

# PRESTIGE

THAILAND  
JULY 2016 | THB 150

PRESTIGEONLINE.COM

**MCLAREN**  
**570GT**  
MIGHTY  
MOUSE

**DISCOVERY**  
THE WONDERS  
OF VIETNAM

**DESIGN FOR**  
**LIVING**  
TREND REPORT

**VATANIKA "PRAE"  
PATAMASINGHA  
NA AYUDHYA**

"THE DEFINITION OF SEXY IS CONFIDENCE...  
THAT'S THE SEXIEST PART OF A WOMAN"

Burda



ISSN 1905-0003  
9 782641 325003  
150.-





## ABOVE PAR – GOLFING IN DANANG

By Duncan Forgan

As I approach the first tee at Bana Hills Golf Club in Danang – the newest golfing option on Vietnam’s stunning central coast – I feel an unfamiliar sense of acceptance of what is about to unfold.

To be fair, the on and off-course action in this part of Vietnam would calm even the most uptight of golfers. During the Vietnam War, the coastal area offered respite for US troops fighting in the jungles further west. These days, the strip of land that extends south from the imperial capital of Hua via Danang and the ancient port of Hoi An is famous for sumptuous resorts and luxury real estate in the foreshore and world-class golf layouts in the hinterland.

Designed by British former world number one Luke Donald (it is his first effort as an architect),

Bana Hills is a more-than-worthy addition to a portfolio that also includes the acclaimed triumvirate of Danang Golf Club, Montgomerie Links and Laguna Lang Co.

Laid out in rolling foothills, the course features natural elevation changes, ravines, streams and mountain backdrops. It provides a welcome contrast to the other three courses – all of which are located on flatter land nearer the ocean.

The front-nine – a thrilling collection of holes laid out in traditional parkland style – contains a number of highlights, not least the par-3 8th, a gem of a downhill short hole that I manage to birdie. The closing stretch of the course is, if anything, even better.

Adding to my general sense of wellbeing is that my sumptuous digs for the weekend, the Nam Hai, is just a short hop from the golf course.

I while away the sunset hours in my luxuriously appointed bolthole, a Zen set-up with romantic net-canopied platform beds flanked by divans and freestanding eggshell-lacquered baths opening up to private gardens and outdoor rain shower before emerging for an evening swim in the resort’s main infinity pool.

My Vietnam golf odyssey was well underway, and with two days remaining it was time to tackle Danang Golf Club and Montgomerie Links – the original jewels in the central coast golf crown.

The latter – the first golf course to be constructed in the area – remains an excellent and enjoyable test. Although designed by my fellow Scot, Ryder Cup legend Colin Montgomerie, the layout is very American in style with expansive bunkers and numerous water hazards. Standout holes include the 12th, a striking uphill par-5 that plays towards the attractive clubhouse, the picturesque par-4 16th and the long, bunker-strewn closing hole. For me, the star golf attraction in the area remains Danang Golf

Club, which has established itself as one of the finest tracks in Asia since debuting back in 2010.

The nearby Marble Mountains providing an extra dramatic visual element on holes such as the 10th, a long par-5 that meanders between epic sand dunes. Australian Greg Norman, affectionately nicknamed The Great White Shark, designed the course and his creation is never anything less than killer.

Despite its proximity, the ocean only comes into view at the 16th, and even then for just the one hole. But what a hole it is.

A friend had told me that the hole was ‘the best par-3 in Asia’. And while I’m sure there are many other pretenders to that particular crown, his hyperbole doesn’t seem far off the mark as I survey the view from the slightly elevated tee.

The late-afternoon sun bathes the scene in a soft, glowing light as breeze from the sea whips the flag around on the small, saucer shaped green. Beyond the putting surface, the white sand of China Beach pours down to the aquamarine expanse of the South China Sea while the distant mountainous Cham Islands rise in green, jungle-clad bulk towards the cobalt sky.

Willing myself to do the tableaux justice, I unleash a miraculous (by my standards) 7-iron towards the pin. With the breeze doing its worst, the ball veers slightly off course, toying with the lip of a bunker before looping round to finish just a few feet from the hole. When you are a reliably unreliable golfer such moments are always to be treasured – especially in a setting as special as this. 🏌️

(For more information on golf packages in Danang see [golfasian.com](http://golfasian.com))



## TRAVEL FACTS



### FLYING TO DANANG

Bangkok Airways has recently launched a direct service from Bangkok to Danang. Flights operate four days a week (Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday) on a 138-seater Airbus A319 aircraft. All passengers can enjoy access to the Bangkok Airways boutique lounge at Suvarnabhumi International Airport.

### WHERE TO GOLF

Bana Hills Golf Club.

[banahillsgolf.com](http://banahillsgolf.com)

Laguna Lang Co.

[lagunalangco.com/golf](http://lagunalangco.com/golf)

Danang Golf Club.

[dananggolfclub.com](http://dananggolfclub.com)

Montgomerie Links.

[montgomerielinks.com](http://montgomerielinks.com)

THIS PAGE (FROM THE TOP): 10TH HOLE AT BANA HILLS AT DUSK; 11TH HOLE AT BANA HILLS AT NIGHT. OPPOSITE PAGE (FROM LEFT): DANANG GC CLUBHOUSE AT NIGHT; DRIVING RANGE AT DANANG GC.