

YOUR LATEST 2018 EDITION

INSPIRED

HOLIDAY INSPIRATION FOR ABSOLUTE MEMBERS & OWNERS

20

CELEBRATING OVER 20 YEARS OF
LIFESTYLE INVESTMENT &
HOLIDAY MEMORIES



FESTIVALS AROUND THE WORLD

ONE DREAMY NIGHT AND DAY
AT **THE BEACH SAMUI**

ISLAND HOPPING
IN KOH SAMUI AND PHUKET



Absolute 
WORLD
Share in the dream

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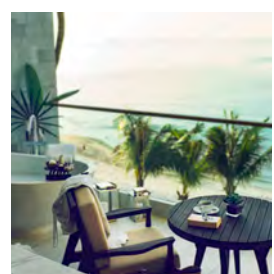
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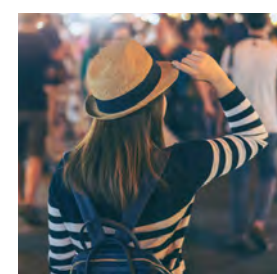
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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Bryan Lunt, Chairman & CEO



Bryan Lunt, Chairman & CEO

Welcome once again to your latest Inspired Magazine, perhaps in time to stir your excitement for your 2019 holiday plans? This edition we focus on the worldwide destinations available to you through our Partner Resorts and of course exchanges. We bring to you a whole host of fascinating festivals to enjoy, in a selection of exciting destinations from the UNESCO approved festival of art, fire, food and Music in Valencia, Spain to a Filipino Flower Festivals, or perhaps the festival of Busking down on Australia's Gold Coast.

According to a joint study from the Global Commission on Aging, traveling actually keeps you healthier, traveling has been scientifically proven to lower stress levels, and rather dramatically. According to one study, three days after taking a vacation, travelers report feeling less anxious, more rested and in a better mood. Interestingly, these benefits tend to linger for weeks after the trip has ended. "Foreign experiences increase both cognitive flexibility and depth of thought, the ability to make deep connections," explains Adam Galinsky, a professor at Columbia Business School who has authored a number of studies that investigate the concrete links between creativity and international travel. Mentally, physically and emotionally, you can gain a lot from packing your bags and visiting places you've never been.

Combine your travel plans with a stay at our home resort Absolute Twin Sands Resort & Spa, Phuket, Thailand and you can be sure to return home healthier. Our dedicated Health & Fitness Centre, 180° Wellness, is also enjoying an expansion as part of our third and final phase and is expected to open later this year with an increased range of treatments targeting stress, aging and weight loss, plus a new temperature controlled Yoga studio and Strength Garden. We have much more for the kids in the final phase so while they are occupied you can perhaps reconnect with yourself while away.

Well the team is poised and ready to hear about your travel inspirations and help you book that dream holiday, and of you have booked already then we simply can't wait to help you make the most of your time with us while away.

Happy, happy holiday planning!

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FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE OUR MEMBER SERVICES TEAMS CAN BE CONTACTED ON ANY OF THE FOLLOWING LOCAL RATE NUMBERS:

ADELAIDE	+61 8 7070 6112	GERMANY	+49 692 222 1557	S. AFRICA	+27 213 001 943
CHINA	+86 400 148 4330	RUSSIA	+7 495 150 20 89	SYDNEY	+612 8073 4452
FINLAND	+35 894 270 4142	NEW YORK	+1 646 564 5654	THAILAND	+66 76 292 525
FRANCE	+33 176 773 993	PERTH	+61 865 557 017	UK	+44 203 642 3203



TRAVEL BRINGS FAMILIES CLOSER TOGETHER

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GIVING A PRICELESS GIFT TO YOUR CHILDREN OR PARENTS? ABSOLUTE VACATION CLUB ALLOWS YOU ACCESS TO A GROWING NUMBER OF DESTINATIONS AND RESORTS WORLDWIDE. PICK A DESTINATION AND BOOK A FAMILY TRIP!



Whether it be a beach holiday in Australia or a safari lodge in South Africa, taking some time out of your busy life to take a holiday together will do the entire family so much good!

Family bonding is so important, and it is one of the many benefits of taking a family holiday. These days away together create strong bonds and long-lasting memories. Not only does a holiday give families the much needed break that they deserve, but also the time to come together and enjoy new experiences and exotic destinations. Short family vacations and extended holidays are also a great return on investment.

Whether it's keeping your toddlers busy or impressing hard-to-please teens, planning the perfect family holiday is not the easiest task in the world. The real magic of a family holiday is in the time you spend together. Our selection of family friendly resorts in unique destinations means you don't have to keep them waiting any longer.

Family holidays are worth the time and money spent because they create long-lasting memories. They truly are the holiday of a lifetime, for a lifetime. Imagine spending the day collecting seashells on a long, sandy beach in Australia with your young children or exploring wide open spaces amongst the nature of New Zealand. Memories created on family holidays are priceless as they are deep-rooted in various activities that families actually have the chance to enjoy together.

A family holiday presents the opportunity for everyone to spend quality time together. Children will definitely



appreciate this time as they are sure to have the undivided attention of their parents throughout the duration of their trip. It's a good time to relax and bond. When everyone is away from the stress of the outside world, there is so much time to chat, reconnect and appreciate the memories being made and time well spent as a family.

Just imagine having the choice of dozens of desirable locations worldwide - vacation resorts set overlooking the most beautiful beaches, or amongst majestic

mountain landscapes. With Absolute Destinations, each resort will become a home away from home for you and your family.

Travel is both life changing and eye-opening. Taking a trip is a wonderful way to broaden your horizons and put the world in a new perspective. Travel enriches us and it also functions as a way to strengthen our relationships. Getting to experience new things and figuring them out together makes us grow stronger and closer each day.

Whether your family is all under one roof, or you have children living in a different time zone or attending university, it is important for families to stay connected. Taking a holiday as a family is a wonderful experience that is guaranteed to bring your family closer and leave everyone full of fond memories in the years to come.

Owning your holidays through Absolute Vacation Club guarantees you, and your family the experience of a holiday of a lifetime, for a lifetime. Take the time out of your busy schedules to spend time together unwinding - whether it's sunbathing on pristine beaches in Goa, swimming in sumptuous pools in Spain, exploring Scotland or just kicking back in Australia. Absolute Vacation Club guarantees you and your family happy holiday memories to treasure forever.



Reconnect with those you love and plan the trip of a lifetime. Check out some of these wonderful Absolute Destinations partner resort options for families!

Australia
Boambee Bay Resort, Coffs Harbour

Lush, sub-tropical resort near the long white sands of Boambee Beach

India
Royal Palms Goa

A spectacular colonial style resort located in the fabulous south west Indian region of Goa

New Zealand
Kaimanawa Lodge, Turangi (North Island)

Kaimanawa Lodge is a small boutique resort located within easy walking distance of the famous Tongariro River

Scotland
Moness Country Club, Perthshire, Scotland

Moness Country Club offers self-catering cottages on a 35-acre wooded estate

South Africa
Kruger Park Lodge, Mpumalanga

Kruger Park Lodge is a tranquil and peaceful haven amongst natural vegetation

Spain
The Harbour Club, Tenerife

This traditional style Andalusian pueblo blanco complex is located on the outskirts of Playa De La Americas

To book simply email
enquiries@absolute-destinations.com or call one of our local rate numbers for your convenience



FESTIVALS AROUND THE WORLD



THERE ARE SO MANY UNIQUE AND INTERESTING FESTIVALS AROUND THE WORLD WHICH HIGHLIGHT THE LOCAL CULTURE & TRADITION OF THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES. WHETHER IT BE A MUSIC FESTIVAL, A RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL OR A FESTIVAL DEEPLY ROOTED IN TRADITION, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT ATTENDING A FESTIVAL IS BOTH A FUN AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY.

Booked your 2019 holiday yet? Why not schedule your travel to include a unique festival? Witnessing a festival in a foreign country presents a fantastic opportunity to learn more about the country and its culture.

Absolute Destinations provides a host of destinations in some of the world's most stunning locations, either our own resorts in Thailand or one of our Partner resorts worldwide, giving you the opportunity to take in some cultural excitement.

So, check out our rundown of the amazing festivals around the world and get planning your next adventure!



BALI - LAND OF THE GODS

Bali is an Indonesian paradise that functions as a living postcard. The island is beyond beautiful and full of magical traditions and culture. Bali is a volcanic paradise with amazing terraced rice fields and a wide variety of interesting festivals to choose from. These festivals owe much to the tradition and culture of Bali.



JUN
JUL

BALI ARTS FESTIVAL June - July • Denpasar

The long-running Bali Arts Festival is a month full of exhibits and live performances scheduled at the Taman Werdhi Budaya Arts Centre in Denpasar. The opening parade is not to be missed as it showcases the entire island's traditional dance and drama.

NYEPI EVE March • Islandwide

Nyepi is Bali's day of silence and seclusion. Everyone stays in their home or hotel and travel is forbidden on the actual day. However, Nyepi Eve gives visitors to the island a chance to witness the parade of giants which symbolise negative forces. Each Balinese household starts the evening with blessings at the family temple and continue with rituals late into the night.



MAR



GALUNGAN AND KUNINGAN Varies, follows local calendar • Islandwide

Visitors to Bali during Galungan will be treated to some of the island's most incredible street scenes which are seemingly endless rows of elaborately decorated bamboo poles. Galungan commemorates the triumph of good over evil and happens twice a year. Kuningan, which is 10 days after the celebration of Galungan, marks the end of that celebration. During Kuningan, special offerings of yellow turmeric rice are given to honour the god Wisnu, the protector of the Hindu trinity.

Bali Beach Club at Jimbaran Bay is the perfect choice as it offers a private and exclusive holiday experience that you will never forget when visiting the Land of the Gods. Located adjacent to the famous beach of Jimbaran Bay, this **Royal Bali Beach Club** is easily accessible to most tourist attractions on Bali, making it a convenient choice when attending one of Bali's many festivals.

Fancy a Balinese escape?

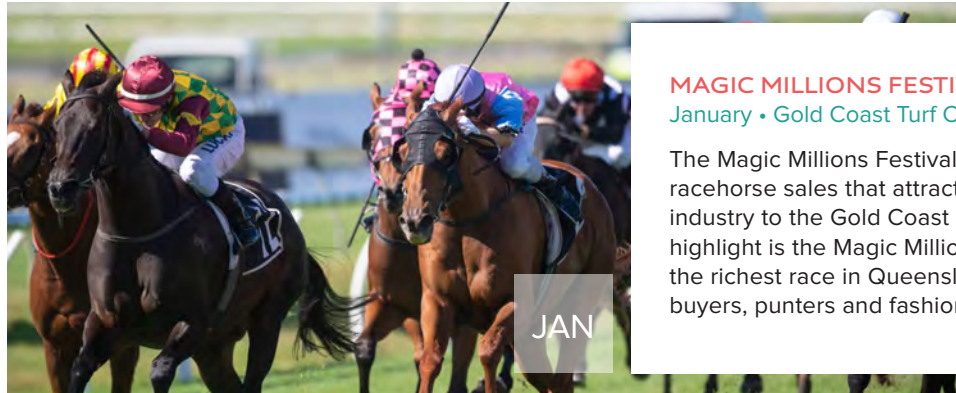
Try our Partner Resort the Royal Bali Beach Club at Jimbaran Bay. The Royal Bali Beach Club offers a true Balinese holiday experience.

To book simply email enquiries@absolute-destinations.com or call one of our local rate numbers for your convenience.



GOLD COAST

Located in Australia, and famed for its long sandy beaches and spectacular surfing spots, the Gold Coast is an outstanding global city with so very much to offer in the way of culture & tourism. There is plenty to see and do for the whole family. With so many action-packed festivals, everyone is sure to take a memorable moment home from the Gold Coast.



MAGIC MILLIONS FESTIVAL
January • Gold Coast Turf Club

The Magic Millions Festival is an intensive week of racehorse sales that attracts the who's who of the racing industry to the Gold Coast Turf Club. The definite social highlight is the Magic Millions Raceday, which features the richest race in Queensland. It is an important day for buyers, punters and fashionistas.

JAN

GOLD COAST MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL
August • Marine Parade, Southport

A family friendly event, the Gold Coast Multicultural Festival puts on an amazing display of culture including international music, drumming, instrumentals, art & craft, food and cultural information. This event serves to promote greater awareness and participation in cultural activities in the hopes to build a greater sense of community and belonging.



AUG



BUSKERS BY THE CREEK
October • Currumbin Creek

A festival that celebrates the old-fashioned art of busking, Busking by the Creek brings together over 300 performers to showcase their talents. The atmosphere of this festival is lively, and it's a huge melting pot of creativity, culture and surprise.

The Gold Coast also hosts a variety of surfing events throughout the year that are definitely worth attending as well. Burleigh Pro at Burleigh Heads in January, and the Quiksilver and Roxy Pro at Snapper Rocks in March give spectators the chance to witness some of the world's best pro surfers coming together to battle it out against the crash of the waves.

OCT

Considering taking a holiday to the Gold Coast? It is an exciting destination famous for its sunshine, offers up gorgeous beaches and completely awesome surfing spots. Heading Down Under for a festival? Why not spend your holiday at **Beachcomber Resort**?

Located just 100 metres from the breaking surf, **Beachcomber Resort** is in the heart of Surfer's Paradise, Queensland. It is an ideal location for couples or families who want to be near all of the action. There are many family attractions within reach of **Beachcomber Resort**, making it an excellent choice for those travelling as a family and also checking out some of the Gold Coast's best festivals.

Beach House Seaside Resort is another marvelous alternative when traveling along the Gold Coast. **Beach House Seaside Resort** is situated in the most idyllic of locations – Coolangatta. The self contained two bedroom apartments overlook the magnificent Coolangatta Beach, and within walking distance experience the great restaurants, discos, and nightlife of the Gold Coast. On-site there are loads of bistros, restaurants and shops to keep you busy before heading out to observe the next festival.



Fancy an Australian Adventure

Try our Partner Resort the Beachcomber Resort, an ideal location in the heart of Surfer's Paradise, Queensland. Or perhaps our Partner Resort the Beach House Seaside Resort, a Coolangatta icon and idyllic Gold Coast holiday spot. To book simply email enquiries@absolute-destinations.com or call one of our local rate numbers for your convenience



PHILIPPINES

Filipinos love to celebrate and get together. Philippine festivals are huge cultural celebrations that attract locals and tourists alike due to their colourful and festive nature. We wouldn't be surprised to find at least one festival in a town somewhere in the country on any given day of the year!



JAN

ATI-ATIHAN FESTIVAL
January • Kalibo, Aklan

One of the oldest religious festivals in the country, Ati-Atihan is characterised by a massive parade of face-painted celebrants, indigenous costumes and weapons, tribal dances and loud drumbeats. Known as the "Filipino Mardi Gras," Ati-Atihan is a festival not to be missed.

PANAGBENGA FESTIVAL
February • Baguio City

Panagbenga means season of blooming, and this festival celebrates with a variety of parades with floral floats and children dressed as flora and fauna. It is a festival that lives up to its name and showcases flower carts, street dancing and outdoor cafes.



FEB



MORIONES FESTIVAL
Holy Week • Boac, Gasan, and Mogpog, Marinduque

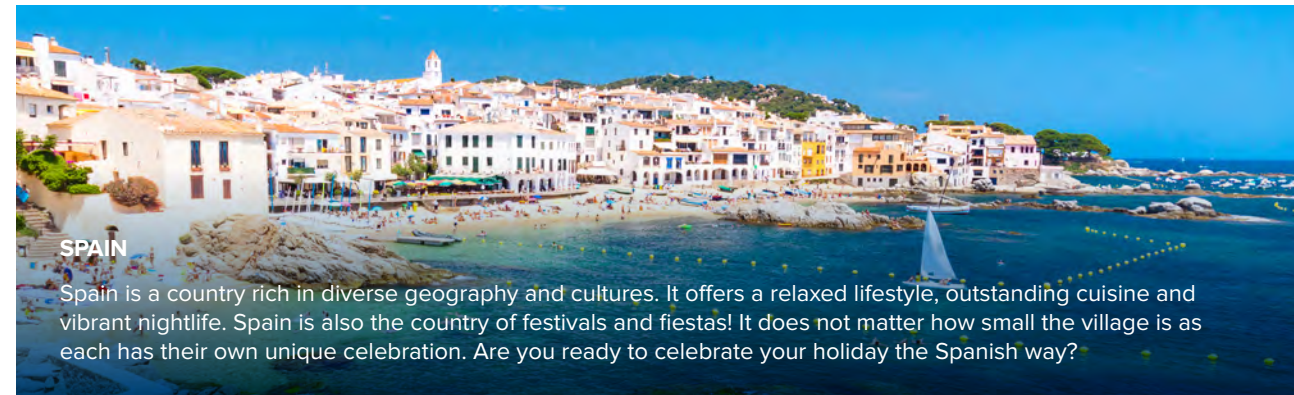
This week-long celebration of the life of St. Longinus makes Marinduque one of the top destinations during Holy Week. Morion is the helmet worn by the centurions while Moriones refers to the costumed penitents reenacting the search for St. Longinus, who had been hunted for centuries by his fellow centurions for converting to Christianity.

Hoping to combine festival hopping with a relaxing stay while you are in the Philippines? Head to Cebu to relax in luxury at Club Ultima at Crown Regency Hotel & Towers. Located in the heart of the Queen City of the South, **Club Ultima at Crown Regency Hotel & Towers** is the perfect location for leisure and recreation.

Another great partner resort in the Philippines is **Club Ultima at Crown Regency Residences, Davao**. An upscale hotel with a strategic location, the **Crown Regency Residences** host a unique variety of themed rooms, excellent services and first-class facilities.

The charm of the Philippines?

Why not book our Partner Resort the Club Ultima at the Crown Regency Hotel & Towers, Cebu City. A perfect leisurely location in the heart of the Queens City of the South.
Or our Partner Resort the Club Ultima at Crown Regency Residences, Davao. An upscale hotel in Cebu City perfect for a relaxing holiday.
To book simply email enquiries@absolute-destinations.com or call one of our local rate numbers for your convenience.

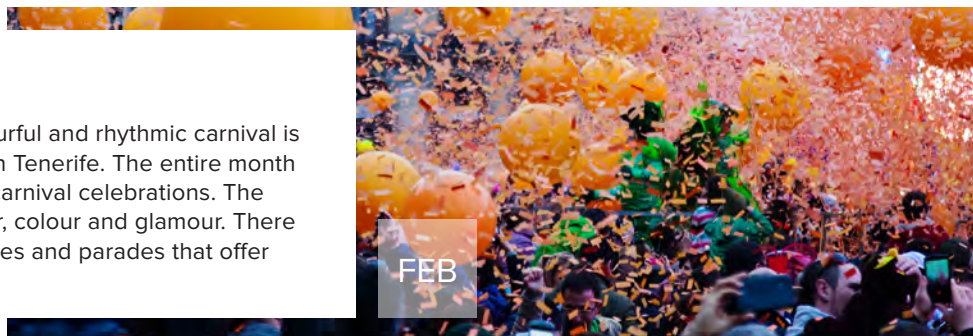


SPAIN

Spain is a country rich in diverse geography and cultures. It offers a relaxed lifestyle, outstanding cuisine and vibrant nightlife. Spain is also the country of festivals and fiestas! It does not matter how small the village is as each has their own unique celebration. Are you ready to celebrate your holiday the Spanish way?

CARNIVAL
February • Tenerife

The celebrations of the colourful and rhythmic carnival is the most extravagant party in Tenerife. The entire month of February is dedicated to carnival celebrations. The island is filled with fun, glitter, colour and glamour. There are numerous contests, parties and parades that offer much entertainment.



FEB

THE FALLAS OF VALENCIA
March • Valencia

The Fallas has actually been declared an event of intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO. During an explosive week, gigantic colourful statues and figures fill the city's squares and streets. Often satirical and political, the statues and figures represent pop-culture events that have happened throughout the year. Each and every one of them is very impressive, and guaranteed you have never seen a festival like The Fallas of Valencia before.



MAR

If you are combining Spain's festivals with a proper holiday, consider a stop-off in Gran Canaria and a few nights stay at the **Bahia Blanca**. Located above the cliffs on the south coast of Gran Canaria, this beautiful accommodation has sweeping views and many choices for leisure and recreation. With elegant facilities and hospitality, guests at this hotel will surely have an impressive stay.

If Spain tempts you you can try our Partner Resort the Aparthotel El Duque Resort, Tenerife.

A family friendly resort in close proximity to Tenerife's best beaches.
Or our Partner Resort the Bahia Blanca, Gran Canaria. Beautiful apartments located in the cliffs above Gran Canaria's south coast.
To book simply email enquiries@absolute-destinations.com or call one of our local rate numbers for your convenience.

THAILAND

Thailand is a Southeast Asian country known for tropical beaches, sprawling palaces, ancient ruins and stunning Buddhist temples. The Land of Smiles caters to all types of travellers and budgets.

SONGKRAN
Thai New Year • April • Nationwide

A water festival to celebrate the Thai New Year, Songkran is wet, wild and nothing like you have ever experienced before. Although deeply rooted in tradition, Songkran has turned into a massive water fight to welcome in the Thai New Year. Expect to get wet as thousands converge in the streets to throw water and have loads of fun.

APR



NOV

LOY KRATHONG
November • Nationwide

Known as the Festival of Light, Loy Krathong is one of the most beautiful festivals in all of Thailand. Banana leaf baskets are made and a candle and flowers are placed on top so that you can float all of your bad luck away. Loy Krathong signals a fresh start, and the festival is truly an enchanting evening across the Kingdom.

Absolute Twin Sands Resort & Spa is an excellent choice for families and would be a wonderful place to stay if you are coming to Phuket to experience some of its interesting festivals. Located on the outskirts of Patong, the resort is

quiet and tranquil and within close proximity to many of Phuket's beautiful beaches.

Absolute Bangla Suites is in the heart of Patong's vibrant nightlife and bustling action. Tucked away off of Bangla Road, **Absolute Bangla Suites** is conveniently located near all of the nightlife venues, some fabulous eateries as well as all of the brand name shopping malls in Patong.

Both of our **Absolute Resorts & Hotels** in Phuket would be delighted to have you! Additionally, our friendly staff will be able to give you local insight and recommendations of things to do before and after the festivals.

For beautiful Thailand a holiday at Absolute Twin Sands Resort & Wellbeing Spa, Phuket is a must.

First class accommodation and service in a spectacular peninsula setting.
Or our **Absolute Bangla Suites**, enjoying the hustle and bustle of Patong in the heart of the action of Soi Bangla.
To book simply email enquiries@absolute-destinations.com or call one of our local rate numbers for your convenience

ABSOLUTE TWIN SANDS RESORT & SPA AS WE LOOK FORWARD TO OUR THIRD AND FINAL PHASE

ABSOLUTE TWIN SANDS RESORT & SPA, OUR FLAGSHIP RESORT ON THE STUNNING ISLAND OF PHUKET HAS SEEN SOME WONDERFUL CHANGES SINCE WE OPENED OUR FIRST PHASE OF JUST 45 SUITES IN 2013. WE WERE THE FIRST TO ARRIVE ON THIS STUNNING PENINSULA THAT WE NOW CALL HOME.



is now very clearly defined and many suites connect directly with the water, offering a private bathing space and swim off terrace.

The meandering lagoon that creeps around the resort is now nearly complete and the addition of the waterslide is sure to provide hours of endless fun for adults and children alike – not to mention the new play area and games room.

For those with an active interest in wellbeing, or simply those who want to embark on a healthier lifestyle to take home can enjoy a brand new dedicated 180° Wellness Spa which will include a brand new gym, sauna, steam, spa, temperature controlled yoga studio and subterranean strength garden for those with a passion for endurance training. The new spa will offer a wider program of treatments, catering to concerns in aging, weight loss and general wellbeing.

The suites themselves have had a few changes and now boast a more natural palate and materials, the beds are still as comfortable, the showers as great, the space is still so breathable and airy.

For those who like to experiment with their local fresh food market haul, we of course still provide full kitchenettes in each suite. But the third phase will also welcome 'The Kitchen Table', a deli-style restaurant and café offering poolside terrace dining, a rotisserie and stone baked pizza oven! 'Blue Mango' continues as a fine dining restaurant, and remains in the top 15 restaurants in Phuket of course.



Positioned between two of the best and lesser-known beaches on the island and just that distance from the hustle and bustle of Patong to command complete relaxation for our guests, we knew we were onto a good thing.

Three years on we welcomed the opening of our second phase, introducing a further collection of 52 suites, and what appeared to be the encouragement of new neighbours. The following year we welcomed the

prestigious Rosewood Phuket and in short succession the Phuket Marriott Resort & Spa.

Now we harmoniously share our peninsula home with our wonderful neighbours and welcome Owners, Members and Guests alike from each corner of the world. The following year we commenced construction of what will be the third and final phase of the resort and are set to unveil a final 88 suites later this year.

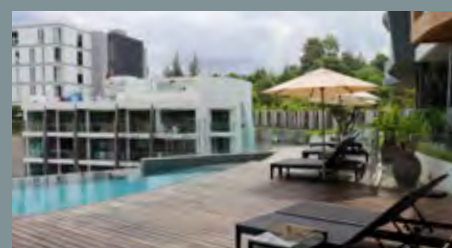
Heavy construction has just finished on the third and final phase and now we commence the important interior decoration and styling, landscaping and services that will bring the resort to life. The splendor of the architecture is now clear to see, and the buildings look stunning against the backdrop of blue sky and jungle-clad hills.

The collection of resort buildings set around landscaped grounds, connected by interlinking waterways



We also welcomed our new GM, Michael Massey who, as a seasoned resort professional with years of experience managing Wellness Resorts around the world, is the perfect fit to lead our Resorts team into the third phase. Michael has already commenced a detailed training program to enhance our services furthermore in anticipation of your arrival and the completion of this outstanding resort, during what is already becoming a most exciting 20th anniversary year for us.

We cannot wait to welcome you to the completion of Absolute Twin Sands Resort & Spa and share in the celebrations!



ABSOLUTE AMBASSADORS: MAGICAL MOMENTS AND LOVELY MEMORIES

IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY THE BUZZ OF THE NEW YEAR WAS IN THE AIR. WE WERE ALL EXCITED WITH PLANNING A GREAT NIGHT, SETTING GOALS AND INTENTIONS AS WELL AS THINKING ABOUT WHAT ASPIRATIONS WE HAD IN STORE FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR. NOW, HERE WE ARE, NEARLY HALFWAY THROUGH 2018. HONESTLY, THIS YEAR HAS FLOWN BY!



Time goes by so quickly, and it is important to focus on what is important as the years continue to fly by and add up. We are so grateful you have chosen Absolute Resorts to enjoy magical moments and to make lovely memories.

So far in 2018, we have had the privilege of welcoming a variety of new faces eager to enjoy a relaxing holiday, as well as many returning guests who we look forward to seeing year after year. We know that time off is precious, and we love watching you enjoy your holidays! We are so grateful that you continue to choose Absolute Resorts again and again to enjoy magical moments and to make lovely memories. Each and every one of you leave a lasting impression on us, and we truly miss you when it's time for you to return to your respective homes!



2018 is shaping us to be a marvelous year! This year we celebrate Absolute's 20th year and in the run-up to the celebration, we have also had the pleasure of celebrating birthdays and candid moments with so many of you! We love to see the smiles on your faces when we surprise you!

Whether it be a surprise cake for a special holiday birthday, or chance to have a quick chat and inform you of some of our favorite spots to see around Absolute Resorts, we are always pleased to interact with all of you, our Absolute Ambassadors. Here's to making more lovely memories and experiencing magical moments with Absolute Resorts in 2018 and beyond!



ABSOLUTE ECO-FRIENDLIER: ADVENTURE THROUGH THE MANGROVES

ABSOLUTE ECO-FRIENDLIER IS A CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY INITIATIVE, WHICH EXPANDS AND INTEGRATES ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES IN OUR RESORTS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

It's an initiative that has even won us an International Special Recognition award in our industry. In an effort to come together as a team and do something meaningful to help better Phuket's natural environment, various staff members from Absolute Resorts & Hotels regularly participate in Mangrove tree planting on the eastern coast of Phuket.

Mangrove trees are an essential part of Phuket's ecosystem, and their forests are dotted across the island. The trees are both productive and complex. Essentially, mangroves are a crossroads where fresh water, ocean water and land meet. Rich in biodiversity, mangroves provide a habitat for an array of plant and animal species.

Mangrove trees have a specialised root structure that allows them to grow in environmental conditions that would likely kill most other plants. Wherever Mangrove trees grow, the soil is loaded with nutrients and serves as food for plankton, algae, fish and types of shellfish. Mangrove forests can become quite dense and therefore function as shelter for a variety of birds, monkeys and often times bright beds of coral growing in the sea.

Our most recent Mangrove tree planting on the in May was met with great enthusiasm from the Absolute Resorts & Hotels teams. The afternoon activity was lively and educational, and truly a wonderful way to join together as a team to do something for the environment and better the community.

There was a wonderful turnout from the staff.

Everyone was ready to lend a helping hand and plant mangroves to help replenish the existing forest on Phuket's east coast. Arriving on the premises, staff met the local officer who explained about the different species of mangroves and later led the planting activities.

Corporate Social Responsibility is at the heart of Absolute Resorts & Hotels and has been since our inception. With our strategic centre in Phuket, Thailand, we are of course aware of our home, our local responsibilities and the positive impact we can have on people's lives locally through our operations, and internationally through delivering memorable vacation experiences for members and guests.

Planting mangroves is just one of the many ways that we feel necessary to give back to the community as well as to our members and guests. We take pride in our CSR initiatives and do our best to help reduce our carbon footprint and be friendlier to our environment, ensuring we stay on top of new initiatives in supporting this commitment.

Perhaps next time you stay with us, you will feel moved to participate in one of our Corporate Social Responsibility activities. Follow along on our social media channels and see what we have planned the next time you spend a holiday with us in Phuket. We would love you to join us.





ONE DREAMY NIGHT AND DAY AT THE BEACH SAMUI



ARRIVING IN THE SLEEPY FISHING VILLAGE OF THONG KRUT ON THE SOUTHERN TIP OF KOH SAMUI IS LIKE STEPPING BACK TO THE SAMUI OF YESTERYEAR. THE VILLAGE HOME OF THE BEACH SAMUI, OUR COLLECTION OF BREATHTAKING SUITES AND PENTHOUSE AVAILABLE FOR OUR FRACTIONAL OWNERS, IS A TRANQUIL, PICTURESQUE, AND CHARMING LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD WHICH PROVIDES THE PERFECT TROPICAL GETAWAY FOR THOSE LOOKING TO TRULY ESCAPE AND ENJOY A RELAXING BEACH HOLIDAY.

We whisked our US born, Phuket-based roving reporter Amy Bensema away to experience a day and night at The Beach Samui and to share her experience with those of you who are yet to visit.

What a treat, a quick hop over from my island home of Phuket to dreamy Koh Samui. I just adore the island and in my 10 years living in Thailand I have yet to experience the charms of the south, although I have heard a great deal. For me Koh Samui is a wonderful escape from Phuket, lazier beaches, an even slower pace, smaller in size, and when you land in their quaint, tropical little airport you really feel like you are closer to paradise.

Whisked effortlessly by my charming Driver into an awaiting, air conditioned car for the 40 minute drive south, I notice how green the island is, nature is abundant on Koh Samui, and the jungle-clad hills are thick with species of flora and fauna. The calming green scene is an instant mood booster as the stresses of life just instantly ease away. Dabbing my brow with a lemongrass scented cool towel I relax and take in each detail of my journey.

Arriving in the village of Thong Krut the calm takes over me in full, the pace of life here is noticeably slower, the village is less busy than other parts of the island, and everyone goes about their day with a smile on their face.

The soft white sands and turquoise hues of Thong Krut beach are a welcome sight. Towering coconut palms provide a dramatic backdrop for Thong Krut as they sway in the breeze and hug the length of the beach. The sea seems to stretch as far as the eyes can see, and the horizon is dotted with views of the adjacent islands, Koh Taen and Koh Matsum, just as you would picture in a tropical dream.

The soothing sound of cicadas sets a heavenly scene for my arrival at The Beach Samui and as soon as the gentle sea breeze gently touched my face, no further confirmation was needed that this is paradise found.

The Beach Samui team were there to greet me as I felt as if I floated into the lobby, my driver following with my bag and a smile. The service from the moment you arrive is remarkably warm and friendly, it felt almost like we had all met before. As you are quickly ushered into the open-air foyer, you will feel right at home. A quick resort orientation is accompanied by a cold towel soaked in lemongrass essential oil and a local iced ginger drink. These small touches go a long way, as the cold towel not only smells divine, but it is also a refreshing pick-me-up for the weary traveller.

The Beach Samui makes for a stunning escape, a beautifully appointed hotel on a Robinson Crusoe-esque beach, quite a contrast. As I arrived into my Penthouse Suite I was first astounded by the size and secondly the endless view directly to the ocean and horizon of islands.



My suite had a double height window as on two floors which really took my breath away. Then looking around the Suite, the décor was just perfect. Colonial style grandeur, carved teak furniture, cool marble, crystal chandeliers. The attention to detail in each of the 21 suites and penthouses is just perfect. It is a beautiful Thai island retreat in a tropical, intimate setting. An oceanfront suite at The Beach Samui is the perfect spot to spend a dreamy holiday on a complete escape.

Once I had set down my bags and caught my breath from the views and décor, I stepped out onto my huge private terrace and gasped a little more – there, with nothing but the ocean in front of me, I discover my outdoor tub which I make note to spend a little time in before I fall asleep that evening.

Well I want to discover Thong Krut but the dreaminess of the Beach has me wanting to curl up under one of the perfectly Instagrammable beachside cabanas and snooze but a long soothing rain shower has me recharged once again so I head out to explore a little for lunch.



The fact that the Botanical Bar & Restaurant at The Beach Samui has not yet opened goes completely unnoticed as I soon discover many local dining choices on the doorstep. For example, just next door you will find La Coppola Italian Restaurant & Pizzeria which serves up amazing pizza and Italian classics right on the beach – even offering takeaway of course if pizza in the terrace tub is a dream! A number of laid-back delicious local Thai restaurants can be found in Thong Krut, and I discovered one of my favorites adjacent to the resort. Nuch's Green Ta'lay Restaurant serves simple yet classic Thai food in an open garden setting. The flavours are authentic and the prices beyond affordable for such fresh food.

With a full stomach I am energised for adventure so I speak to the team to make the most of one of the curated local experiences, all the while finding it so refreshing how much pride the team take in their work. As locals, their recommendations are extremely well considered, making me realize that whilst sleepy, there are no shortage of things to do in the village and across the southern part of Koh Samui.

I grabbed my camera and headed off on my Beach Samui bike to explore a local coconut oil farm. It is really quite interesting to witness the coconut oil extraction firsthand, and as we all know, coconut oil is great for the skin and hair so I bought some for after my bedtime hot tub and a couple of bottles to take home for friends.



I also visited the breathtaking Laem Sor Pagoda, a small, golden pagoda with ornate details located on the beach. The beach here is nearly deserted and completely serene. It is a great place to visit to get a feel for the local Buddhist culture.

On my way back home I stopped at a local market to buy a few delectable ingredients as each suite at The Beach Samui is equipped with a kitchenette and so I wanted to experience dinner cooked a la moi on my terrace. Fresh local food is widely available but for the essentials there is a 7-11 of course in the village.

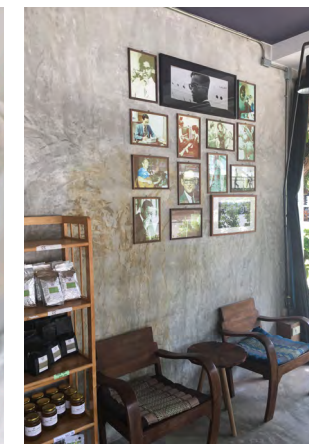
So, back at The Beach and I immediately start to unwind as the scent of jasmine and lemongrass gently invades my senses. The sun is starting to set and the Thong Krut sunset was like nothing I have seen before in Thailand. The team set up a little private table for me on the beach and I enjoyed a chilled glass of wine that I bought earlier from the Thong Krut wine shop just across the road – the sunset, the tranquility, the view, (the wine) – what a treat. I felt for a moment just how Hemmingway must have felt and felt equally inspired.

Soon it was time for dinner and I cooked up a storm, my Thai Green Curry has been finely honed over these years and so I decided to enjoy just that. On my terrace with the backdrop of the beach and swaying palms, I dined. I needed little else to make me the most relaxed and happiest person on the planet!

I was wrong, my next experience added a further layer of relaxation, as a member of the team discreetly arrived to set up my evening milk bath and disappeared as quietly as they came, leaving a stunning scene in my hot tub. As I slipped into the warm

water, scented with essential oils and local flowers I started to take in the sigh above my eyes. The starry sky, the low levels of light pollution at The Beach Samui means you can witness a most incredibly breathtaking night sky. And when you look down you notice the beautiful limestone infinity pool is mirroring the stars also with the clever use of fiber-optic lighting. This is pure relaxation.

Now, the beds: plush and cloud-like, the soft mattresses and obviously high thread count cottons will ensure much needed rest and the most pleasant night's sleep during your stay.



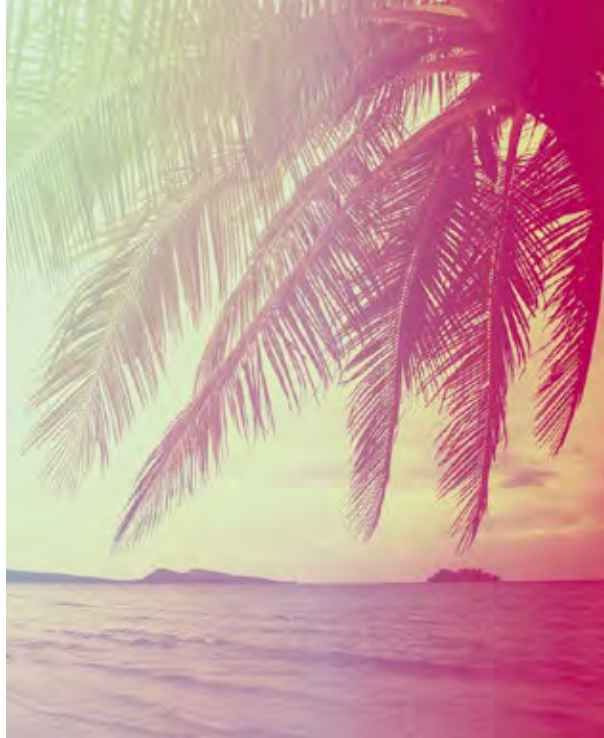
Morning wandered in slowly as I had enjoyed a beautiful sleep, I pressed a button and my double height curtains gently drew back. I was then reminded of that view which could almost have been a dream.

After another invigorating rain shower I headed out to find the best breakfast and from what I have read and understand, the best coffee on the island. If you crave a freshly brewed cup of coffee, located just next door to The Beach Samui is Boy's Organic Coffee. A popular coffee shop across the island, and a local favourite in Thong Krut, Boy's Organic Coffee serves up authentic organic coffee with bold flavours from northern Thailand. The coffee shop also serves tea, but I highly recommend ordering a latte as the owner, Boy, is quite talented when it comes to crafting latte art.

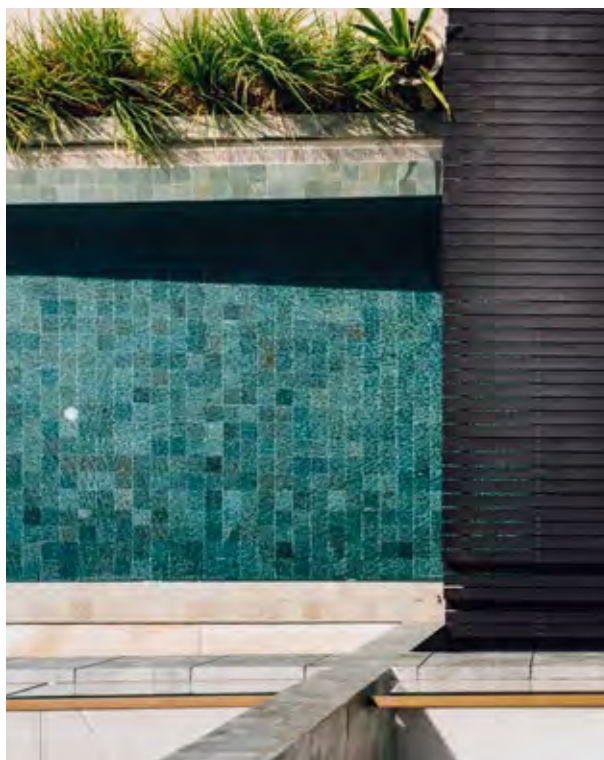
The best breakfast was found about a 7-minute stroll down the road at an enchanting little waterfront spot called The Hideaway Restaurant with lovely views across the bay.

A quick hop back to the hotel to grab my bag, Mr Boy prepared one of those divine coffee's to go and I was being chauffeured once again, this time reluctantly back to the airport.

There are so many ways to spend one dreamy night and day at The Beach Samui, or of course a dreamier week! This gorgeous, boutique hotel provides true Thai escapism for those seeking a serene island sojourn. The local fishing village of Thong Krut is authentic and charming, really the Samui of yesteryear, truly showcasing the very best of Thailand. It's a must for your bucket list.




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TAKING A HOLIDAY IS GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH

THINK YOU'RE TOO BUSY TO GET AWAY FROM THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE OF WORK? YOU MIGHT VERY WELL BE SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT TAKING A HOLIDAY IS GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH. WHETHER IT'S A QUICK WEEK GETAWAY OR AN EXTENDED TWO WEEK-LONG VACATION, TAKING A HOLIDAY IS EXACTLY WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED.



We all need time away from the workplace to relax, rejuvenate and revitalise our lives. So, exactly what is it about going on holiday that boosts our overall wellbeing, reduces stress and inspires us to live fuller, richer lives? It's easy! When we start planning holidays, it improves our frame of mind. Suddenly, there is an overall mental lift. Anticipation rises as going on a holiday gives us something to look forward to.

Taking a holiday means stepping away from the routine and disconnecting for a short period of time which offers up many health benefits. It is important to allow time for yourself while on holiday. You need to rest, refresh and decrease the chance of mental burnout. A holiday should leave you feeling relaxed and rejuvenated. You will want to power up both mentally and physically, so make sure

to connect to what you enjoy during your holiday. It is also vital to get proper nutrition, exercise and sleep.

The positive effects of going away on a short vacation or an extended trip are really beneficial. The feelings of calmness and utter restoration can last up to three or four weeks after you return. It is also important to note that research shows if you get appropriate physical activity in during your holiday, for example a yoga class or a brisk walk on the beach, the positive effects can last even longer. Sounds wonderful, don't you think?

While we all know that taking a holiday is good for your health, have you ever thought of going one step further and enjoying a wellness holiday? Imagine transforming your body and empowering your mind with a health & wellness holiday in paradise.



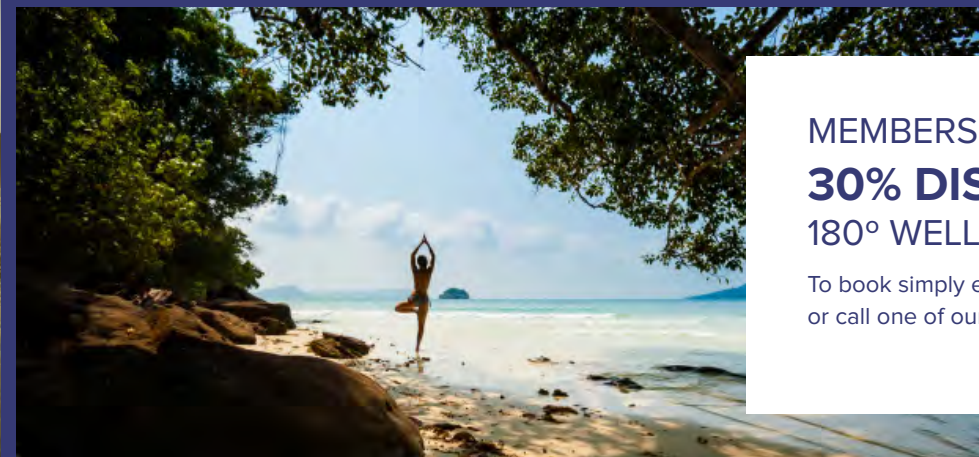
Located on the lush, tropical paradise of Phuket, 180° Wellness Thailand welcomes guests from all over the world for nurturing, fun, educational and effective health & wellness programs. You will be able to enjoy the range of health, wellbeing and detox programs offered on-site at Absolute Twin Sands Resort & Spa. Our team of highly professional wellness workers, teachers and coaches will practice with you and guide you in the core principles of wellbeing including hydration, nutrition, body movement and relaxation. A health & wellness holiday has wonderful health benefits and will leave you feeling rejuvenated, revitalised and reignited.

Phuket offers another option in the form of KO8 Escapes. More challenging than 180° Wellness Thailand, KO8 Escapes endeavours to transform your body and empower your mind through its rigorous, yet rewarding, programs which focus on health, fitness and fun. Sleep in style at Absolute Twin Sands Resort & Spa while experiencing Phuket in a totally unique way. A variety of amazing locations around the island will served as functional training sites and these sites include jungles, beaches and sweeping seascapes paired with rooftops, poolsides and Muay Thai arenas. You will return home a rejuvenated and refreshed version of yourself ready to take on the world!



It is a proven fact that taking a holiday helps us to disconnect and live life more fully in general. We remove ourselves from thoughts of work and let our brains mentally boost once we disengage. A holiday allows us to catch up on sleep, restore social connections, move our bodies and relish in the everyday enjoyment in our lives.

Don't waste another minute thinking you are too busy at work. Put your health & wellness first and book a holiday with Absolute Resorts & Hotels today. Whether you want to relax or partake in a variety of unique health & wellness programs with 180° Wellness Thailand or KO8 Escapes, a holiday focusing on your personal health, wellness and fitness goals is bound to be good for your health.



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HOW TO STAY OFFLINE WHILE ON HOLIDAY



LIVING LIFE ONLINE CAN BE VERY ADDICTIVE. THERE ARE EMAILS TO CHECK, STATUSES TO UPDATE, PHOTOGRAPHS TO LIKE, NEWS TO WATCH AND THE LIST GOES ON AND ON. IF YOU ARE PLANNING A HOLIDAY, IT IS TIME TO SHOW THAT SMARTPHONE WHO IS BOSS. ALL IT TAKES IS A VERY STRONG SENSE OF WILLPOWER AND THE REALISATION THAT LIFE WILL NOT END IF YOU ARE NOT CONSTANTLY CHECKING EMAILS AND SOCIAL MEDIA OR LOOKING DOWN AT YOUR PHONE.

For most people, long holidays and short vacations are often infrequent. If you are traveling as a family, it is so very important to make the most of these special days by devoting time and attention to your children or partner instead of being immersed in the day-to-day happenings of the online world.

If you are not able to disconnect, it will be difficult to truly relax and unwind during your holiday. Commit to remaining offline so that you can recharge and refresh. Give leaving the grid a chance, even if it is just for a few days, as it

feels good to let go and focus on what is happening in the present moment.

Going offline during a holiday definitely has its perks, to completely disconnect will take some preparation. If you do not decide beforehand how to stay offline, you will fail. Therefore, set boundaries before you leave for your trip. Do a bit of pre-planning and forced organisation so that you are able to enjoy every single opportunity that your holiday has to offer. For example, in the days leading up to your departure, make sure that work deadlines are met,

and designate tasks to colleagues if possible. If you put in the legwork beforehand, you will be able to truly take a deep breath and enjoy the fruits of your labour.

During your holiday, it is important to reflect on what is important to you and perhaps take measure to make those things relevant once again in your day-to-day life. A great example of this is family meals. If you are travelling as a family, ensure that you dine together. Engage in conversation as there is no cooking to prepare, no dishes to wash up and no homework to be done. Take the time to savour the meal as well as connect as a family in a relaxed manner that is often times not possible at home.

Another aspect of going offline during a holiday is that you will be able to recharge relationships instead of devices. Take advantage of the moment and have fun together with the people you are traveling with, whether they be family or friends. Use the time away from your smartphone to converse and enjoy simple things together such as a walk on the beach or a spa treatment. When we are not consistently checking our phones, life happens all around us and witnessing it firsthand is both nurturing and beautiful.

While it is true that going completely offline during a vacation is quite possibly not the easiest thing to do, the truth of the matter is that it is possible. With a bit of willpower and dedication, you will be able to focus on the present moment, nurture relationships and enjoy the change of scenery from your everyday life back home.

Going offline ensures a tech-free holiday, which will give your brain the rest that it deserves which leads to improved

concentration, better sleep quality and increased mental clarity. All of these combined factors will make you feel better, not only when on vacation, but as you reemerge back into your busy lifestyle at home.

We are not able to turn back time, so instead of attempting to capture and upload every event of your holiday online and to social media, live in the now and go offline. Enjoy a holiday with your family or friends and be inspired by all that living in the present moment has to offer.





TRENDY MARKETS IN PHUKET AND KOH SAMUI

A TRIP TO PHUKET OR KOH SAMUI WOULD BE INCOMPLETE WITHOUT VISITING ONE OF THE MANY MARKETS ON EITHER OF THE ISLANDS. SHOP UNTIL YOU DROP, BARGAIN TO YOUR HEARTS' CONTENT, SAMPLE DELICIOUS LOCAL DELICACIES AND EXPERIENCE A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE LOCAL RESIDENTS.



PHUKET'S STYLISH MARKETS

While fresh markets and farmers-type markets are a dime a dozen across the island, it is Phuket's trendy new hip markets that are really making a statement and raising the standard for a unique shopping experience on the island.



PHUKET INDY MARKET

Adjacent to Limelight Avenue shopping mall, Phuket Indy Market is a compact market that appeals to the younger crowd. The market is vibrant and creative, and a place where many of Phuket's young artists display their handmade creations. Phuket Indy Market features live music as well as a decent choice of street food. It is a fun, young atmosphere and the place to find a unique gift for a friend or loved one.

Phuket Indy Market

When: Wednesday, Thursday & Friday
 Time: 4:00pm - 10:00pm
 Location: Phuket Town



CHILLVA MARKET PHUKET

Although relatively small, Chillva Market packs a powerful punch. The market features a wide array of container stalls selling items such as t-shirts, homemade beauty products, sunglasses and handbags. There is a stage showcasing local entertainment, however, most of the music is in Thai. Chillva also features a nice selection of local street food, cute coffee shops and pubs. Parking is available at Chillva, and to avoid intense crowds it is best to go after 8:00pm in the evening.

Chillva Market Phuket

When: Container Shops open daily, Full Market Thursday - Sunday
 Time: 4:00pm - 11:00pm
 Location: Samkong



LARD YAI | SUNDAY WALKING STREET MARKET

A popular market in Phuket's Old Town district, Lard Yai is a local market with artistic flair. Every Sunday, Thalang Road comes alive with local musicians, artists and charming market stalls. Lard Yai is a great place to shop for souvenirs, enjoy a robust coffee and street food of the Phuketian variety. Lard Yai is well worth checking out as it offers a tiny glimpse into Phuket's local life in the atmosphere of a lively street bazaar.

Lard Yai | Sunday Walking Street Market

When: Sundays
 Time: 4:00pm - 10:00pm
 Location: Thalang Road

SHOP UNTIL YOU DROP IN KOH SAMUI

There is more to shopping in Samui than fancy malls and boutique outlets. When staying at The Beach Samui, take the opportunity to explore some of the island's quirky walking streets and night markets. Even if you are not a big fan of shopping, strolling through these markets is a very colourful way to have a local experience in Koh Samui.



FISHERMAN'S VILLAGE WALKING STREET

Every Friday night, Bophut comes alive as the narrow Beach Road and adjoining streets are crammed with market stalls selling a variety of wares including handbags, t-shirts, simple jewellery, sunglasses and souvenirs. The atmosphere is lively, and Fisherman's Village Walking Street is often packed with shoppers from across Koh Samui. A lot of unique items are for sale here including hand-carved soaps, handicrafts and musical instruments. The walking street features a wide variety of Thai food specialities and small snacks, too.

Fisherman's Village Walking Street

When: Friday
 Time: 5:00pm - 11:00pm
 Location: Bophut

MAE NAM WALKING STREET

A family friendly market located in the heart of Chinatown, the Mae Nam Walking Street hosts a laid-back vibe and plenty of shopping stalls and street food to nibble on. Here you can find a good mix of expats, locals and tourists having fun together and enjoying bargaining over the occasional t-shirt or knockoff handbag. The walking street is a U-section, so if you are planning to eat your way around the market make sure to travel clockwise.

Mae Nam Walking Street

When: Thursday
 Time: 5:00pm - 11:00pm
 Location: Chinatown Mae Nam

CHAWENG WALKING STREET

Chaweng Walking Street is a crowded market area that is full of colour, sounds and scents. Often busy with tourists sipping cocktails, the walking street is a wonderful place to try bargaining skills when purchasing such items as sunglasses, t-shirts, cosmetics and clothing items. The walking street showcases many of the other items readily available in markets throughout Thailand in an energetic atmosphere.

Chaweng Walking Street

When: Daily,
Market stalls are closed on Fridays & Sundays
Time: 4:30pm - 12:00am
Location: South Chaweng



NATHON WALKING STREET

A sprawling street market with a variety of street food, the Nathon Walking Street is worth checking out on a Saturday evening. Vendors peddle the usual wares including handicrafts, clothing items, souvenirs and antiques. There is a wide variety of Thai food to choose from as well as Western cuisine. Nathon Walking Street is a popular market with locals that is worth checking out when in Koh Samui.

Nathon Walking Street

When: Saturday
Time: 17:00pm - 23:00pm
Location: Old pier of Nathon



LAMAI NIGHT BAZAAR

Located in the centre of town, the Lamai Night Bazaar is large market that functions as a fun place to get all of your shopping in. Lamai Night Bazaar is full of the usual market fare including knockoff goods and handbags, but there is also a good selection of local handicrafts and souvenirs to be found as well. The night bazaar also includes a food court, cafe and a pub. Bargaining is expected here, so have a good laugh and get the best price.

Lamai Night Bazaar

When: Daily
Time: 17:00pm - 23:00pm
Location: Lamai Centre

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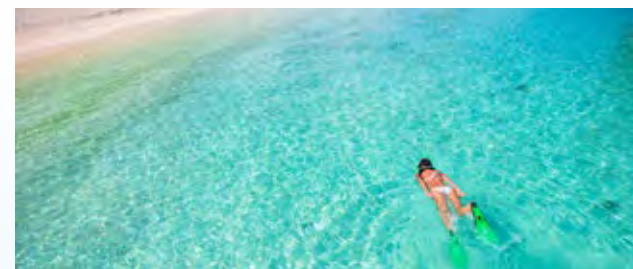
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ISLAND HOPPING IN KOH SAMUI AND PHUKET

LOCATED IN THE GULF OF THAILAND, KOH SAMUI IS JUST ONE OF THE ISLANDS LOCATED IN AN ARCHIPELAGO. ISLAND HOPPING IS A POPULAR ACTIVITY IN SAMUI AS THERE ARE A WIDE VARIETY OF SMALLER ISLANDS OFF THE COAST RIPE FOR EXPLORING. MAKE THE MOST OF A DAY TRIP AND CHECK OUT SOME OF THESE GORGEOUS, SMALLER ISLANDS LOCATED NEAR SAMUI.



KOH TAEN

Located just a short distance off the coast of Thong Krut, Koh Taen is charming little island that is great for day trips from Thong Krut. As it is exceptionally close to The Beach Samui, Koh Taen is highly recommended for those who would like to spend the day snorkelling or fishing.

The nature at Koh Taen is simply stunning, and there is even a mangrove swamp with a wooden walkway through it! The Koh Taen Conservation Society has done a fantastic job using signs to mark various plants and buildings of historical significance, so do make sure to explore the island while you are there.

A day trip to Koh Taen wouldn't be complete without a stop at the neighboring island of Koh Mudsum. The white sandy beaches of this tiny island are great for picnics and relaxing, while the beach itself is great for kayaking, swimming and snorkelling.

ANG THONG MARINE NATIONAL PARK

A simply stunning archipelago comprised of 42 pristine islands, Ang Thong National Marine Park is located in the Gulf of Thailand. The islands are blessed with natural beauty and features towering limestone karsts, white-sand beaches, verdant jungle, waterfalls and hidden lakes and coves to explore.

Ang Thong National Marine Park is a protected area of more than 100 square kilometres of land and sea. In addition to the breathtaking scenery, the marine park

is home to an interesting variety of tropical wildlife and colourful sea creatures. It is a scuba diver's dream playground and also great for other water-based activities such as snorkelling, swimming and sea kayaking.

If you are chilling on one of the islands, there are also a lot of wonderful hiking opportunities. Regardless of the marine park's tourist appeal, it remains a picture perfect postcard of a tranquil tropical paradise. Do take the opportunity to head out to Ang Thong Marine National Park for a day our two when you are staying with us in Samui.



KOH WUA TALAP

Koh Wua Talap is the headquarters of the Ang Thong Marine National Park. The island is tropical and gorgeous and features basic infrastructures. Bungalow rentals are available on the island and there is a restaurant for when you get hungry. Koh Wua Talap is also equipped with a First Aid Centre, and information booth and a sea kayak rental desk.

If you explore Koh Wua Talap, you will find great hiking, spectacular viewpoints and exceptionally clean beaches. The island is on the itinerary of most of the day trips that come through Ang Thong Marine National Park, so make sure to soak up the sun and enjoy it!



KOH NANG YUAN

Located within close proximity to the popular diving island of Koh Tao, Koh Nang Yuan is an idyllic island with stunning mountain backdrops and the most perfect turquoise waters. The natural vegetation of the island is lush and most of the island is covered in jungle.

There is an amazing viewpoint just a short hike up from the beach. While the hike can be navigated in flip flops, it would be better to wear trainers as there are a few boulders to maneuver over before reaching the top! Once you do reach the top, you will be greeted by a sweeping view of three tropical islands connected by a sand bar.

KOH MAE KOH

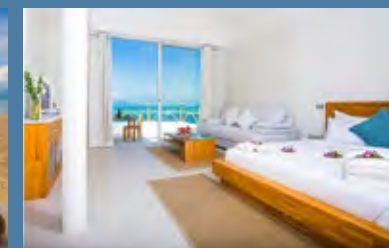
Literally a kilometre away from Koh Wua Talap is the dreamy island of Koh Mae Koh. Known as Mother Island, it is the second most visited island in the Ang Thong Marine National Park. Koh Mae Koh is famous for its two viewpoints as well as its "hidden" emerald lagoon called Talay Nai in Thai.

The emerald lagoon is effectively sea water surrounded by limestone karsts. Talay Nai is connected to the sea by underground tunnels. Exploring this area of the island makes for some stunning panoramic snapshots. All water-based activities can be enjoyed on the island, and kayaks are available for rent.



Island hopping around Koh Samui?

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ISLAND HOPPING FROM PHUKET

Referred to as the “Pearl of the Andaman,” Phuket is the largest island in the Andaman Sea. Phuket is lucky to be surrounded by a large variety of islands of its coast, and each one has something different to offer the intrepid traveller.



JAMES BOND ISLAND & PHANG NGA BAY

Made famous in the 1974 movie “The Man with the Golden Gun,” James Bond Island is a must-visit for tourists spending a holiday in our Phuket resorts. James Bond Island itself is a small limestone karst that juts out from the bay against a dramatic seascape. It is a very photogenic location and a popular spot for selfies.

Located in the pristine Phang Nga Bay, James Bond Island is just one of the many attractions this area has to offer. The beauty of the landscape is breathtaking and the natural ecosystem of Phang Nga Bay is quite lush. The waters that surround Phang Nga Bay are home to a wide variety of interesting marine life and a rather large Mangrove tree forest.

Once you have explored James Bond Island, the best way to see the rest of Phang Nga Bay is by a sea canoe, which allows for an efficient way to explore and discover the caves in the area. Phang Nga Bay is within close proximity to Phuket and well worth a day trip.



SIMILAN & SURIN ISLANDS

The Similan & Surin Island groups are located north of Phuket and quite remote. World renowned for the gorgeous underwater life, both island groups are a favourite of scuba divers and snorkellers.

The water that surrounds the Similan & Surin Islands is warm and clear, and the scenery is absolutely amazing. If you are looking for a rustic castaway adventure, these island groups definitely need to be at the top of your bucket list.

It is important to note that both the Similan & Surin Islands are only open from mid-October to mid-May due to changing weather patterns. The months of operation can vary a little, so best to check before you book your trip.



CORAL ISLAND

Coral Island is located a mere three kilometres off the coast of Phuket and is an outstanding day trip option. The island gets its name due to the fact that it is surrounded by multi-coloured coral reefs.

Coral Island consists of two main beaches, Long Beach and Banana Beach. Both offer long stretches of powdery sand and crystal clear waters. There are so many fish in the waters that surround Coral Island, so snorkelling is a must!

In addition to the water-based activities offered on-site, there are also a few dining spots and beach chairs to laze about in. Coral Island truly is a little slice of paradise, and a day frolicking in the sea here will not disappoint.



RACHA YAI ISLAND

Racha Yai Island is less touristy than some of the other islands off of the coast of Phuket. The island is quiet and tranquil and hugged by coconut and palm trees. It makes for a nice day trip as it is a relaxing getaway and really gives the chance to disconnect and unwind.

The water around Racha Yai Island is quite clear and turquoise in colour. The beaches on this island are really nice and great for swimming. While there are a few vendors offering drinks and snacks, it is best to take a few boxed lunches or snacks with you when you go.



PHI PHI ISLAND

Phi Phi boasts some of the most beautiful natural scenery in the world. Turquoise waters are backed by towering limestone karsts while the underwater world is home to a magnificent variety of marine life. Quite popular since being featured in the 2000 Hollywood film, “The Beach,” the islands make for a fun day trip or overnight stay from Phuket.

There is lots to do while visiting Phi Phi, and a hike up to the island’s viewpoint is highly recommended. Once you reach the top, you will be awarded with breathtaking panoramic views over the islands and the sea below.



Exploring the islands off of the coast of Phuket?

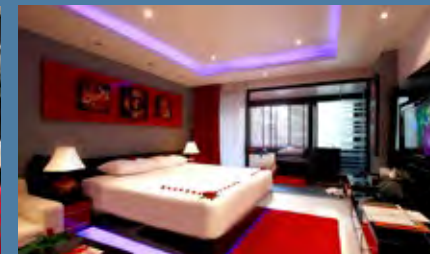
Book your accommodation in any one of our Absolute Destinations resorts to ensure the ultimate in relaxation once you’ve returned from a day of island hopping.



ABSOLUTE TWIN SANDS RESORT & SPA

Panoramic ocean views in a spectacular peninsula setting

To book simply email enquiries@absolute-destinations.com or call one of our local rate numbers for your convenience



ABSOLUTE BANGLA SUITES

Located in the heart of the action of Patong’s most vibrant street Soi Bangla

To book simply email enquiries@absolute-destinations.com or call one of our local rate numbers for your convenience

FAVOURITE TRAVEL APPS IN 2018

TREK AROUND THE WORLD WITH SOME OF THE BEST APPS AVAILABLE FOR BOTH IOS AND ANDROID. WHO NEEDS A TRAVEL AGENT WHEN YOU HAVE A SMARTPHONE? IT'S 2018, WHICH MEANS THAT PRE-PLANNING FOR A TRIP NO LONGER HAS TO BE A HEADACHE. THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENTS HAVE GIVEN US ALL THE NECESSARY TOOLS WE NEED. WE'VE ROUNDED UP SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE TRAVEL APPS IN 2018 TO HELP MAKE PLANNING THAT SPECIAL GETAWAY A BREEZE!



DAY-TO-DAY

WHATSAPP

WhatsApp has over one billion users worldwide. It is a fantastic communication app that is a great alternative to the traditional SMS. Install the app before you leave for your trip so that you will be ready to add numbers of friends you meet along the way, making it quicker to chat. WhatsApp is a great way to keep in touch with people at home, too. Just remember, you will need a data connection or Wi-Fi to be able to send messages.



GETTING AROUND

CITYMAPPER

With an ever-growing list of countries under its belt, Citymapper is one of the best apps to both find and utilize public transportation. The app connects users with ride-sharing services, offers the fastest way to get to your destination and allows you to check subway and train lines offline for a variety of cities. Subscribe to specific train or bus lines, and let the app alert you when you need to get off. Citymapper is extremely convenient when it comes to using public transport for the first time in a new country.



LANGUAGE

GOOGLE TRANSLATE

Google Translate is a remarkable app that provides translations for up to 103 languages. Conversation-based, the app is a godsend when travelling in a country where you don't speak the language. Google Translate also allows users to listen to translations out loud and translation. Star favourite words or phrases for offline access as well.



PREPARATION

PACKPOINT

Packpoint is a handy little app that makes a packing list for you before your trip. It checks the weather forecast for the dates and location of your trip, which is convenient for packing appropriate clothing. The app also asks you to select activities you'd like to participate in during your trip. For example, would you like to dine on a fancy dinner, swim in a local pool or have a business meeting? Packpoint will then offer up a list of what you should pack based on these activities. General items you would need on any trip are also included. Remove items you don't think are necessary and also share your packing list with family or friends who are travelling with you, just in case they need a little help.



CURRENCY

XE CURRENCY

XE Currency app is a must for anyone travelling abroad. It is a free app that tracks live currency markets across the world. XE Currency then provides users with accurate, up-to-the minute conversion tables. This truly is a robust app that is consistently being updated in order to provide users the most up-to-date information. An advantage of XE Currency is that users can store the most recent rates and access them even when their device is offline.



DISCOVER THE CITY

TIMEOUT

Tired of TripAdvisor and Yelp? Download TimeOut instead. TimeOut is loaded with resources for finding the best coffee, most authentic local meal, fine dining or fun bar in almost any city in the world. Take the time to browse their Top 10 lists as you might just find yourself in one of the most impressive venues that the city has to offer.



RESTAURANT

UBEREATS

Available worldwide, UberEATS delivers local restaurants and delicacies straight to your door, regardless if you are in a hotel, Airbnb, or anything else. UberEATS features detailed reviews as well as a variety of menus and descriptions for some of the best eats in town.



PHOTOGRAPHY

SNAPSEED

Snapseed is a complete, professional photo editor that allows users to enhance their photos and apply digital filters. The features are easy-to-use and offer an unbelievable amount of control over photo attributes. Snapseed will turn those holiday snapshots into professional photographs!



CLIMAX

POOLSIDE BAR & GRILL

A CUT HIGH ABOVE THE REST

SET ON THE ROOFTOP OF OUR VIBRANT ABSOLUTE BANGLA SUITES, CLIMAX POOLSIDE BAR & GRILL TRULY IS ONE OF PATONG'S HIDDEN GEMS, ONCE DISCOVERED YOU WILL CERTAINLY FIND YOURSELF COMPELLED TO RETURN. AN OPEN-AIR RESTAURANT WITH MAGICAL SUNSET VIEWS, CONTEMPORARY DECOR AND A REFRESHING ROOFTOP POOL, CLIMAX SERVES AWARD-WINNING DISHES AND FRESH, MODERN CUISINE.



Tucked away from the bright lights and energy of the world-famous Bangla Road, Climax is a culinary force to be reckoned with. The restaurant team has a love for food, cooking and eating and it certainly shows by the delightful dishes being served. Climax prides itself on sourcing only the very best ingredients. The restaurant goes local as much as possible and takes advantage of Phuket's abundant crisp vegetables, tropical fruits and fresh catch of the day.

Climax's well curated menu offers something for everyone, from healthy breakfasts to tasty salads, gourmet burgers, classic Thai favourites, Italian dishes, a creative kids menu and rich, decadent desserts that will satisfy any sweet craving.

And for those on a healthy journey, there are flavourful, light breakfasts to choose from as well as healthy smoothies and wheatgrass shots. We have some of the best salads in Patong, and a zesty option is the Quinoa Salad. This salad is Chef Ricardo's speciality and is full

of green olives, red onion, green pepper and feta cheese. The Quinoa Salad is light yet filling and one of our favourite meals.

Craving local cuisine? The classic Thai favourites pack a powerful punch and are a perfect marriage of the sweetness and spiciness that Thai cuisine is so famous for. Try the Thai Style Sea Bass which is a mouthwatering fresh fish accompanied by a light yellow curry sauce.

The Italian Kitchen at Climax Restaurant features a variety of hearty pasta and risotto dishes, however, if you are looking to really sink your teeth into a delicious meal, the Porchetta is highly recommended. Succulent roast pork with crispy crackling served with roast potatoes and an apple puree, the Porchetta is a masterpiece unto itself.

Gourmet burgers are a big deal at Climax Restaurant, and we think we have some of the best on the island. Looking to fuel up before you hit the beach? Drop into Climax Restaurant for

a juicy Double Cheeseburger stacked high with two prime beef patties and topped with bacon, cheese, lettuce, onion, tomato and the Chef's special BBQ sauce. Throw in a side of sweet potato fries for a well rounded meal that is sure to power you through your day.

Climax Restaurant is a cut above the rest. An outstanding restaurant located in the heart of Patong, the charming establishment is a welcome respite from the energy of Bangla Road. Great for breakfast, lunch or dinner, the restaurant is also a nice spot to enjoy a coffee or a cocktail as the sun sets. Make sure you visit Climax Restaurant for a leisurely morning by the pool or a few adult beverages before you head out and paint the town red!

To book your rooftop, poolside dining experience simply contact the Climax team on

Tel: +66 (0) 81 979 6262, by email on reservations@climaxrestaurant.com or why not connect on **Instagram @climaxphuket** or on **Facebook @climaxrestaurant**

ABSOLUTE ECO-FRIENDLIER: ABSOLUTE RESORTS & HOTELS BANS PLASTIC STRAWS



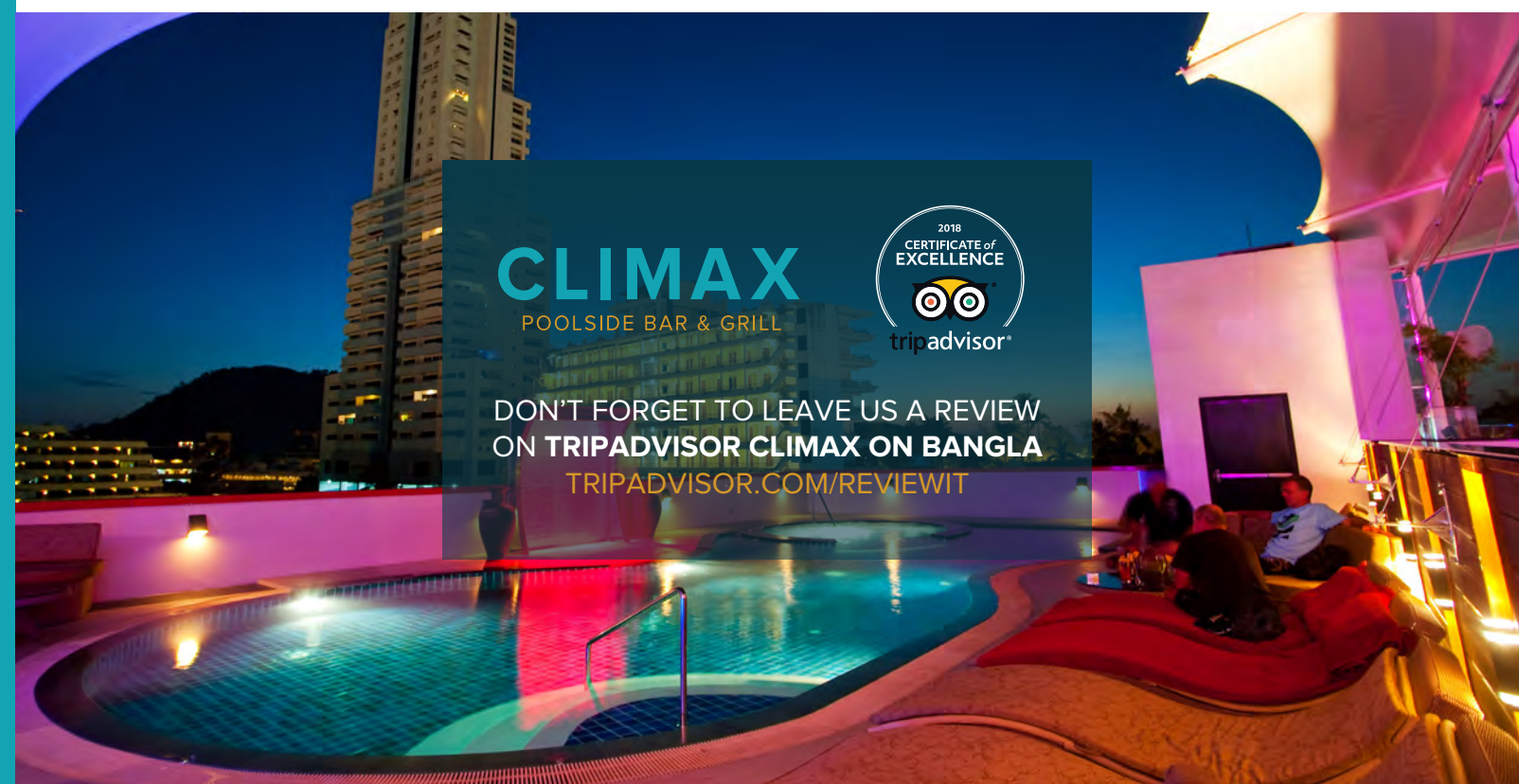
As part of our ongoing initiative to support our local communities and the wider environment, we are delighted to announce that Absolute Resorts &

Hotels will be rolling out a ban on plastics, starting with the plastic straws in all our Resorts. In keeping with the vision of Absolute Eco-Friendlier, our Resorts will be using a biodegradable alternative to plastic straws.

Now, instead of single-use plastic straws, guests will be able to enjoy their drinks with eco-friendlier paper straws.

Plastic straws clog the ocean, hurting fish and other marine life. Horror stories of various sea animals injured or killed by the plastics that humans carelessly toss aside compelled our team to take action. Each and every one of our Absolute Resorts & Hotels staff cares about the environment and is happy to do their part to protect it.

We hope that you will support our decision to use a biodegradable alternative to plastic straws and we urge you to support our mission as part of a global campaign for the betterment of this beautiful planet.



HOW TO EAT HEALTHY WHILE ON HOLIDAY

WITHOUT A DOUBT, ONE OF THE BEST PARTS OF GOING ON HOLIDAY IS HAVING A CHANCE TO INDULGE IN THE MOST DELICIOUS MEALS THAT YOUR DESTINATION HAS TO OFFER. HOWEVER, A SOLID WEEK OR TWO OF GLUTTONY CAN LEAVE EVEN THE BEST-INTENTIONED TRAVELLER FEELING BLOATED AND SLUGGISH. IT IS POSSIBLE TO KEEP EATING HABITS IN CHECK DURING HOLIDAY, AND WE'VE LAID OUT A FEW GUIDELINES FOR YOU BEFORE YOU GO.

Remember that your holiday starts at the airport, so start your trip off by packing a healthy snack for the airplane ride, because as we all know, airplane food generally does not taste good and it isn't good for us, either. If you are in a rush to make your flight and don't have time to pre-plan, once you get to the airport perhaps by a few healthy snacks such as almonds, a piece of fruit or yoghurt. Protein bars and sandwiches with lean meats such as salmon or turkey are also good ideas. If you opt to eat at an airport restaurant before departure, do your best to eat something fresh such as a salad or a grilled chicken breast. Also, don't forget to drink your water. It is essential to stay hydrated during your flight, so do ensure that you are drinking plenty of water. Water is also great for combating grogginess and jet lag, too, which means you will get the most out of your trip as soon as you land.



During your holiday, skip the sugary and salty hotel snacks. Instead, take advantage of your local surroundings and head to a fresh market or a local vendor to check out what the locals truly eat. Buy some fresh, in-season fruit or other delicacies native to the region as they will not only fill you up, but they will also help curb your appetite and offer you healthier snacking options.

While being on holiday can often be relaxed and lazy, it is important to remember to not skip breakfast! After all, it is the most important meal of the day. Make sure to begin every day with a healthy breakfast. Fill up on fruit, whole wheat toast, egg white omelette and do your best to avoid pastries and fried foods, such as bacon, no matter how tempting they are. Eating a good breakfast is essential to fueling your body for the rest of the day. Plus, it will allow you to feel full of energy when you are taking in the sights of your selected destination.

Do a bit of research before you leave on holiday and seek out the best or most popular dishes from your holiday destination. Allow yourself the



pleasure of sampling the local cuisine and delicacies, but if you plan to have an exuberant meal, order it at lunch. This gives you plenty of time to burn the calories throughout the day. In the evenings, switch back to a light meal of fresh veggies, fruits and lean proteins so that you feel less heavy and bloated. An added bonus is that lighter meals help you sleep better, and we all want to feel well rested while on holiday!

Travelling is an experience and none of us want to miss out, but we must be sensible when it comes to our eating patterns while on holiday. If you plan to eat dessert, make sure to monitor your portion size. Don't feel guilty eating dessert, instead, savour every delicious bite. However, make sure to eat slowly. If you are attempting to count calories while on holiday, remember that the hid-den calories are in alcohol. If you are sipping cocktails, stay away from concoctions that contain fruit juice and stick to simple cocktails with soda water or a glass of wine instead. Alternatively, if you are staying at Absolute Resorts & Hotels you can always ask the resort staff to remove the mini bar naughties and replace them with healthier



alternatives such as bottled water or fresh coconuts.

Even better, if you are really looking for a change and want to take a healthier holiday, why not consider 180° Wellness Thailand? Located in the paradise island of Phuket, 180° Wellness Thailand offers nurturing, fun, educational and effective wellness programs. Enjoy the benefits of a range of health, wellbeing and detox programs as well as the delicious nutritional cuisine carefully prepared by the Chefs at the award-winning Blue Mango restaurant. Visit the 180° Wellness Thailand website www.180wellness.asia to see if one of the many programs is right for you.

You simply do not want to end a holiday or short vacation feeling worse than when you started, so be mindful of what you eat and do your best to be healthy. While you should indulge and splurge during your holiday, also make sure that you are filling up on healthy grains, fresh local fruit and vegetables. Schedule meal times, stick to the one plate rule and drink plenty of water to stay hydrated. Enjoy your holiday, but be mindful of your health as well!



SPRING READS THAT WILL MAKE WINTER A DISTANT MEMORY

SHED THE DULLNESS OF WINTER AND WELCOME THE ARRIVAL OF SPRING WITH THESE SELECTED NOVELS THAT EMBRACE ALL THE NEWNESS A CHANGE OF SEASON HAS TO OFFER. SPRING'S NEW READING RELEASES ARE RIVETING, MEMORABLE, ROUSING AND AS FRESH AS THE SEASON ITSELF.



**THE ITALIAN TEACHER
BY TOM RACHMAN**

Conceived while his father, Bear, cavorted around Rome in the 1950s, Pinch learns quickly that Bear's genius trumps all. After Bear abandons his family, Pinch strives to make himself worthy of his father's attention – first trying

to be a painter himself; then resolving to write his father's biography; eventually settling, disillusioned, into a job as an Italian teacher in London. But when Bear dies, Pinch hatches a scheme to secure his father's legacy – and make his own mark on the world.



**WALLS IN LOVE: THE UNTOLD
LIFE OF THE DUCHESS OF
WINDSOR, THE WOMAN WHO
CHANGED THE MONARCHY
BY ANDREW MORTON**

Wallis Simpson comes to life in Andrew Morton's historical compilation of letters, diary, entries, and other records never before

revealed to the world. Morton's painting of Simpson is more than welcome; no longer is she just the American who was the reason Edward VIII abdicated his throne. She's a woman with a complex background and a history that is often portrayed in books and the media as one-sided and harsh. There is no doubt fans of "The Crown" and the British aristocracy in general will tear through "Walls in Love" with a feverish fascination.



**HURRICANE SEASON
BY LAUREN K. DENTON**

Denton brings readers down to southern Alabama, where she introduces them to Ty and Betsy Franklin. The Franklins live on a farm, Ty taking care of their dairy cows and Betsy overseeing the day-to-day operations of

everything else. Their lives do not involve children - Betsy has long forgotten her dream of becoming a mother - until the day her sister, Jenna, drops off her two daughters under the premise they'll be there for two weeks. All this occurs in the summer, a time known for hurricanes and the havoc they can wreck. It's a story of family, strength, and weathering the storms life sends your way.



**THE WIFE BETWEEN US
BY SARAH PEKKANEN AND
GREER HENDRICKS**

When you read this book, you will make many assumptions. You will assume you are reading about a jealous ex-wife. You will assume she is obsessed with her replacement – a beautiful, younger

woman who is about to marry the man they both love. You will assume you know the anatomy of this tangled love triangle. Assume nothing.

Twisted and deliciously chilling, Greer Hendricks and Sarah Pekkanen's *The Wife Between Us* exposes the secret complexities of an enviable marriage - and the dangerous truths we ignore in the name of love. Read between the lies.



**MY OXFORD YEAR
BY JULIA WHELAN**

Ella Durran is living her dream: She's studying abroad at Oxford while balancing her dream job of helping a political candidate make a presidential run. But her world becomes even more flipped when she meets Jamie Davenport. He's

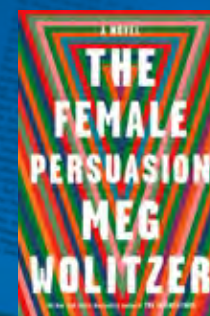
the quintessential Brit in a romance tale, with a beautiful face, quick wit and a love of literature (which helped land him the teaching position in Ella's class). The chemistry between the two is undeniable, but Jamie has a life-changing secret... A secret which you'll have to read to find out.



**EDUCATED: A MEMOIR
BY TARA WESTOVER**

Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, she prepared for the end of the world by stockpiling home-canned peaches and sleeping with her "head-for-the-hills" bag.

Educated is an account of the struggle for self-invention. It is a tale of fierce family loyalty, and of the grief that comes from severing one's closest ties. With the acute insight that distinguishes all great writers, Westover has crafted a universal coming-of-age story that gets to the heart of what an education is and what it offers: the perspective to see one's life through new eyes, and the will to change it.



**THE FEMALE PERSUASION
BY MEG WOLITZER**

Wolitzer's newest work details the relationship between Greer Kadetsky, a college freshman at the beginning of the novel, and Faith Frank, a famous feminist whose presence and ideas influence Greer's life in significant ways. Their relationship, however, is not the only one the author brings to life. Greer's boyfriend, Cory, and her best friend, Zee, stand on their own as memorable individuals who have to find out who they are in the grand scheme of life, as it applies to both Greer and the entire idea of feminism.



**LOVE RULES: HOW TO FIND
A REAL RELATIONSHIP IN A
DIGITAL WORLD
BY JOANNA COLES**

The media exec and former editor-in-chief of *Cosmopolitan* and *Marie Claire* is using her years of experience in both the digital and love advice worlds to bring self-help

to those frustrated with da-ting in the era of Tinder, Bumble, Hinge, and more—in Coles's words, the "gamut of dating apps." She brings the same sense of honesty and intellect to her books as she did to *Hearst Magazines*; it's like reading an advice novel written by your best friend, albeit a more informed and well-researched friend.



**THE FRIEND: A NOVEL
BY SIGRID NUNEZ**

They say there's not relationship like the one between a dog and its owner, and Nunez proves that theory a thousands times over in her newest release, "The Friend." Grief is an emotion shared by both the novel's main characters:

a woman who recently lost her friend and mentor, and a Great Dane who lost its owner. Nunez's writing is haunting and poignant while it draws the reader into the heartache and devastation brought by death. An easy read it is not, but it is, in one word, unforgettable.



**DIGGING IN: A NOVEL
BY LORETTA NYHAN**

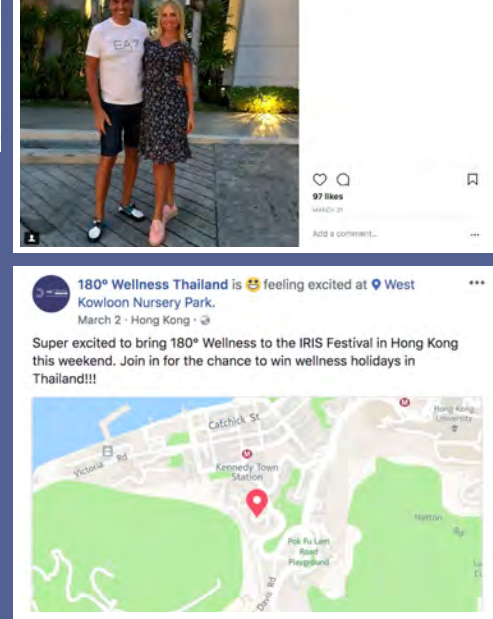
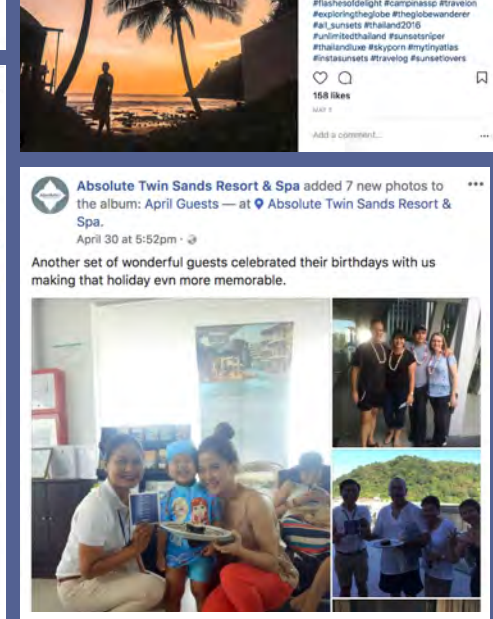
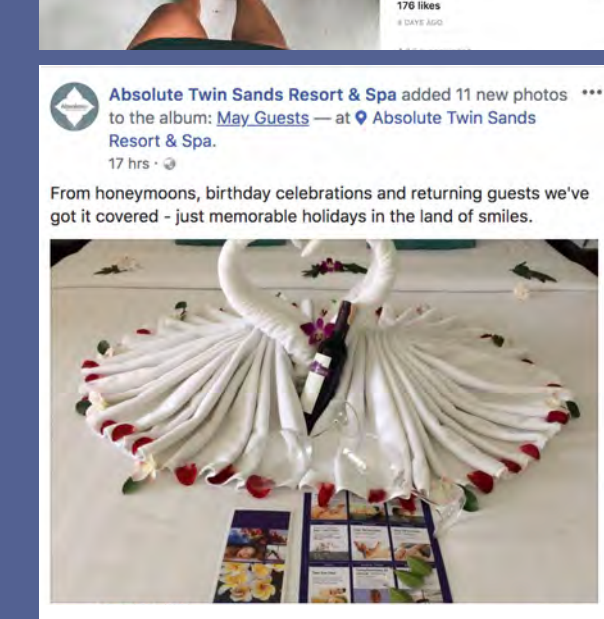
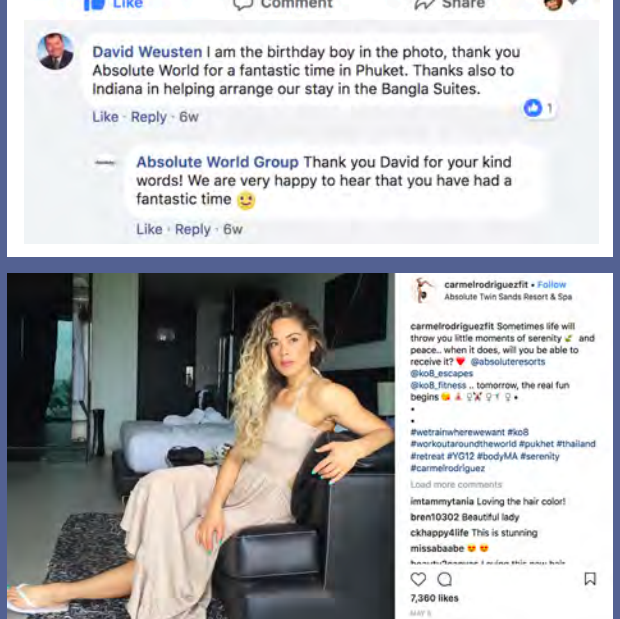
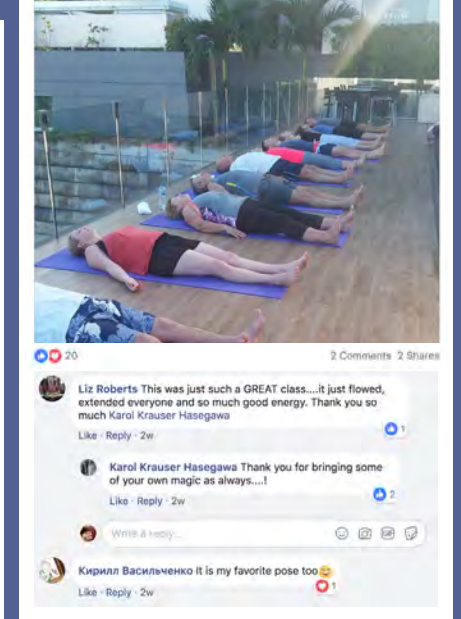
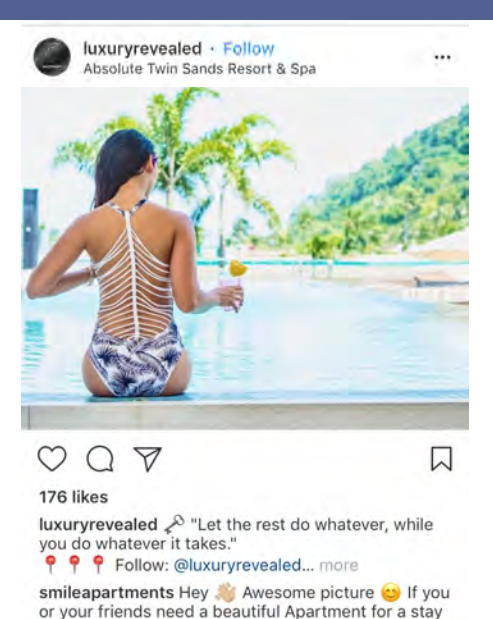
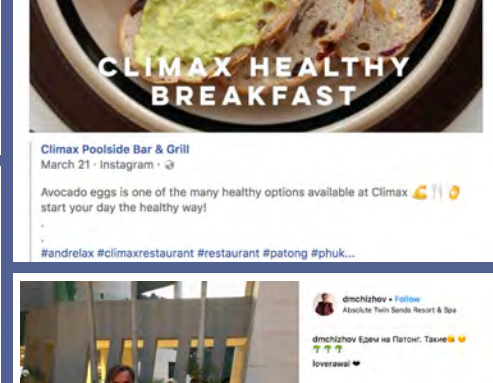
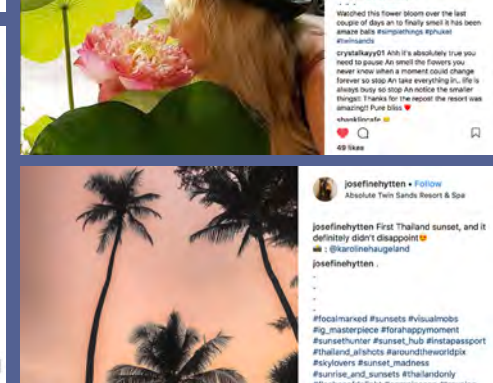
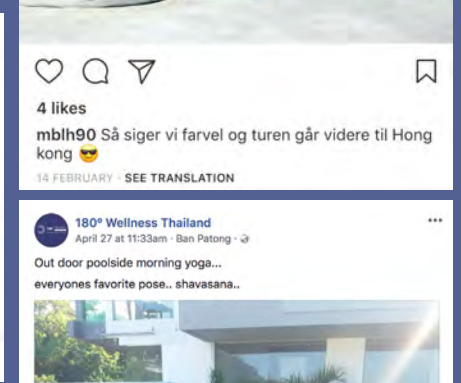
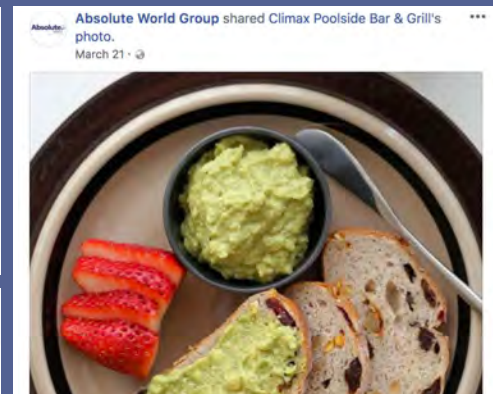
Paige lost her soulmate two years ago, and nothing has been the same since. Weighed down by grief and the frustrations of neighbors complaining about the state of her yard, she begins to dig. Building a vegetable garden becomes her own

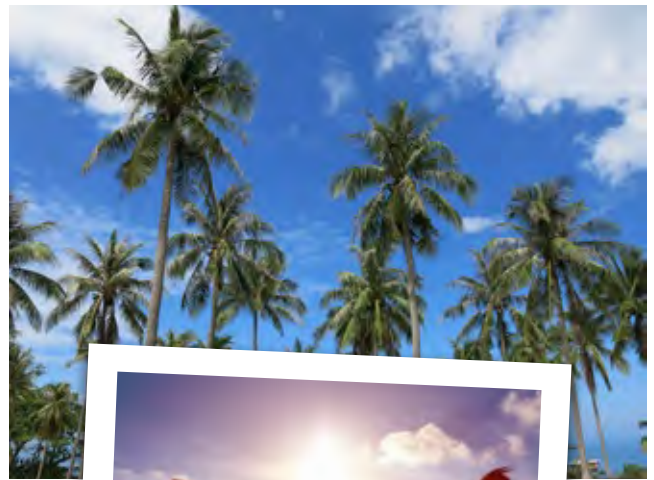
kind of coping method. She begins to transform her yard with the help of new friends, and, in turn, she begins to dig herself out of the hole she fell into after the tragic death of her husband. It's a cliched story plot, but told in an entirely uncliched and fresh manner.

WE WANT YOUR HOLIDAYS TO INSPIRE OTHERS!

A BIG THANK YOU FOR SHARING WITH US SOME OF YOUR AMAZING ABSOLUTE HOLIDAY ADVENTURES ACROSS OUR **INSTAGRAM** AND **FACEBOOK** PAGES. **#AbsoluteResorts**

WE ❤️ HOLIDAYS





YOUR LATEST EDITION

INSPIRED

HOLIDAY INSPIRATION FOR ABSOLUTE MEMBERS & OWNERS

WE HOPE YOU HAVE ENJOYED YOUR NEW MEMBER MAGAZINE AND WELCOME ANY FEEDBACK.
LET US KNOW WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE BY SENDING YOUR THOUGHTS TO: INSPIRED@ABSOLUTEWORLD.NET