaaan's set package of four famous yahom.

5 Traditional pharmaceuticals on display amid antique furniture.

6 Some of the mixing equipment for the production of herbal medicines.

Real Resolutions

BY DAVE STAMBOULIS



We're almost two decades into this century, and it's that time of the year again, the new one, where folks feel like they get a fresh start, or at least they try to spin it that way. It's also that time of the year where people make New Year's resolutions, a practice that goes back centuries.

The Babylonians promised the gods each year-end that they would pay their outstanding debts and return borrowed objects, while the Romans made vows to their god Janus, for whom the month January is so named. Medieval knights took what were known as "the vow of the peacock" by placing their hands on a live or roasted peacock and reaffirm their commitments to chivalry.

While Gallup and other various

polls in the US have claimed that upwards of 40% of Americans made resolutions and that at least half of them were more likely to succeed than those who made vows of change at other times of year, a British study in 2007 found that 88% of those making resolutions failed completely, which sounds a lot more in line with what I find when asking my friends and acquaintances about their own efforts.

The problem is that most people end up saying they want to stop a behavior that they actually enjoy. If drinking or smoking gives you that much pleasure, what are the odds that you are going to stop it, even if you actually believe it is harmful? Same goes for going to the gym; while most folks want to be in good

shape, the prospect of torturing one's body for hours per week is a reality that doesn't justify the result for most.

My take on things is that if you derive pleasure out of any of your vices, and realistically don't see them as being overly harmful, then by all means don't even consider giving them up. Yet what I'd like to encourage more isn't making a New Year's resolution, but putting more effort into living your dreams.

My wife and I recently left our desk jobs and spent the past half year traipsing the high mountains of Asia, from the Pamirs of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to the endless ranges of Ladakh, India, on the Tibetan border, and finally to Everest Base Camp in the Nepal Himalayas.

It wasn't so much that we had a bucket list to tick off or a particular must-see place, but was more about choosing to take some time away from the big crowded city we live in, get away from the ridiculous amount of time we spend on the internet, and just do something totally different, something that would make us feel constantly alive as opposed to just going through the motions. It also meant getting the courage up for taking the risk of leaving steady employment and a life that we were used to.

While we obviously all need to work and make an income, for many this can become a non-stop grind, where we actually work less to survive, and more out of habit and addiction, where our only reward becomes spending the hard-earned money on consumer goods as a way of feeling satisfaction. In our case, our journey was fueled far less by expenses or fancy resorts, and far more by the need to have real experiences in the real world.

I think this sentiment gets echoed a lot these days. Take the trek to Everest Base Camp for example. It takes several weeks to reach Base Camp, and that's only if you fly into the nearest airstrip at Lukla. You have

to go slowly in order to acclimatize to the high altitudes, ending up sleeping at 5,000 meters which is extremely uncomfortable, endure brutal cold that reaches to -20 degrees, endure dusty trails, bland repetitive food, and go without showers or creature comforts for the most part. In the end, Base Camp itself doesn't even afford views of Mount Everest, and yet each year thousands of folks make the pilgrimage here.

I'm not sure they do it "because it's there," as British explorer and climber George Mallory once reasoned to a *New York Times* reporter. While some certainly come try their luck due to seeing Mount Everest being on their travel bucket list, I think that a majority of people come because they want a challenge, an adventure, and something out of the ordinary. They want to feel alive, even if it means discomfort and suffering. They paid lots of hard-earned money to suffer and endure misery all in exchange for some precious minutes of feeling truly alive.

Experiential travel is one of the top traveling trends in the tourism world today. Travelers

raft raging rivers, take cooking classes, do language programs, and generally integrate with their surroundings far more than just going to fancy resorts and lying on the beach. While cultural immersion is far from perfect, at least lots of people are trying; trying perhaps to disconnect and connect more, precisely because their everyday lives don't necessarily offer this.

Taking the plunge and doing something like a long trip, changing a lifestyle, or embarking on something radically different certainly isn't easy. Even myself, a veteran traveler, I spent hours thinking about all the "what ifs," wondering how our trip and new lifestyle choice would work, and what would happen if it didn't. However, in the end, throwing caution to the wind and just letting fate take a bit of control, it all eventually works out.

So, here's to less of "I'm giving up booze and smoking," and more of "I'm heading to France and taking a sommelier course and becoming an enophile." Happy New Year!

PHOTOGRAPHS: DAVE STAMBOULIS



Deep in Meditation

BY J. PAKCHUEN

Happy New Year! Feeling fresh and starting life anew, people get so hung up on their New Year's resolutions during this time of the year. One of the most popular goals is to be healthier and stronger. But apart from improving only your physical health, you may want to work toward your mental wellbeing, as well.

Body and mind work hand in hand and they are really inseparable. There are many ways to improve your mental state, and one of the best-known methods is meditation. Meditation is the process to focus your mind on one particular thing and free your mind from other distracting thoughts. There are many techniques involving meditation either within or outside the religious field. Either way, meditation has been proven to do more good than harm, particularly to your mind, and eventually, your body, too. These are some benefits of meditation:

Improving Your Memory

Many studies point to the usefulness of meditation in helping a person think clearly or memorize things better. A study conducted by researchers at University of California at Santa Barbara showed that "mindfulness meditation," or the meditation that requires the meditator to become aware of the present moment, helped boost memory.

A group of students attended four 45-min mindfulness classes per week for two weeks, while another control group took nutrition classes for the same length of time. During the mindfulness course, students practiced focusing their minds on their physical postures as part of the focused-attention meditation. The students learnt to focus their attention on whatever activity they were doing, such as tasting a fruit or listening to a recording. They had to try to stay mindful of all actions in their daily routine and also complete ten minutes of daily meditation when not attending classes.

The students in both classes took the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) standardized tests before and after completion of their courses. The results showed that the score among the mindfulness students went up significantly, but not so for the nutrition class. They also had better scores on tests of working memory and focus.

One other research study published in the *National Center for Biotechnology Information* journal shows that regular meditation may help improve your memory because it helps increase the density of the grey matter part of the brain. Grey matter is known as the major component of the brain involved in muscle control and sensory perception, such as seeing, hearing, self-control, and memory.

Reducing the Risk of Diseases

Meditation can obviously calm and relax your mind, hence reducing stress, high blood pressure and alleviating hypertension problems that could lead to heart disease, one of the leading causes of death in many countries. Bodily movement practices such as tai chi, qigong and yoga help you focus on breathing and being healthy from inside out.

An article published by Harvard Medical School also suggests that meditation, along with a balanced diet and exercise, can help reduce the risk of heart disease as it helps lower your heart rate, blood pressure, breathing rate, and levels of cortisol, a hormone that's released at times of stress.

Boosting Your Mental Health

One of the studies published in *Biological Psychiatry* shows that meditation can help deal with stress that causes physical inflammation. The study was conducted on 35 unemployed men and women who were stressed about finding a new job. After a few days of mindfulness meditation, a scan on their brains showed more activity relating to the processing of stress, focus, and calmness in a positive way. Their blood tests also showed lower levels of the inflammation.

One other method of meditation called "loving-kindness" meditation or *Mettā* meditation, as discussed in Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism, helps bring positive thoughts to your mind. It drives away negative thinking and lifts your spirits. The practice involves reciting phrases that help create positive thinking and compassion toward oneself and others, such as "May I be safe and protected", "May I be happy", "May I be free of physical pain and suffering" and "May I be healthy and strong".

This relates well to the "law of attraction" discussed widely in modern science. The study published on the website of the National Center for Biotechnology Information has also proved that this meditation method may help with different psychological problems, such as anxiety, hostility, depression and anger.

How to Get Started

The key of meditation is to focus on one thing and it doesn't have to be boring. Try practicing the Buddhist *Vipassana* meditation which focuses on reality and the present state of life. The practice is simple: focus the mind on your breathing, breathing in and out slowly, while staying mindful of how the breathing affects your body and mind.

If this doesn't work for you, try adding some physical activity, such as yoga, or resort to art. Many times, you will find painting, crochet or simply listening to music could bring peace of mind. But the key is to focus on one thing, which means you will have to do that activity only and nothing else for a period of time.

Meditation can be simple and also costless. Taking only 10-20 minutes a day to meditate on a regular basis can surely give you a tremendous effect over a long period of time. You can also meditate anywhere, anytime, even when you're commuting to work or before turning in. As easy as it sounds, the best time to start is probably now.

PHOTOGRAPH: HONEY KOCHPHON ONSHAWEE/PIXABAY



PHOTOGRAPH: HUTOMO ABRIANTO/UNSPLASH



The Matter About Time

BY SWISA ARIYAPRUCHYA

On a recent trip to Spain, where the concept of “time” is unlike anywhere else I’ve been, I became fascinated by its work schedule and effects on life. Halfway through the day around 2 pm to 5 pm, businesses in Spain close down for a 3-hour lunch break and resume back around 5 pm and stay open until 8-9 pm. Dinner starts at around 9 pm and can last up until the early hours of the morning. Young children leave school at 5 pm when in other western countries, they’d already be home.

It’s a unique schedule that in recent years has raised discussions concerning its effects on businesses and performance. It’s no surprise that the government has set up a committee to study these issues following the EU’s move on September 2018 to repeal the Summer Time Directive and end EU-wide harmonization of Daylight Saving Time (DST). Both Spain’s concept of time and the EU’s DST have fascinating historical origins which may not be quite relevant to today’s world.

Intrigued by Spain’s strange hours, which were completely out of sync with my own circadian rhythm, I discovered that Spain’s hours have its origins after the Spanish Civil War (during 1936 – 1939) when, under General Francisco Franco’s dictatorship, families

had to work two jobs to sustain their livelihoods. An agricultural economy, the hottest time of day was used to recharge in between jobs and offered much needed rest. This practice of having a midday break continues until this day even in non-agricultural sectors and despite most no longer needing to have multiple jobs.

The long midday break means that employees work until 8 or 9 pm and stay up later than most countries. As a result, studies show that on average Spaniards sleep less than other nations. Spain is also one hour ahead of its “natural” time zone as Franco decided to align Spain with Germany and other European countries during the Second World War despite the country being in the same longitude with the Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

Like the Spanish *siesta* (meaning “nap” in Spanish), the concept of DST is a legacy that though first conceived in the early 1900s, it would not be introduced until the First and Second World Wars to conserve energy. Discontinued after the war, it was revived during the 1970s oil crisis and has remained ever since.

A recent continent-wide survey commissioned by the EU showed that 84 percent of Europeans (4.6 million respondents) now

wanted to abandon the idea. The consultation paper also cited that despite the positive effects of more evening outdoor activities on health, “there are chronobiologic research findings that suggest that the effect (of DST) on the human biorhythm may be more severe than previously thought.” Studies show that energy saving was minimal and other effects inconclusive. Ending EU-wide harmonization of DST means that member states would be able to determine their own time zone.

Spain would have to soon make a decision on what “time” it would like to be in. It must also answer questions such as whether it should revert to its “natural” time zone thus adopting GMT and would it use the opportunity to also change its legacy work schedule to promote efficiency and productivity?

Changing to GMT would give Spain more equal hours of sunshine and darkness, but Spain’s work schedule has become so intrinsically linked to its culture that I find it hard to imagine any change.

After almost 80 years, the Spanish *siesta* and the strange hours have become an integral part of Spanish life. Interwoven into its culture, “time” in Spain is truly unlike anywhere else in the world.

POMELO DEBUTS

PM. MENSWEAR

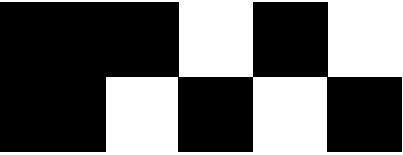
BY PEKKY THE ANGEL



Pomelo Fashion is now reaching out to the other half of the population by launching a menswear label called Pomelo Man (PM.). Making its debut in Thailand and launching exclusively on their apps on both iOS and Android, PM is set to offer a new sartorial and shopping experience for men.

To address the biggest drawback of online menswear shopping that is sizing, customers can now walk into a PM location, get measured up by the store crew and never have to bother about sizing while shopping on the App again, transitioning seamlessly from the online to offline world.





David Jou, Pomelo's CEO, said "With PM, we wanted to re-imagine men's fashion. We wanted something classic, yet fresh and contemporary, combined with the latest technology to create an effortless shopping experience."

PM helps customers find what they call a "Perfect Fit," with key items like T-shirts, chino pants, hoodies, and accessories. The brand will become a one-stop shop for every man's daily fashion needs.

To please their new target group, PM offers a "Man Lounge" complete with free Wi-Fi connectivity, USB charging stations, and video games.

The premium apparel is great value for money, ranging in price from THB 390 to THB 1,590. Check out the latest products now at PomeloFashion.com or on the Pomelo Android and iOS Apps.



POMELO MAN

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF POMELO MAN





Glamorous 'Winter Wonderland' by Kwankao

BY PEKKY THE ANGEL

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF KOI RESTAURANT



Koi Restaurant and Lounge recently hosted its fourth installment of a series of fashion galas where guests were treated to an exclusive collection of evening gowns by Kwankao. Entitled "WINTER WONDERLAND," the night saw Kwankao showcasing 25 evening wear looks for every special occasion. With the restaurant beautifully decorated with snowflakes and trees of silver and blue, guests were transported to a winter wonderland.

The night started off with an exquisite set meal designed by Koi and consisting of tantalizing dishes such as Fried Scallop Cake, Crispy Wonton, Bluefin Tuna, Creamy Shrimp Tom Yam Soup, Australian Tenderloin Tataki, Grilled Lamp Rack with Ichimi Sauce, Saikyo Miso Marinated Snow Fish, Chef Omakase Sushi Plate, and the famous Koi Hojicha Crepe.

Following the hearty meal, guests adjourned to The Club at Koi, where they were welcomed by special guest DJs and a special dance performance by world-famous Polish ballerina Ida Nowakowska, a judge and a choreographer of Poland's *So You Think You Can Dance* TV program. The fashion show, together with the classy winter atmosphere, was truly a night to remember.

For more information, visit www.theclubatkoi.com.



PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF MANDARIN ORIENTAL

Le Normandie's Chef de Cuisine Arnaud Dunand-Sauthier at the Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok is joining forces with Chef Koji Shimomura, a 2-Michelin-star guest chef from Tokyo, to present "Four Hands Lunch and Dinner" at Le Normandie from Jan 30 to Feb 2.

A highly acclaimed chef and the owner of Édition Koji Shimomura in Roppongi, Tokyo, Chef Shimomura has won approbation for his sensory delights that combine Japanese and French flavors.

Sharing a passion for French gastronomy and determined to bring it to the next level, both great chefs are teaming up to showcase their culinary prowess by co-creating new exciting dishes for a delectable six-course lunch (THB 5,297 net) and an 8-course dinner (THB 10,829 net).

For lunch, guests have roasted lamb saddle with lettuce, radish and anchovies as the main course and much more. The dinner features special roasted Challans duck with endive and beetroot, among other things.

To make arrangements, call 02 659 9000 or visit www.mandarinoriental.com/bangkok for further details.

Dine in Style at Le Normandie's Four Hands Lunch and Dinner

BY PEKKY THE ANGEL



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January

'SLASH' and co live in Bangkok

One of the greatest guitarists of all time, "Slash" returns to Thailand once again for a rock concert titled "Slash ft. Myles Kennedy and The Conspirators" on Jan 10 at GMM Live House. The band consists of Slash on lead guitar, Myles Kennedy on lead vocals, Brent Fitz on drums, Todd Kerns on bass, and Frank Sidoris on rhythm guitar. Slash was the lead guitarist with Gun 'N' Roses, Velvet Revolver and Snake Pit. Visit www.thaiticketmajor.com to book tickets priced at THB 2,200 and THB 3,200.

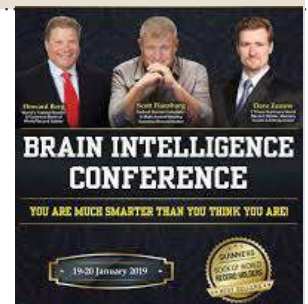


Blackpink to stage a performance in Bangkok

Blackpink, currently the hottest K-pop girl group, will kick off their "In Your Area World Tour" in Bangkok on Jan 11, 12 and 13 at IMPACT Arena, Muang Thong Thani. Formed in 2016, Blackpink consists of South Koreans Jisoo, Jennie and Rosé, and Thai-born member Lisa. The girl group is the highest-charting female K-pop group on the Billboard Hot 100, thanks to their megahit "Ddu-Du Ddu-Du," which also set a record as the most-viewed Korean music video in 24 hours on YouTube at the time of its release. Advance tickets are sold out online, but diehard fans can probably find last-minute tickets at the door for a marked-up price. For further details, check out www.thaiticketmajor.com.

Tips and tricks for boosting your memory bank

Learn memory techniques from world-class memory experts and Guinness World Record holders Dave Farrow, Scott Flansburg and Howard Berg at the "Brain Intelligence Conference" to be held on Jan 19-20 at the Grand Ballroom, IMPACT Muang Thong Thani. Learn how to tap the power of your mind to access and retrieve information just like a computer to help boost your career by remembering client details, presentations, and much more. Tickets start at THB 24,900. To sign up, visit <http://bit.ly/2MyrhKa>.



Music, art and more at 'Nang Len Music Festival 4'

The "Nang Len Music Festival" is back in its fourth consecutive year with a new theme, "Let's Get Rad!" For those who love to begin the year with fun, the Nang Len Music Festival is one of the best music and lifestyle festivals being held on Jan 26 at 8speed Motor Track Khao Yai in Nakhon Ratchasima province. The lineup includes Potato, Room39, Da Endorphine, Paradox, Bam Bam, and many more. Tickets start from THB 1,500 and can be booked at www.allticket.com/#/event/Nanglen4.

World's best jazz artists to converge on Thailand Jazz Conference

The Thailand International Jazz Conference (TIJC) is being held from Jan 25 to 27 on Salaya campus of Mahidol University College of Music. As usual, this year's TIJC plays host to some of the world's greatest jazz artists and features a broad array of activities including performance, jazz education (workshops and masterclasses), and a solo competition (open to general professional jazz musicians and students). There will also be a TIJC Jazz Camp running from Jan 21 to 23 and participants will get the opportunity to meet, perform with, and learn from world-class maestros. Visit www.music.mahidol.ac.th/tijc/ for more information.



'AKB48 Group Asia Fest 2019' in Bangkok

All seven sister groups from AKB48 will be joining hands to perform and participate in a string of activities at the "AKB48 Group Asia Festival 2019" on Jan 27 at IMPACT Arena, Muang Thong Thani. The sister groups of AKB48, each consisting of 10 members, will stage performances at the festival that's being organized by Shanda Games. The participating sister groups are JKT48, BNK48, MNL48, Team SH, Team TP, and SGO48. For more information, visit www.eventpop.me.

*Submit news, updates and press releases to: info@urbanaffairsmagazine.com.



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