

One Create

Wellness & Lifestyle

Issue #7



A Life Inspired.

Celebrating
International
Woman's
Day 2025

HOLLYWOODSKI

LOU MATHEWS
TALKS ABOUT HIS LATEST BOOK
AND LIFE IN L.A.

SAMRAN TRIP
TOUR THAILAND ON A HARLEY

CHARLOTTE
WHALLEY
LEADERSHIP COACHING

DONNAH CIEMPKA
BUSINESS &
EDUCATION

KHUN THANAPORN
RANGKAAPANEE
ON BUSINESS

KRU BOWIE
LEARNING
THAI
LANGUAGE
& CULTURE

MARTIN
BLUNOS
2 STAR
MICHELIN
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REGULAR
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RAINE
GRADY
WHAT'S IT
LIKE BEING
A TRAVEL
SHOW
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&
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SCOTT
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LIVING OUT
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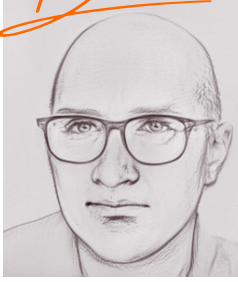
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Editor-in-Chief.

Buzz Langton



Dear Readers,

Welcome to Issue #7 of One Create Magazine - our special International Women's Day 2025 edition!

We're honored to feature Claire Baines on our cover, whose story exemplifies the innovative spirit we highlight throughout these pages as we celebrate women's achievements across diverse fields.

Before sharing our exciting content, I must acknowledge the recent 7.7 magnitude earthquake in Myanmar. Here in Bangkok, we experienced 80 seconds of tremors that brought our city to a standstill. While we faced mostly inconvenience, Myanmar has suffered over 2,600 deaths and 13,000 destroyed homes. In times of celebration, we must extend compassion to those facing tragedy. Please consider supporting relief efforts through [The Intrepid Foundation](#).

In this edition, Lou Mathews discusses "Hollywoodski" and shares tales of L.A. life. Travel enthusiasts will enjoy Raine Grady's insights on being a travel show presenter, while Scott Eddy offers wisdom on maintaining wellness while constantly traveling.

Our Thailand features include the Samran Trip on Harley-Davidson motorcycles, Kru Bowie's insights into Thai culture, and business perspectives from Khun Thanaporn Rangkaapanee. Charlotte Whalley presents leadership coaching strategies, Donnah Ciempka explores business-education connections, and Martin Blunos shares culinary inspiration in his regular column.

As we commemorate International Women's Day 2025,
We invite you to join our 'A Life Inspired' journey.

Warm regards,

Buzz Langton

Editor-in-Chief

80 Seconds That Shook Bangkok

When Myanmar's 7.7 Quake Brought the City to a Standstill



The afternoon of Friday, March 28th began like any other day in Bangkok. The usual chaos of traffic, the humid build-up of pre-summer heat, the constant cacophony of a city continuously in motion. None of us knew that in a matter of moments, we would become unwitting participants in one of Southeast Asia's most significant seismic events in recent living memory.

I was among the estimated 17-18 million people in Bangkok who felt the earth shift beneath us when the 7.7 magnitude earthquake struck Myanmar's Sagaing Region, nearly 1,000 kilometers away. What makes this experience particularly surreal is that Bangkok rarely feels earthquakes.

Our city, built on soft alluvial soil often compared to jelly, is typically insulated from such geological disruptions, yet paradoxically, this same geological makeup amplified the distant tremors to a frightening effect.

It started subtly, a gentle swaying that could have been mistaken for dizziness, I thought vertigo or a funny turn was occurring as did many. Then came the unmistakable realisation - the building was moving. Around me, confused glances turned to wide-eyed stares as the swaying intensified. For approximately 80 seconds, though it felt like an eternity - Bangkok's skyline undulated in a way that defied our understanding of how concrete and steel should behave, skyscraper roof top and infinity pools turned into undulating mini tsunamis as if Poseidon had cast his hand over the city for doing some unknown wrong to him.

What made this earthquake particularly unnerving wasn't just the unexpected movement, but the duration. Most quakes last seconds; this one continued for well over a minute, giving us all ample time to process what was happening while being completely powerless to stop it, perhaps allowing our worst fears to grow.

The aftermath was a Bangkok I'd never seen before. As news spread of the completely destroyed skyscraper on Kamphaeng Phet Road—the State Audit Office building under construction now reduced to a three-story pile of twisted steel and concrete rubble—the cityscape transformed. The transportation network that millions rely on daily ground to a halt as officials shut down the MRT and BTS systems for safety inspections.

What followed was something between exodus and pilgrimage - millions of Bangkokians pouring into streets already notorious for congestion, all attempting the same impossible task of getting home. My own journey became a rather long walk under the punishing afternoon sun, the heat reflecting off concrete and asphalt as temperatures soared. Bangkok's infamous pre-summer heat showed no mercy as I navigated through a city rendered almost medieval in its sudden dependence on foot traffic, sweat-soaked and increasingly dehydrated with each passing kilometer. The usually competing sounds of tuk-tuks, motorcycles, and cars were now accompanied by a new chaos—millions of pedestrians forced onto Bangkok's notoriously inadequate sidewalks.

Anyone familiar with the city knows these narrow pathways, often blocked by food vendors, motorcycle parking, and utility poles, are barely sufficient for normal foot traffic. Now, as the entire working population attempted to navigate home on foot, people spilled onto the roads, creating a dangerous dance between vehicles and pedestrians. The city's infrastructure, never designed for mass pedestrian evacuation, revealed its glaring inadequacies as suits and street food vendors alike jostled for inches of concrete in the blistering afternoon heat.

As I navigated Bangkok's streets alongside millions of others that evening, a sobering reality gradually settled over me. My experience, inconvenient and unsettling as it was represented the most fortunate end of a spectrum of suffering that stretched northwest to Myanmar. While I faced a long walk home, others faced unimaginable loss, I hear the phrase 'heartbreaking' often, and it is!

The numbers are staggering: over 2,610 deaths in Myanmar, with Mandalay alone suffering 1,790 fatalities. Here in Bangkok, at least 18 people lost their lives, with another 33 injured and 78 still missing as of the latest reports. The completely destroyed skyscraper became a tragic focal point, claiming at least 10 lives with many construction workers still trapped beneath the massive three-story heap of concrete and mangled steel that was once an emerging addition to Bangkok's skyline.

There's a strange form of survivor's guilt that comes with experiencing a natural disaster primarily through inconvenience when others experienced it through tragedy.

Understanding why Bangkok felt an earthquake centred so far away requires acknowledging our city's unique geological reality. Built on what geologists call the "Bangkok Basin," our metropolis rests on approximately 200 meters of soft clay and sand deposits, essentially a giant bowl of sediment that amplifies seismic waves rather than dampening them.

When the Sagaing Fault ruptured with a slip of nearly 6.5 meters, it sent seismic energy along a rupture zone 350-500 kilometers long. These waves traveled through harder rock with relatively little loss of energy until they reached Bangkok's basin, where they reverberated like ripples in a bowl of water, magnified by our city's geological makeup.

This same phenomenon explains why buildings swayed for far longer than the actual earthquake lasted—our city's substrate was quite literally rippling beneath us.

In the days since the earthquake, Bangkok has developed a new vocabulary. Terms like "seismic retrofitting," "structural integrity," and "aftershock potential" now pepper conversations from street food stalls to corporate boardrooms. Engineers are conducting inspections across the city, particularly in the countless high-rises that define our skyline.

For many of us who have lived in Bangkok for years, this event has shattered an unstated assumption about our city's immunity to certain types of natural disasters. We've always prepared for floods, for political unrest, for traffic beyond imagination - but earthquakes were simply not on the list, not in our 'mental availability'.

Now, as ongoing aftershocks continue to be reported and experts warn we may feel tremors for up to two weeks, there's a collective reassessment happening. What other certainties might we need to question? What other preparations might we need to make? While Bangkok grapples with its new seismic awareness, it's impossible to overlook the catastrophic impact in Myanmar. Beyond the shocking death toll, the earthquake destroyed over 13,000 residential buildings and damaged hundreds of religious sites, including more than 670 Buddhist monasteries.

The timing couldn't be worse for a nation already suffering through civil conflict. International aid teams from India, China, Thailand, and Singapore face enormous challenges navigating damaged infrastructure and political complications to reach those in need.

As Bangkok returns to its version of normal - the BTS and MRT running again, the traffic reassuming its familiar patterns—there's an undercurrent of change in how we perceive our city's relationship with the earth beneath it. Building codes will likely be revisited, emergency protocols reassessed, and personal preparedness reconsidered, the fashion for high-rised living will no doubt make low-rise living ever more popular.

For me, and perhaps for many others, the earthquake has provided an unexpected reminder of both human vulnerability and resilience. On that extended walk home, I witnessed countless small kindnesses: strangers sharing water, shops staying open to provide restrooms, impromptu community forming around shared experience.

The ground may have trembled beneath Bangkok last Friday, but what remains unshaken is the spirit of adaptation that has always defined this remarkable city.

We have weathered political storms, floods, economic crises, and now we add earthquakes to the list of challenges that have tested-but never broken - The City of Angels.

As we extend our deepest sympathies to those who lost loved ones, homes, and livelihoods in Myanmar and here in Thailand, we also commit to learning from this experience—to building better, preparing smarter, and perhaps appreciating more deeply the ground beneath our feet, however occasionally uncertain it may prove to be.

This article reflects my personal experience during the March 28, 2025, Myanmar earthquake as felt in Bangkok. For those wishing to support relief efforts, numerous international organisations are coordinating aid for affected communities in Myanmar and Thailand.

One Create Magazine Team - Humbly suggest the following organization if you would like to help.

Learn more about The Intrepid Foundation here:

<https://theintrepidfoundation.org>

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<https://www.theintrepidfoundation.org/t/myanmar-earthquake-appeal>

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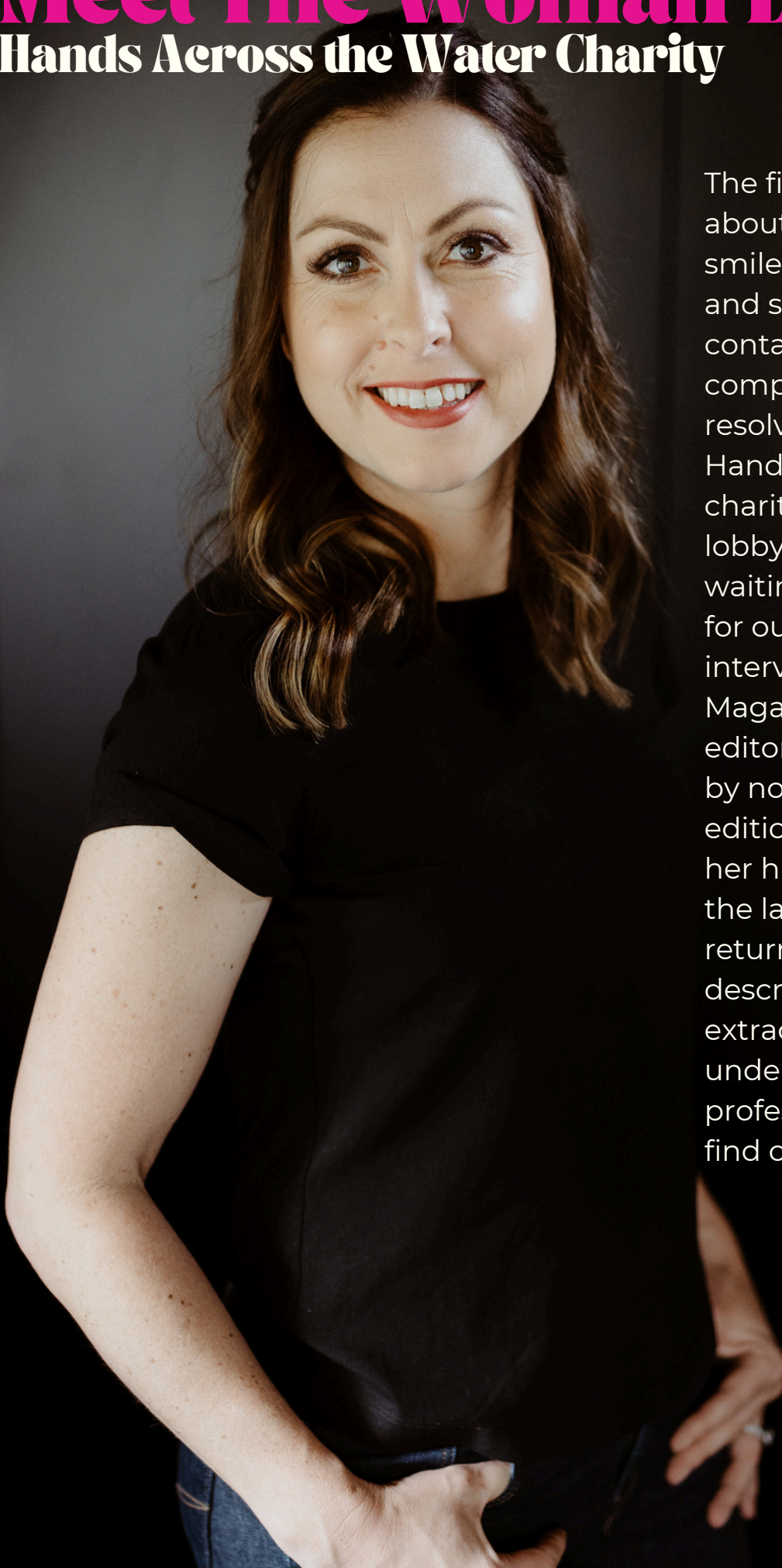
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Featured Interview.



Meet The Woman Driving Hands Across the Water Charity

A portrait of Claire Baines, CEO of Hands Across the Water charity. She is a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a black short-sleeved top and blue jeans. Her hands are tucked into her pockets. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

The first thing you notice about Claire Baines is her smile, warm, genuine, and somehow containing both gentle compassion and steely resolve. The CEO of Hands Across the Water charity is seated in the lobby of a Bangkok hotel waiting for me to arrive for our forthcoming interview for One Create Magazine's featured editorial; as you've seen by now she graces this edition's front cover and her husband Peter on the last. She's freshly returned from what she describes as "the most extraordinary undertaking" of her professional career - Lets find out what she means.

the most extraordinary undertaking of her professional career

"It feels like it was such a privilege to be part of that event," Claire says, reflecting on "Run to Remember," the **monumental twenty-six day, 1,400-kilometer ultramarathon** her husband, Peter Baines, completed to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami.

This epic journey—from the charity's northernmost home to the site where it all began in Khao Lak represented not just a global athletic achievement, but the culmination of two decades of humanitarian work that began long before Claire joined the organisation.

When Peter Baines, a former forensic police officer from New South Wales, first arrived in Thailand in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami, he was there to identify bodies.

What he encountered changed him forever. "During his third rotation, he met a group of kids who had lost their family, lost their homes, and he couldn't walk away from that," Claire explains.





This moment of clarity birthed Hands Across the Water in 2005. Years later, Claire would enter the picture with her background in journalism and event management.

Her professional expertise in creating events and experiences would prove invaluable when she eventually became the organisation's CEO, though that transition would come after she met Peter and became involved with the charity he had founded.

Claire's journey with Hands reflects her professional evolution from event management into nonprofit leadership. "My early background started in journalism when I graduated from university," she explains. After working for a magazine company, she found herself drawn to events.

"I went from wanting to be a journalist but after experiencing the behind the scenes of events, I was drawn to their energy and impact. And that inspired me to be part of that world and would launch me into the next 15 years of my career.

"We needed to get our foundation established in Thailand in the long term, we will look at relocating HQ employing a local [Thai] CEO"

These skills would later prove crucial to Hands Across the Water's fundraising model, particularly their signature charity bike rides. "For the first 15 years, all of our operations were out of Australia," Claire explains. Then COVID hit, wiping out 75% of their fundraising events overnight. The crisis forced a strategic pivot: "We needed to get our foundation established in Thailand. In the long term, we will look at relocating HQ, employing a local [Thai] CEO."



This isn't an exit strategy but a 'longevity plan,' ensuring the charity will outlive its founders. It's a philosophy that permeates everything Hands does—working with Thai staff to raise Thai children rather than imposing Western methodologies.

"It's not for us Australians to come over and say, 'This is how you should raise your children,'" Claire says firmly.

Claire's involvement with Hands deepened over time, culminating in her role as CEO. She speaks with particular pride about the charity bike rides she helped grow, connecting her previous corporate event experience at REA Group with the charity's mission.

"My connection into the real estate industry was through one of my key stakeholders at REA, Steve Carroll," she explains.

Together, they created a corporate bike ride model that has raised over \$2.5 million through seven events. It was against this background of successful fundraising initiatives that Peter's "Run to Remember" emerged.

The idea came to him in September 2022, when he approached Claire with a characteristically audacious proposal, to commemorate the tsunami's 20th anniversary with something 'epic.'

"It wasn't just about getting on a bike and covering a distance—he knew that was achievable," Claire says. "So instead, he set his sights on something far more challenging. He decided to run it, pushing himself to take on an epic test of endurance."

The scale of this challenge bears emphasising: running 1,400 kilometres over 26 days means completing an ultramarathon every day. To put that in perspective, it placed 58-year-old Peter Baines in the top 1% of ultramarathon runners globally.

Add Thailand's punishing humidity and temperatures approaching 40°C (104°F), and the feat becomes nearly unfathomable, perhaps even unfinishable, but Peter did finish it, on time - 20 years to the day of the 2004 Tsunami anniversary on December 26th 2024.

The logistics of supporting such an endeavour proved equally daunting.

Claire assembled a core support team of ten people, each with specialised roles. Her father became Peter's decision-maker for medical emergencies—"to remove the emotional toll that would take on me"—while Claire herself juggled CEO responsibilities with providing direct support to her husband, including running her own cumulative marathon throughout the event.

"I made a decision to run cumulative kilometres, working my way up to 26 Km's a day. So day one, a kilometre, day two, two kilometres, and then I finished with 26 kilometres at the end," she explains. By the final day, she had completed 351 kilometres—an extraordinary achievement on its own.

The team developed a meticulous daily routine. "We broke the day into three blocks, three 20-kilometre blocks," Claire says. "I'd be up at 4:30, Pete would wake up at five, breakfast on the road by 5:30."

Mornings, she ran alongside Peter; midday, she handled fundraising and operational matters; afternoons, she cycled alongside him through the most punishing heat.

Despite careful planning, there were inevitable crises. On December 14th, just before a major event in Bangkok, "the wheels started to fall off," Claire recalls.

Peter developed excruciating shin splints that felt "like a screwdriver being dug into his leg."

When her father called suggesting they move the lunch stop closer, Claire made the difficult call - "We're not moving lunch.

Our job is to get Pete from A to B, and the best we can do today is adjust the distance." While changing the plan in the moment might have seemed like the best option, consistency and structure were key to keeping him moving forward.

Sticking to the original lunch stop and reducing the kilometres at the back end of the day to manage his pain was the right call to keep him on track.

Peter pushed through those torturous five kilometres to reach lunch. "He came into lunch and he was pretty broken that day," Claire says.

Peter and Claire then faced a four-hour drive to Bangkok for a pre-scheduled event the next morning—something that initially seemed like terrible timing but proved unexpectedly beneficial.

"We folded all the seats down and basically just laid Pete in the back – it was like first class travel," Claire says. "For four hours, he could just listen to music, scroll on his phone, and completely switch off. No expectations, no conversations, nothing to do. And it was a blessing!"

‘the real VIPs were the kids from the homes, the kids were beaming, They could have run it hopping’

The next morning, despite his physical state, Peter appeared at Bangkok's Chatuchak Park, it was dark when we arrived, pre-dawn at around 5:00 AM for a mini-marathon event attended by 390 people, including children from the charity's homes, the Australian Ambassador to Thailand, Dr Angela Macdonald, and Bangkok's Governor, Khun Chadchart Sittipunt, to name just a couple of the attending VIPs.

But the real VIPs were the kids from the homes, "the kids were beaming," Claire says. 'They could have run it hopping', they were that full of energy. They loved being able to play even a small role in Run to Remember."





Chatuchak Park - Mini Marathon

On Christmas Day—the second to last day of the journey—the team strategically split the final 51 kilometres over two days, ensuring Claire could complete her own challenge.

They ran 25 kilometres on Christmas Day and 26 kilometres on Boxing Day, the final day of Run to Remember.

Peter's adult children flew in from Australia to join them for these last legs, making the final stretch even more meaningful.

Through it all, Peter struggled with the brutal physical demands. "There were days he would run and by the end of the afternoon, he'd just lean into me and whisper, 'I'm empty. I have nothing left,'" Claire recalls.

Everyone in the crew saw it, understood it. "It became an unspoken rule – we didn't expect him to engage, we didn't expect him to talk. We just let him be."

The culmination at Wat Yan Yao temple in Khao Lak held profound significance. "I remember turning onto the main road and seeing the top of Wat Yan Yao – such a significant moment for us and for Pete's journey," Claire recalls. "That place holds deep meaning because it is where Pete spent his rotations in the aftermath of the Tsunami, so this is where his story would come full circle.

While the official finish line was at Baan Tharn Namchai, in Pete's mind, the Run to Remember ended the moment he ran into Wat Yan Yao. "That was his true target, the moment that carried the most weight.

That was where the emotion set in. That was us crossing the finish line." For Peter, it wasn't simply about completing the distance, it was about closing a chapter, reflecting on his 20 year journey, and honouring the lives that had shaped his purpose.

It represented a journey not in kilometres, but in time and of the lives of young Thai children, every minute, every step, every heartbeat that he must have felt in order to achieve his challenge.

Beyond the extraordinary physical achievement, the "Run to Remember" served the charity's greater mission. The initiative raised vital funds and created new opportunities for the children Hands supports. Claire proudly shares the story of Am, a young woman who grew up in one of their homes after losing her parents.

"Am went to school and then on to do a Business English degree at university," Through the charity's social enterprise, Hands Experiences Thailand, Am received training as a tour guide and became an official guide for Hands Experiences - leaving her home in the North East and relocating in the South of Thailand.

For Peter, it wasn't simply about completing the distance, it was about closing a chapter, reflecting on his 20 year journey, and honouring the lives that had shaped his purpose.



"She's a remarkable woman who has been through a lot," Claire says with evident pride. "I look at the opportunity we've given her, and it reinforces just how much we can do for the kids growing up in our homes.

Seeing her journey unfold is a reminder of the impact we can have, and it inspires me to do even more."

As International Women's Day approaches [March 8, 2025], Claire Baines embodies a model of female leadership that balances strength with compassion, strategic thinking with personal sacrifice.

Her work demonstrates that the most effective leadership often happens behind the scenes, orchestrating the support that enables others to shine.

This philosophy extends to how Hands Across the Water operates—not as Western saviours, but as partners empowering Thai communities to sustain themselves. "All of our homes employ local teams and Thai people raising Thai children," Claire emphasises.

All of our homes are run by local teams—Thai people raising Thai children," Claire emphasises. "Beyond providing care, we are building a strong operations team in Thailand that will one day take the lead, ensuring Hands' future is locally driven. Our goal is to create a sustainable model that reduces reliance—and therefore risk—on Australian funding, securing long-term impact for the children and communities we support." Twenty years after the tsunami that launched this journey, Claire and Peter Baines have transformed personal tragedy into communal opportunity. Each ultramarathon kilometre represents a step toward sustainability for the hundreds of children whose lives have been forever changed by their work.



"The charity goes beyond our lifespans," Claire says simply. In both her professional achievements and her marriage, Claire Baines has found strength in endurance—a fitting theme for a woman who has helped build bridges across water, across cultures, and across generations.

As CEO of Hands Across the Water, she is not just leading an organisation; she is shaping a legacy – one that ensure the children and communities she serves are empowered to create their own future, long after her and Peter’s work is done.



If you are inspired by Claire and Peters story, and you’d like to support Hands Across The Water by joining one of their bike rides in Thailand or sponsoring from afar - every single dollar, baht, euro or pound helps.

Connect with Hands at:

Instagram: @handsacrosstthewaterth

Instagram: @handsacrosstthewater_anz

<https://handsacrosstthewater.org.au>



Victoria C. Woodhull

Victoria C. Woodhull - Her Story

THE REVOLUTIONARY WOMAN WHO DARED TO BE THE FIRST WOMAN TO RUN FOR THE U.S. PRESIDENCY IN 1872.

In celebration of International Women's Day, One Create Magazine examines the extraordinary life of Victoria Woodhull, whose 1872 presidential campaign broke gender barriers decades before American women could even cast a ballot.

Born Victoria California Claflin in 1838 in rural Ohio, Woodhull's early life was marked by hardship. With minimal formal education and a father known for con schemes, she navigated a difficult childhood that included marriage at just 15 to an alcoholic doctor. Despite these challenges, Woodhull's intelligence and ambition propelled her forward.

After divorcing her first husband and remarrying Colonel James Blood, Woodhull, alongside her sister Tennessee Claflin, made history as the first female stockbrokers on Wall Street. Backed by railroad tycoon Cornelius Vanderbilt, who admired Woodhull's skills as a medium, their firm shocked the male-dominated financial world. "Petticoats Among the Bovine and Ursine Animals," mocked one newspaper headline, though others hailed them as "the Bewitching Brokers."

The sisters channeled their financial success into founding Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly in 1870, a groundbreaking newspaper that advocated for women's suffrage, labor reform, and "free love" – which for Woodhull meant the freedom to marry, divorce, and have children without social restriction or government interference. "To woman, by nature, belongs the right of sexual determination," Woodhull declared in her famous Steinway Hall speech of 1871. She railed against the sexual double standard that allowed married men to have affairs while women remained trapped in loveless marriages with few options for divorce.

Appearing before the House Judiciary Committee in December 1870, Woodhull argued that women already possessed the right to vote under the 14th and 15th Amendments – they simply needed to exercise it. This constitutional interpretation impressed committee members and drew unprecedented public attention to the suffrage movement, placing Woodhull at the centre of the fight for women's political equality.

In 1872, the newly formed Equal Rights Party nominated Woodhull for president, with abolitionist Frederick Douglass chosen as her running mate (without his consent). The campaign sought to unite women's rights advocates with African-American civil rights activists after divisions created by the exclusion of women's suffrage from the 15th Amendment.

The campaign ended dramatically when Woodhull was arrested on obscenity charges just days before the election for publishing details of a prominent minister's affair in her newspaper. She

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The campaign ended dramatically when Woodhull was arrested on obscenity charges just days before the election for publishing details of a prominent minister's affair in her newspaper. She spent a month in New York's Ludlow Street Jail, effectively preventing her from voting in the very election in which she was a candidate.

After her divorce from Colonel Blood and following legal troubles in America, Woodhull relocated to England in 1877. There she met banker John Biddulph Martin, whom she married in 1883 despite his family's disapproval.

As Victoria Woodhull Martin, she established The Humanitarian magazine with her daughter Zula, published between 1892 and 1901. Her political views evolved during this period; she embraced Christianity and distanced herself from some of her earlier radical positions.

In rural Worcestershire, Woodhull Martin devoted herself to education reform, building a village school and advocating for kindergarten curriculum in English village education. Ever the pioneer, she was also among the first female motorists in England, reportedly the first woman to drive a car in London's Hyde Park.

Woodhull died in 1927 at her Bredon's Norton estate, but her legacy has grown in recent decades. In 2001, she was posthumously inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. Organisations including the Woodhull Institute for Ethical Leadership and the Woodhull Sexual Freedom Alliance carry forward her name and principles.

Memorials to Woodhull can be found at Tewkesbury Abbey in England and at various sites in Ohio, including a clock tower at the Robbins Hunter Museum where a wooden likeness of her appears on the hours. Her life has inspired a Broadway musical, an opera, and a forthcoming film.

As contemporary feminists rediscover Woodhull's contributions, her prophetic words still resonate:

"They cannot roll back the rising tide of reform. The world moves."





THE BLUNOS
GASTRONOMIC
GAZETTE

**SOME MOTHERS
DO 'AV 'EM'**

My mum was the reason I got into the business of cooking and hospitality. Many have said this and in my case it's totally true. Both my parents were brought up in relative austerity through tough times in their native Latvia. Settling in the Uk in the late 40's and speaking next to zero English mum worked a part time job, kept home and brought my sister and I up whilst dad found a full time job mining coal, a job back in the day, not for the faint hearted.

IRON
CHEF

“Those times were also tough but they were happy”

The mother is a special unique human being (in my best David Attenborough accent) - dad once said to me “son you may have many fathers but you only ever have one mother” I guess he was saying to me was don't take mum for granted, she is special! Working part time gave little time for her to cook for the family, she managed her time and multitasked, prepared in advance making lots of slow cooked dishes. She would pop a casserole in a low set oven go off to work and come home hours later to a house smelling sweetly of succulent braised oxtails which would then be topped with dumplings, mixed before she left the house in the morning, then back in the oven for half an hour and bingo dinner was done.

We all sat at the table to eat, no TV on the lap dining malarkey, mums rule.

Dad ate like a horse well you would after nine hours of coal mining, and my sister and I tucked in pretty heartily too, because it was so tasty.

Mum ate little mouthfuls between smiling and watching us, perhaps getting her sustenance from seeing us enjoy her food.

However we end up in our adult lives a lot goes down to our upbringing sure we get moulded along the way to maturity but the nuts n bolts of who we are, I think, is down to our formative years and that comes from our parents and mainly mums.

Remember when as a kid you would ask mum 'WHY' to pretty much everything you saw or heard and she would patiently, at first, give you an answer broken down in kiddy words so you'd understand and to appease your inquisitive mind. The more she answered your questions the more you asked, it was like a challenge a game to stump her, until she lost it and just said "because" that's why.

She was Mommy Google before google came along ha ha. It's strange how things pan out. Growing up through toddling to teens she knew everything. Then thirteen hits and boom you now know everything and more you start giving it back to her in cart loads. A spotty teenager has, in abundance, answers and reasons why they can't do what she asks.

“come home hours later to a house smelling sweetly of succulent braised oxtails”

I remember, with some embarrassment, how much of a d*** I was in my teenage years to my folks and how it must have seemed, at times, that I was disappointment but putting that aside and focusing on the positives I made it through and i put it down to them both especially so my mum.

Wings spread and nest flown it didn't take me long to come to the realisation that mum knew what she was on about and going home as a young apprentice chef not only with a bin liner of dirty washing and an empty belly craving slow cooked buttery oxtail with herbed dumplings but with a load of things to ask her advice on.

Going home was like therapy after a couple of days I'd leave with my thoughts and ideas crystallised with her and at times dad's advice a full belly and a pile of washed and pressed laundry fortified and ready to take on the (culinary) world again.



Times change and nowadays the roles of woman and men have moved on but with the shift of ideas and life plans one thing has stayed constant - mothers and how they influence the family. This I'd like to think is a variation on a theme that most of you reading have had we must all remember 'Mums' are special!



Martin Blunos hails from the beautiful South West of England. He's a renowned 2 Michelin Star restaurateur, Iron Chef and Master Chef, now based in Bangkok, Thailand

You can follow Martin Blunos on his Instagram account:

[@martin_blunos-chef](https://www.instagram.com/martin_blunos-chef)

Words Martin Blunos - Photograph Buzz Langton



LATIN HEAT: The Faces Behind Bangkok's Hottest Table



guilty

the

VERDICT





Tucked away in the stylish Anantara Siam Bangkok, 'guilty' is bringing Latin American flair to Thailand's food scene with gutsy flavours and party vibes.

One Create Magazine caught up with Restaurant Manager Bruno Fuentes and Chef de Cuisine Axel Correa to discover why this hidden gem is quickly becoming one of the city's hottest tables.



Guilty Bangkok is located at Anantara Siam Bangkok Hotel, 155 Rajadamri Road. Open Monday-Saturday for lunch (12-2:30pm) and dinner (6-11:30pm). Sunday dinner only. Reservations recommended: 02-126-8866 | <https://www.guiltythailand.com/guilty-bangkok>



One Create: So, tell us about Guilty's concept and location.

Bruno: We're located right in the heart of Bangkok on Rajadamri Road near Chitlom. We share this iconic strip with other world renown hotels. The Anantara Siam Bangkok Hotel has been here over 40 years, all be it under different owners and names.

Axel: My job is to be the chef de cuisine here, making sure all the food comes out nicely, looks beautiful, and tastes amazing – that's my first priority. But I'm also bringing my culture, my flavours, my spices to Bangkok. Bangkok is a very difficult city because there are so many different cuisines, so many good chefs around.

One Create: How did the Guilty concept begin?

Bruno: In Thailand we have Guilty Bangkok and Guilty Samui. The name actually comes from the original chef, a Portuguese named Olivier. The Minor Group bought the brand but decided to change the cuisine for the Asian market. It's this fun, casual, Latin American concept designed to bring in a younger crowd along with the fun, vibrant atmosphere.

One Create: The name 'Guilty' is intriguing – what's the story there?

Axel: We understand the phrase and we live it! Sometimes it feels guilty but good to have a nice ceviche or that super delicious pork belly. We know it's not the healthiest – that's why it's "guilty" – but it's worth it.

One Create: Latin American cuisine isn't that common in Bangkok – what sets it apart?

Bruno: Latin American, Peruvian cuisine is actually quite new in Thailand. There are a lot of Mexican places, but with Peruvian, we're only one of a few restaurants – and compared to them, we're much better! The Peruvian cuisine uses local ingredients, it's seafood, it's ceviche... it's not much carbs. You have fresh fish, which we cure with tiger's milk, "leche de tigre," which we make from scratch – just blended ingredients, lime, fish juices, onions. It's healthy in that way. Also, the spicy elements that Thais love.

One Create: What are your signature dishes?

Bruno: Certainly our ceviche – Axel has definitely improved that since he arrived, and I think we have the best in Bangkok, honestly. We do a nice table-side guacamole where we smash the avocados in front of you with pico de gallo and a little secret ingredient which really brings out the flavour. I don't think there's any better guacamole in Thailand, to be honest. Even better than the other Mexican restaurants, I can say that!

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Axel: I think one of our best sellers is the 'gambas'. It's these beautiful big Thai prawns that we marinate with dried chilies and lots of garlic. It's very tasty and comes with a nice hibachi grill, so we do a little smoke show. The smoke isn't just charcoal – you can really smell it. They're premium dishes but they sell well because they're very tasty. You can choose three, four or six prawns depending on your group size.



One Create: How would you describe your approach to the menu?

Axel: Our approach is to take a little of all the South American cuisines. When I say South America, Mexico is technically not part of it, but here it's kind of like "Latin cuisine." We have a little bit of Mexico, a little bit of Peru, some specials featuring arepas from Colombia or Venezuela, some Argentinian steaks, some chorizo. We're trying to take the best of these cuisines and replicate them here as much as we can.

It's not going to taste exactly the same as in our countries because that would be very difficult. But I'm not looking for that when I'm creating a dish – I'm looking for something that tastes good with local ingredients. I'd rather not buy too much from outside Thailand. Our fish arrive alive here in the kitchen because that's the sustainability approach.



Axel: Almost all my career I was working in the Middle East where nothing is local – everything comes from outside. So you can taste the difference here, even in something simple like a watermelon that tastes so much better here than elsewhere. That's great!



One Create: We hear you have some impressive desserts?

Bruno: Yes! We have this signature giant Rocher – like a chocolate Rocher but we make a very large one, almost football-sized. We bring it out with lights and sparkle candles, and you get to smash it with a hammer. Inside there are some unique secret chocolates. It's really impressive.



One Create: And what's the atmosphere like?

Bruno: We also have a DJ Mondays to Saturdays, playing nice Latin house music, which is great for the vibe. We open for lunch from 12 to 2:30pm and then dinner from 6 to 11:30pm. On Sundays we close for lunch as the restaurant is used for our hotel Sunday brunch, which shares the space with three other outlets.



One Create: Any exciting plans on the horizon?

Bruno: We're planning to launch our Saturday brunch concept on April 5th. The idea is to have fun! Honestly, the food will be almost all-you-can-eat, non-stop with different dishes.



Axel: You just keep serving to your table until you can't take any more. Like Bruno mentioned, there's also a lot of entertainment value – dancers, unique shows, unique elements.



Axel: It's all about fun, entertainment, and a great dining experience.

Bruno: Yeah! We have some of the best tequila too. We have Clase Azul, and for the Saturday brunch, we're looking to collaborate with a mezcal supplier, Siete Misterios. We're also looking to extend it to make it the longest brunch in Bangkok – there's an idea to keep it going until 6pm.

One Create: Tell us about your signature cocktails.

Axel: Talking about drinks, our signature is a Pisco Sour. Pisco is an alcoholic drink made from grapes that normally comes from Peru, though Chile also claims it as their's. They have a long-running dispute about who created it!

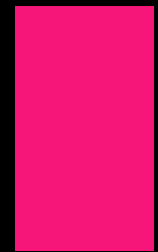
Bruno: Pisco is basically the Peruvian national spirit. We use it with lime and add a little vegan egg white for foam. It's like a whisky sour, but with Pisco instead. It's very refreshing, goes really well with spicy foods and ceviche – that lime flavour is perfect. We top it with a little bitters, and I believe we have one of the best in Bangkok.

One Create: How has the Latin American community responded?

Bruno: The Latin American embassies are close by and we've gotten to know them personally. Especially the GRULAC embassies.

The ambassadors usually come every two months for either a farewell lunch or some private event, and we prepare special menus for them. They really enjoy our food.

The other day, the Colombian embassy requested Axel to prepare some Colombian dishes which aren't on our menu, but we happily did it for them. They were really in love with it and said it reminded them of home.

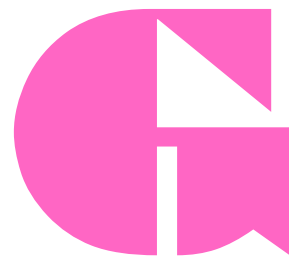


Axel: Since I arrived, and Bruno too, we've worked on building collaborations with other Latin American restaurants and chefs. The Latin community here in Bangkok is quite close-knit. The chefs always do collaborations with each other, not just in Bangkok. Now there's the LATINADA Festival happening in Singapore – this big Latin American festival with culture, entertainment, and food. They bring in chefs from all over Asia. That shows how strong the Latin American community is in Asia.

One Create: What's most important to you about the food you serve?

Axel: Sometimes it's just the ingredient that's important, the product, but I want to tell a story. I want guests to understand why they're eating this. It's not just about whether it's spicy or sour or balanced – it's about where it comes from.

Our cuisine has a lot of history behind each dish. In Mexico, the mole comes from the Aztecs that mixed a lot of seeds. So when you come to Guilty, it's not just about eating – it's about learning something about another part of the world that is very far from here.



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RAINE GRADY

THE STORYTELLER WHO DEFINED TRAVEL JOURNALISM IN ASIA AND BEYOND

It's fairly sultry this afternoon, the traffic moves slowly as the multitude of scooters and motorbikes interweave around the semi stationary cars inching their way along Sukhumvit road, one of Bangkok's main transport arteries. Just another typical weekday afternoon in central Bangkok, however the person I am about to meet isn't typical at all, I'm about to meet and interview Raine Grady at The Holiday Inn.







"You sound like you have a bedroom voice that's not ideal for serious news"

Raine settles into our conversation with the ease of someone who has conducted countless interviews herself – only this time, she's in the interviewee's chair.

Her career trajectory from Australian newsrooms to becoming one of Asia's most recognisable travel correspondents offers fascinating insights into media evolution, cultural diplomacy and the unique challenges faced by women in journalism.

She starts with an early recollection - "I was told my voice was too sexy for the news when I was younger," Grady recalls, breaking into laughter. "You sound like you have a bedroom voice that's not ideal for serious news" she was told by a senior male colleague,... "How do you reply to that?"



This assessment from early in her career might have derailed others, but Grady's response reveals the philosophy that has guided her professional journey: "My mother always told me if there's an obstacle in front of you, don't whine about it, just find a way to knock it down, you know, get around it, chip away at it.

So that was always my philosophy."

The late 1980s found Grady working at Australia's Channel 9 when an opportunity arose to visit Thailand.

"One thing led to another but I ended up taking over a local program in Thailand, the first English language show on cable TV here,"

"I went to my boss at Channel 9 and I said, look, I have an opportunity to go and do [this]," she explains. The network offered her a safety net – a position to return to if her Thai adventure didn't pan out – but serendipity had other plans. "One thing led to another but I ended up taking over a local program in Thailand, the first English language show on cable TV here,"



she explains, describing how a chance meeting with CNBC representatives changed her trajectory.

As they were looking to establish their presence in the region, they entrusted her with resources despite her relative inexperience. "They gave me a budget. This was all rather new to me," she admits with characteristic modesty, reflecting on the learning curve she faced.

"You could learn from your mistakes... People were "less knowledgeable or perhaps more forgivable"

"You could learn from your mistakes... People were "less knowledgeable or perhaps more forgivable" in the local industry at that time.

What began as an experimental foray became the foundation for one of Asia's most successful travel programmes, Travel Asia & Beyond. "We made more than 500 episodes of this show over 12 years," Grady notes. Her production company captured destinations across the continent, often before they became fixtures on the tourist map, providing viewers with authentic cultural experiences rather than glossy brochure imagery.





"People would assume, because we were doing travel... that I lived the life of a princess,"

The reality of producing travel content, however, was far removed from the glamorous perception viewers had of me "People would assume, because we were doing travel... that I lived the life of a princess," she says with a wry smile. "I'd bump into people in the street and they'd say, 'Why are you here in this street?' And I'd say, 'Well, that's my house, just down there.'"

The work demanded exhaustive effort and technical precision. "To get one good minute of television, you've got to record one good hour of [footage]," she explains. Her predominantly Thai team immersed themselves in local cultures, eschewing the superficial for deeper, more meaningful narratives – an approach that became Grady's hallmark.

The 1990s Thailand business world presented unique challenges for a female producer. When Grady first arrived, she found many professional circles effectively closed to women.

"My grandfather was a member of Rotary," she explains, "and through that connection, I learned about their special events where women were occasionally admitted.

It's about time they changed their ways," she adds with a smile, "but I had to find my own way in."

And find her way she did. With characteristic resourcefulness, Grady developed alternative strategies to access the professional networks essential to her work. She began attending dinner events and social gatherings where she could connect with the wives of influential businessmen, which eventually provided pathways to meet the decision-makers themselves.

"You had to be creative," she reflects. "There was no point aggressively confronting these barriers directly in those days— that wouldn't have worked. You had to find the side door."

Yet her gender sometimes proved advantageous, particularly in travel journalism. When asked about working in Thailand, she reflects: "You didn't need to be aggressive here.



This is a polite, gentle culture". Her gentler approach opened doors in cultures where women were underrepresented in business.

"The handful of women that I did get to meet that were starting their own businesses here," she remembers, "I sort of gravitated towards them to see how they were navigating their way through the challenges." She reflects on these connections with fondness: "Most are still friends."

Grady's experiences inform her perspectives on women in leadership today. "I'm looking forward to listening to some of that girl power," she says, referencing the upcoming Women's Leadership Summit 2025 that is about to start a floor above us. "I think the world we live in today needs more girl power - More women with a voice and presence," she emphasises. "On the stage, on the world stage that is." Throughout her career, Grady has witnessed – and adapted to – seismic shifts in media production and consumption. Rather than viewing digital platforms and artificial intelligence as threats, she approaches them pragmatically. "It's a double-edged sword. Social media gives everyone a voice, but it also produces a lot of chaos and disinformation, and Ai is moving so fast that it can seem frightening," she acknowledges, "but you can approach this as just another tool in your arsenal, or you can let it threaten you."

For Grady, the essence of her work transcends technological platforms: "Whatever platform it appears on, it's still about storytelling and people still want to have stories. People still need an escape."

Grady has witnessed remarkable transformations in Thailand since her arrival. "No Skytrain when I came here, no underground. The tallest building was the Dusit Thani, then one of the oldest hotels. So it's been an amazing [journey]," she reflects, having observed Bangkok's evolution into a global metropolis.

When the pandemic temporarily halted travel, Grady channelled her creativity into new outlets. "I am a reader, I'm a voracious reader," she says. She also began painting – an artistic pursuit she modestly describes as "dabbling" despite evident talent.



Now, as global travel resumes at breakneck speed, Grady expresses excitement about returning to long-form storytelling. "Social media – it's immediate, it's obviously high-volume work but it's a bit uninspiring for me, so getting back into long-form storytelling," she explains, contrasting it with the brevity-driven content that dominates digital platforms is the perfect mix.

Her favourite destinations are defined by meaningful experiences rather than scenic beauty. "A lot of my favourite destinations have given me deep cultural experiences, all with faith built around those experiences," she reflects.

Leaning forward, she shares an extraordinary anecdote about Nepal, where a chance encounter with an ancient monk at Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha, proved eerily prescient. "He somehow knew I was carrying a son," she says with wonder in her voice, "even though I didn't know the gender myself at that point."

It's just one of countless remarkable stories she's accumulated through years of global correspondence.

Today, Grady seeks authenticity in her personal travels. "Going to lesser-known places, lesser known islands... Those sorts of experiences are what I look for now because I love people but I don't particularly like [crowds]."

For this accomplished storyteller, the narrative continues to unfold. "It's been an amazing journey," she says with genuine warmth. "But it's not over."

Her forthcoming projects promise to return to the substantive storytelling that has defined her influential career in international media

Raine Grady's work can be found on YouTube

[@DestinationThailandTV](#) & [TravelAsia@beyond.tv](#)

Connect with Raine on

Instagram: [@rainegrady](#)

One Create

Issue #6



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The Perpetual Traveller

Meet Scott Eddy

Global Travel and Hospitality Influencer



On a typical morning in Bogotá, Colombia, Scott Eddy rises at precisely 5 a.m.

This isn't unusual - he wakes at this hour every day, regardless of what time zone he happens to be in or how late he retired the night before. "I go to bed at 10 p.m., I go to bed at 2 a.m., it doesn't matter.

My wake-up time never changes," he explains with the conviction of someone who has found a personal truth. "I go for a morning walk every morning, depending where I am."

Today, his walk will come a bit later than usual - Bogotá "is not the safest before it gets light", but the ritual remains sacrosanct. "I'm just present during the sunrise," Eddy says. "I just think that if you wake up for the sunrise every single day and get out there in fresh air and just walk around, I think it's impossible to have a bad day."

"I just think that if you wake up for the sunrise every single day and get out there in fresh air and just walk around, I think it's impossible to have a bad day."

This philosophy has served Eddy well during a peripatetic existence spanning continents and careers.

At fifty-three, he stands as one of the world's foremost travel influencers, though he'd likely balk at such a reductive label. A former stockbroker turned digital marketing pioneer turned perpetual wanderer, Eddy has built a life deliberately unburdened by possessions.

"Ten years ago, I sold everything that I own," he declares with evident satisfaction. "Now I own nothing. I have clothes. I have a storage unit in South Florida." When not traversing the globe, which is rare - he estimates he spent only "a month and a half" in Florida during all of 2024 - he still opts for temporary accommodations. "Even when I'm in South Florida, I have a hotel. Like I just get a hotel because I'm only there two days a week, two weeks, whatever."

Eddy's journey to this untethered lifestyle began with tragedy.

Born in Michigan to a family of police officers, he moved to Fort Lauderdale at age three when his father joined the local police force.

His future seemed predetermined: "You're going to grow up, after high school, you're going to join the police academy, you're going to become a cop, you're going to get married, you're going to have kids, you're going to retire and die.

Like my life was completely mapped out."



“Like my life was completely mapped out.”

As a teenager, Eddy spent hours at the police department after school. "I learned how to give a polygraph when I was like fourteen years old. I learned how to beat one when I was fifteen," he recalls with a hint of mischief. "All those cop TV shows, that was my literal life."







"That is the day that my life changed forever,"

-protesting.

But the decision proved fortuitous: "It was the best decision I ever made because I learned how to sell anything to anyone."

For a decade, Eddy thrived in finance, until January 1999, when the firm was suddenly sold. "If you show up on Monday, you're gonna have a new owner," management announced one Friday.

Everything changed on May 25, 1989, three weeks before his high-school graduation. His father, a detective, was killed in a plane crash whilst returning from taking a confession. "That is the day that my life changed forever," Eddy says quietly. "I decided that I just didn't want to be a cop anymore. But at the same time, didn't know what the hell I wanted to do because I wasn't trained for anything else." With few options and no interest in university—"I was a terrible student, hated school"—Eddy reluctantly accepted a friend's suggestion to join an investment banking training programme. "I don't know finance. I don't know math. I don't know how to sell. I don't know shit," he remembers -



Eddy resigned immediately. That weekend, an acquaintance in Bangkok invited him to visit. With no job tying him down, Eddy bought a ticket for what was meant to be a two-week stay.

"After four days, I called my mom," he recalls, "said, 'I'm never coming home. I love this place.' And she sent all my things and I ended up living in Bangkok for eleven years."

The Thailand that captivated Eddy wasn't the one of postcards and package holidays, though he certainly enjoyed its hedonistic offerings. What struck him most profoundly was the character of its people.

"In London, in New York, in Miami, in LA, in Barcelona, you know, like these big cities, typically the bigger the city, the shittier the people, the more the crime," he observes. "When I got to Thailand, and Bangkok is so big, it's so dense... I mean, what do you have, sixteen million, seventeen [people]... but everybody is so kind. Like Thai people are the kindest people. And I didn't know that that was possible until I went to Thailand."

Culinary revelations followed. "I didn't really like Asian food," he admits. "I mean, I still don't eat Chinese.

I just don't like the spice. But Thai food is my favourite food in the world. I ate street food for eleven years every single day, you know, som tum and whatever, just every single day." Eddy's time in Thailand coincided with the dawn of social media, a coincidence that would shape his career.

Around 2005, a friend in finance suggested he start a digital agency. "I was like, I don't even know what you're talking about," Eddy recalls. "

And he said, it's a marketing agency, but you're doing all digital stuff. You're building websites, you're doing SEO. This was before social media got mature."

The friend's insight proved prescient: "Just trust me, you're already partying with all the decision makers in Bangkok and like, you know, everybody.

So he goes, "it would be easy. You don't even have to look for clients."

Thus was born what Eddy claims was "the first digital agency in Asia," one that "just exploded" with seventeen clients within weeks, most of them hotels. "That's where I learned the whole travel industry," he explains. This was during a transformative era for Asian tourism: "That was when the first wave of crazy hotels entered Bali. That's when the Western Casinos entered Macau. That's when Marina Bay Sands was being built in Singapore. That's when all the Thai islands were exploding, getting very mature in tourism."



"That's where I learned the whole travel industry,"

Simultaneously, Eddy established a commanding presence on Twitter, becoming "the first American expat in every Asian country to have a million followers."

This digital prominence "got me headline news in the newspaper, which got me speaking gigs, which got me more clients. So it just steamrolled since then."

After Thailand, Eddy continued his nomadic existence: a year in the Philippines, another in Sri Lanka, four years in Spain (split between Barcelona and Marbella), one in Lisbon, and another in London—where, he quips, "I met more English people in Thailand and Spain than I did in London."

In 2015, he returned to the United States, but not to settle. His wanderlust remained undiminished, and the digital landscape he helped pioneer had matured enough to support his borderless business model.

Today, he works primarily in three sectors: destinations, hotels, and cruise lines, amassing impressive statistics along the way- the exact numbers of flights taken, cruise nights, and hotel stays meticulously tracked in year-end reports he produces with the precision of his former financial self.

This perpetual motion raises obvious questions about physical and mental wellbeing.

Beyond his inviolable morning ritual, Eddy maintains a spartan regimen: he has "never had a sip of coffee" in his life, hasn't consumed soda in "seven years, eight years," and instead drinks "like three gallons of water a day."

Jet lag, that universal lament of the frequent traveller? "I don't believe in jet lag. I think it's all bullshit. I think it's all mental," he declares.

I try to get on the local time zone immediately. Even if I'm shattered, I'd still like, that's fine. The first night I'll go to bed early, but I get out and I do exactly [my routine]."

He reserves particular scorn for his compatriots' travel habits: "Americans are the worst because they're horrible travellers." His own strategy for long-haul flights to Asia is counterintuitive but effective: "On the last two connections, I won't sleep. I will force myself to stay awake because I want to arrive here so I can meet. It makes me wake up at five."

For all his success, Eddy acknowledges the changing dynamics of his industry. "Post COVID, my world is so saturated. The only reason I'm still relevant is because I was one of the first, you know, like I'm OG.

I've been creating content since when social media was invented," he reflects.

"Most people just got into it because they want the free shit and they want the egos and they want the status and shit like that."

He still commands respect in the field, speaking "probably ten, fifteen times a year at different conferences and private workshops" and serving as a consultant to "private family office and venture capital events that are investing in social media." Yet he feels the competitive pressure: "I'm feeling the downturn post COVID.

Even though travel is booming, there's much more people in my space. So am I losing out because somebody's just starting, they have a big audience because they grew during COVID...and I can feel I'm losing business to people that are newer in the business just because the brand says, 'I can get this person for free or half your money.'"

Eddy's response has been to pursue "much more interesting, bigger scale projects," including hosting "Video Globetrotter," which he describes as "the first travel series on Lifetime," an "Anthony Bourdain type show" that was unfortunately "crushed during COVID."

Throughout our conversation, Eddy exudes contentment with his unconventional path, despite the trade-offs.

"I live that life for ten years in the finance world, you know, partying eight days a week, you know, banging the hottest girls in the club, you know, whatever, and going to South Beach every day," he reflects. "I'm so much more happy now.

And, news for you, I make ten percent of what I used to make.

This observation prompts a philosophical aside: "If you were a shitty person when you're broke, you're going to be even more shitty when you have money," he muses. "Money doesn't make you happier, it exposes your real personality."

As our interview concludes, Eddy expresses eagerness to return to Southeast Asia, particularly his beloved Bangkok. "I'm so down.

I'm telling you, I need to come over there for like a couple months just to see if it would work," he enthuses. "Because if I find a way bro, I'm over."



For now, though, he'll continue his sunrise walks in Bogotá, then perhaps pack his suitcase—the only constant physical presence in his life—and head to whatever destination next beckons. After all, in Scott Eddy's world, owning nothing means being able to go anywhere.

As he signs off, his parting words capture both nostalgia and anticipation: "Enjoy Bangkok. I really miss it."

You can follow Scott Eddy on IG [@mrscottteddy](https://www.instagram.com/mrscottteddy).



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DONNAH CIEMPKA ON LEADERSHIP, LIFE BALANCE & WHY AUTHENTICITY MATTERS

The journey to Ascot International School involves navigating Bangkok's sprawling outskirts, down narrow lanes where water buffalo occasionally amble past modern developments.

When I arrive at Donnah Ciempka's office, she's seated on a blue sofa beneath one of two framed Dr. Seuss prints—licensed anniversary editions she specifically selected for her workspace.

"I was looking at it earlier," she says, following my gaze to the artwork. "When I got this job, I bought these as a reminder of why I do what I do." Dressed in a vibrant floral-patterned dress with eye-catching lime-green accents and matching shoes, the recently re-elected president of the Australian Chamber of Commerce of Thailand defies every corporate stereotype. And that's entirely deliberate.

"I don't believe that as a woman, your success lies in replicating men," she tells me. "For so many years, women's success has been based on how well they can fit the male narrative."

When Donnah Ciempka was appointed Chamber president; creating the first equal gender balance on the board - she encountered predictable resistance. "Some feedback I received from the community was the fear of how many women were on the board," she recalls with a wry smile. "There were reasonably misogynistic comments about 'the women taking over'."

Her response was characteristic: "I intentionally wore the most floral dresses I could find with ruffles and frills to the first three big events. I thought, 'I'm going to over-deliver, and you don't get to shape me.'" I ask if this defiance has cost Donnah professionally. "There are jobs that have passed me by because I'm not a good conformist," she acknowledges without regret. "But that's a strength in education, where we too often reward rigid adherence to tradition."

Before becoming Head at Ascot, Donnah Ciempka's career spanned Australia, Seoul and Beijing.



She worked in consulting roles focused on policy development and implementation. "I was really looking at if this is what you believe and if this is the vision you want, how do we then put pieces in place to deliver it?"

At Ascot, her leadership philosophy has created a uniquely diverse learning community with students from 58 different nationalities. "Asia gives me energy," she explains. "That sense of community, of embracing what life presents—it really energises me."

Her approach to management is refreshingly straightforward. "I probably drive our leadership team crazy," she admits with a laugh. "I'm like, 'Let's do this!' And they're like, 'Have you thought about logistics? Have you thought about the time?' I'm like, 'The idea is brilliant—you make it happen.'"

Donnah's mother used to call her "a bull in a China shop"—a characterisation she happily owns. "I do rush in. As a younger person, I'd think, 'That sounds like a good idea. Let's do it,' and then halfway through realise this is not going well."

This tendency has occasionally "burnt" her, but it has also fuelled innovation. "I don't see a problem we can't fix," she states with the kind of certainty that makes you believe her.

Despite leading both a school and a major business organisation, Donnah maintains balance through deliberate creative practices. "I'm a voracious reader," she says. "I wind the day down with audiobooks - I've realised at the age of 50 that I have a reading comprehension issue, and anything audio I retain better."

She's recently completed her master's degree entirely through audio learning—an impressive achievement she mentions almost casually.

A former art teacher, she's equally committed to maintaining her artistic practice. "It's not the weekend unless I've spent time in my studio," she says. Her current medium is gel printing, which satisfies her fascination with texture and pattern.

"The second I want to create something that looks like something, there's an expectation. And I'm not interested in that," she explains. "For me, my artistic expression is about playing."

When I ask about her greatest challenge as a female leader, her answer is surprising. "The greatest challenges I see as a woman are women against each other," she says frankly.

She elaborates: "Every move to bring about equity - whether it's quotas or companies saying we're to have fifty percent men, fifty percent women - has been put in place to try and create an inclusive, safe workforce.

But what that's done is pit women against women. For many generations, my greatest competitor has not been a man; it's been other women, because I've got to outperform them to get the job."

As our conversation draws to a close, I ask what message she would share if she could put anything on a billboard.

"You are enough," she says without hesitation, crediting her grandmother with this wisdom. "Every single one of us is enough."

As our conversation concludes, I'm struck by how Donnah's philosophy permeates both her leadership at Ascot International School and her role within Bangkok's business community.

Her ability to balance authentic self-expression with professional excellence has not only earned her re-election as president of the Australian Chamber of Commerce, but has created an educational environment where students from 58 nationalities thrive together.

In a world of increasingly complex global challenges, her refreshing certainty - "I don't see a problem we can't fix" feels like exactly the kind of leadership we need.

Donnah Ciempka is Head of Ascot International School and recently re-elected president of the Australian Chamber of Commerce of Thailand.



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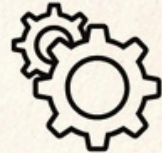
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What's the Difference?

HRT VS TRT



HRT, or Hormone Replacement Therapy, rebalances hormones like estrogen and progesterone to improve health. It's gender-inclusive and offers diverse benefits.



TRT, or Testosterone Replacement Therapy, is a specialized form of HRT for males with low testosterone (hypogonadism). It offers various treatment options, like injections, gels, patches, or pellets, chosen based on patient needs and guidance from healthcare providers.

ONE CREATE LOOKS AT WHAT USED TO BE A TABOO SUBJECT BUT IS STILL MISUNDERSTOOD

By Margaret Ellsworth, Health Correspondent

The waiting room of Dr. Amelia Chen's hormone clinic in north London is surprisingly serene for a Monday morning. Soft light filters through tall windows, illuminating a diverse group of patients: women in their fifties thumbing through magazines, men in business attire checking watches, all awaiting their consultations. The atmosphere is calm, but the conversations happening behind closed doors tackle complex decisions that millions face as they age: whether to supplement their declining hormones, and at what cost.

Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) for women and testosterone replacement therapy (TRT) for men have transformed from taboo topics to mainstream medical interventions over the past two decades. Yet as accessibility increases, so do questions about their long-term effects, creating a medical landscape where patients must navigate between promising benefits and potential risks.



"Twenty-five years ago, women suffering through menopause were often told to simply endure it," explains Dr. Chen, who has specialised in hormone therapies since 2001. "There was this peculiar British stoicism about suffering in silence."

For women approaching or experiencing menopause, the decline in oestrogen and progesterone can trigger debilitating symptoms: hot flushes that disrupt sleep, mood changes that strain relationships, and cognitive effects colloquially known as "brain fog" that impact professional performance.

Janet Whitfield, 58, a secondary school headteacher from Manchester, describes her experience before HRT as "like someone had stolen my competence overnight."

"I'd been teaching for thirty years, but suddenly I'd lose my train of thought mid-sentence. I'd wake up drenched four times a night. Eventually, I wondered if I needed to take early retirement," she recounts. Six months after starting HRT, Janet reports feeling "like myself again."

Six months after starting HRT, Janet reports feeling "like myself again."

The physiological benefits of HRT extend beyond symptom relief. Research consistently shows that oestrogen helps maintain bone density, potentially preventing osteoporosis, a condition affecting one in two women over fifty.

Studies also indicate HRT may reduce the risk of heart disease when started early in menopause. What makes HRT particularly effective is its ability to rebalance the endocrine system during the dramatic hormonal fluctuations of perimenopause and the sustained deficits of post-menopause. Dr. Fiona Mackenzie, consultant gynaecologist at the Royal Free Hospital, explains the complex interplay at work: "Menopause isn't simply about hormones disappearing—it's about the body's regulatory systems becoming destabilised. Before full menopause, women often experience wildly fluctuating hormone levels rather than a straightforward decline."

These fluctuations explain why perimenopausal women may experience symptoms despite blood tests showing "normal" hormone levels on the day of testing. "HRT works by providing a consistent hormonal baseline," continues Dr. Mackenzie. "This allows the hypothalamic-pituitary-ovarian axis—essentially the body's hormonal control centre—to recalibrate." This rebalancing effect extends to multiple systems.

Declining oestrogen affects not just reproductive organs but also the brain, skin, musculoskeletal system, and cardiovascular function. Receptors for sex hormones exist throughout the body, which explains the wide-ranging symptoms of menopause and the equally broad benefits of replacement therapy.

Caroline Fitzpatrick, 54, a retail manager from Bristol, describes this systemic impact: "I didn't realise how many of my issues were hormone-related until they improved on HRT. My joint pain decreased, my skin became less dry, my migraines reduced, and my digestion improved. It wasn't just about hot flushes—it was like every system in my body had been affected."

For many women, the psychological rebalancing is equally significant. The complex relationship between hormones and neurotransmitters means that oestrogen affects serotonin, dopamine, and noradrenaline levels—key chemicals in mood regulation. This explains the increased vulnerability to anxiety and depression during perimenopause.

Yet the therapy's history has been turbulent. In 2002, the Women's Health Initiative study sparked global panic by suggesting HRT significantly increased breast cancer risk. Prescriptions plummeted, leaving many women suffering unnecessarily.

"That study has been heavily critiqued since for its methodology," notes Professor Eleanor Hammond of King's College London. "The participants were primarily older women who began HRT many years after menopause, which doesn't reflect typical usage patterns."



"it was like every system in my body had been affected"

Subsequent research has provided nuance. The current consensus suggests that while combined oestrogen-progesterone therapy may slightly increase breast cancer risk (approximately one additional case per thousand women annually), oestrogen-only HRT for women who've had hysterectomies shows minimal risk. Furthermore, the cardiovascular benefits may outweigh these risks for many women, particularly those under sixty.

Lisa Chen, 52, a solicitor from Edinburgh, represents the new wave of informed patients. "I researched for months before deciding," she says. "Modern formulations and application methods have improved the safety profile. I use transdermal patches rather than oral pills to reduce blood clot risk."

While female menopause receives increasing public attention, male hormonal changes remain comparatively under-discussed. Unlike the relatively rapid hormonal shift women experience, men typically see testosterone decline gradually—about a 1-2% annual decrease after age thirty—in what some medical professionals term "andropause," though this terminology remains somewhat controversial in medical circles.

"There's still significant stigma," observes Dr. Rajeev Patel, an endocrinologist specialising in male health. "Men are less likely to seek medical help, often attributing symptoms to 'just getting older.'" These symptoms can include reduced energy, decreased muscle mass, increased body fat, diminished sexual function, and mood changes including depression.

Michael Freeman, 63, a retired civil engineer, describes his experience: "I thought I was just burnt out. I'd always been active, but suddenly I couldn't motivate myself to leave the sofa. My GP tested my testosterone levels, which were at the level you'd expect in a man twenty years older."

Six months into TRT, Michael reports significant improvements in energy and mood, allowing him to resume his active lifestyle. His experience reflects the potential benefits, which can also include increased bone density, improved body composition, and enhanced cognitive function in some men.

However, TRT remains controversial. Unlike HRT, which replaces hormones that have dramatically declined, TRT often supplements testosterone that has decreased but remains within the broad "normal" range for older men.

Dr. Sarah Williams, consultant urologist at University College Hospital, emphasises this distinction: "The definition of 'low testosterone' isn't universally agreed upon. Some men with levels at the lower end of normal range experience symptoms, while others with similar levels feel fine."

This ambiguity has contributed to concerns about over-prescription, particularly in private clinics where diagnostic thresholds may be less stringent than in the NHS.

It's important to note that testosterone levels in men have a wide normal range and significant daily fluctuations, typically being highest in the morning. This natural variation can complicate diagnosis and highlights the importance of multiple tests before beginning treatment.

The Young Men's Dilemma: When TRT Comes Too Soon

A worrying trend has emerged in recent years: the increasing use of testosterone therapy among young men without clear medical indications. Online wellness clinics and social media influencers have fuelled interest in testosterone as a lifestyle enhancement rather than a medical treatment.

Dr. James Harrison, reproductive endocrinologist at Guy's Hospital, expresses grave concern: "We're seeing men in their twenties and thirties seeking TRT for vague symptoms like fatigue or difficulty building muscle, often after self-diagnosing based on internet research."

The consequences of premature TRT can be severe and sometimes irreversible. "Exogenous testosterone suppresses the body's natural production through negative feedback on the hypothalamic-pituitary-testicular axis," explains Dr. Harrison. "In young men, this can lead to testicular atrophy and potentially permanent fertility issues."

It's worth noting that with proper medical supervision, fertility preservation strategies can be implemented alongside TRT when necessary. "For young men with genuine testosterone deficiency who may want children later, treatment with human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG) alongside testosterone can help maintain testicular function," Dr. Harrison adds. "But this requires specialised management and isn't typically offered in the wellness clinic setting."

Daniel Wright, 28, represents a cautionary tale. After starting TRT through an online clinic at age 24 to enhance his gym performance, he discovered the hard way that testosterone is a contraceptive of sorts. "When my wife and I decided to start a family, I learned my sperm count was essentially zero," he recounts. "I've been off TRT for eighteen months now, taking fertility medications, but my natural production hasn't fully recovered."

Beyond fertility concerns, premature TRT carries other risks. For adolescents and very young men (though medical ethics would typically prevent prescription in these groups), it can cause premature closure of growth plates, limiting height potential. Long-term use typically leads to testicular shrinkage and may cause psychological dependence.

Professor Martin Richards of the Institute of Reproductive Health notes another troubling aspect: "Many young men seeking testosterone have normal levels but unrealistic expectations based on comparing themselves to professional athletes or social media personalities who may be using supra-physiological doses or additional substances."

For those with genuine hypogonadism—primary testicular failure or pituitary/hypothalamic disorders TRT remains appropriate at any age.

But specialists emphasise that alternative approaches should be exhausted first for younger men with borderline levels: improving sleep, reducing alcohol consumption, managing stress, optimising nutrition, and addressing underlying conditions like obesity or sleep apnea, all of which can significantly impact testosterone production.

The scientific evidence regarding TRT's long-term safety presents a complex picture. Some older studies suggested potential increased cardiovascular risks, but more recent research indicates TRT may actually improve heart health in appropriate candidates by reducing insulin resistance and body fat.

However, these cardiovascular effects depend heavily on proper dosing, regular monitoring, and individual risk factors. Prostate concerns add another layer of complexity.

While it was once believed that testosterone therapy might increase prostate cancer risk, current evidence doesn't support this fear for men without pre-existing prostate cancer. Nevertheless, regular monitoring remains essential, including routine blood work, prostate examinations, and prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing.

Both therapies exist within socioeconomic contexts that cannot be ignored. For women, NHS access to HRT has improved following advocacy efforts, though waiting times remain problematic.

The recent introduction of prepayment certificates has reduced costs for those requiring multiple HRT products.

For men, the path is often more challenging. NHS guidelines for TRT prescriptions remain relatively strict, requiring testosterone levels below 8 nmol/L alongside symptoms. This has created a two-tier system where those with financial resources can access private treatment while others cannot.

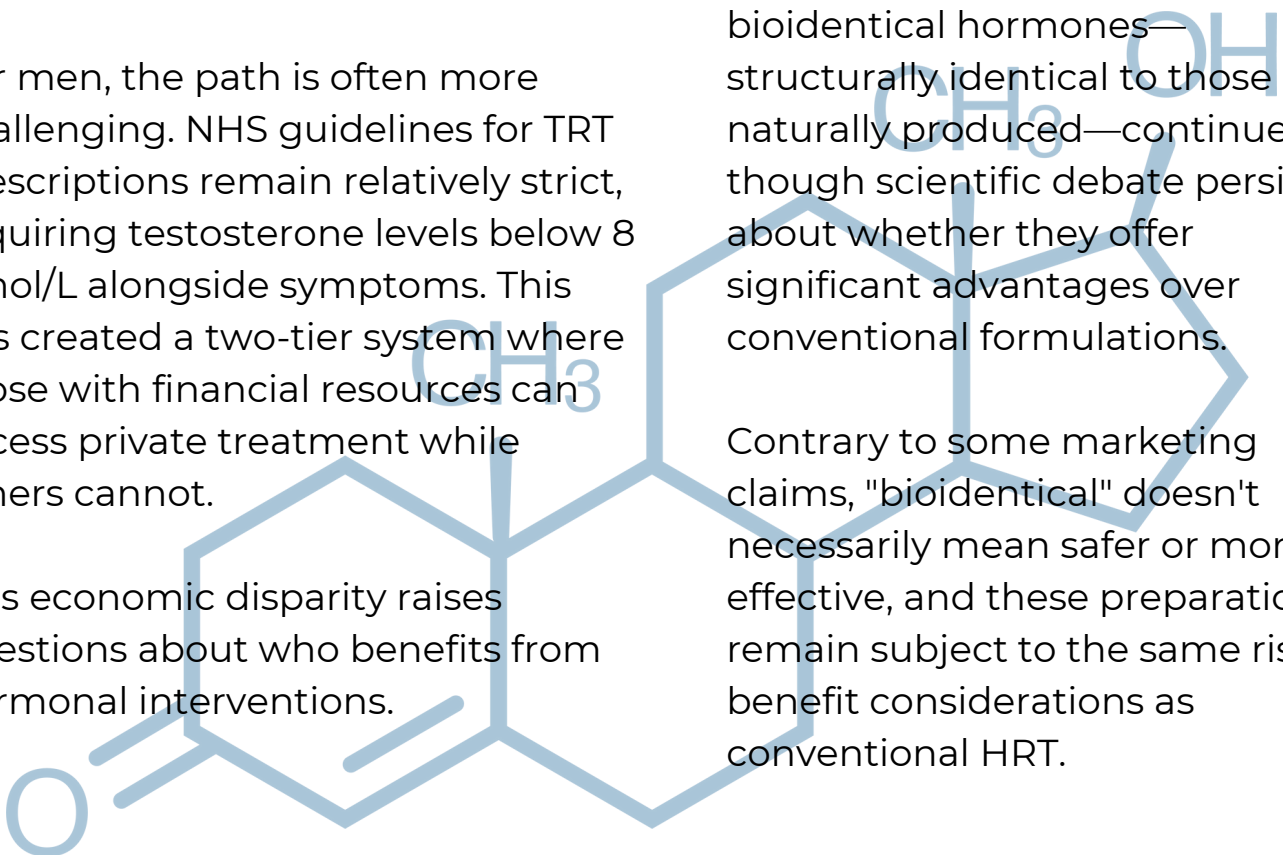
This economic disparity raises questions about who benefits from hormonal interventions.

Studies suggest that in both sexes, hormone therapy patients are disproportionately white and middle-class, reflecting broader healthcare inequalities.

The medical community increasingly advocates for individualised approaches to hormone therapy. "The risk-benefit calculation differs for each patient," emphasises Dr. Chen. "Age, medical history, severity of symptoms, and personal preferences all matter."

This personalised approach extends to delivery methods. Traditional pills now compete with patches, gels, implants, and injections, each with distinct risk profiles. The trend toward bioidentical hormones—structurally identical to those naturally produced—continues, though scientific debate persists about whether they offer significant advantages over conventional formulations.

Contrary to some marketing claims, "bioidentical" doesn't necessarily mean safer or more effective, and these preparations remain subject to the same risk-benefit considerations as conventional HRT.



The evolution of HRT has moved far beyond the one-size-fits-all approach of decades past. "We're increasingly recognising that replacing oestrogen alone isn't sufficient for many women," explains Dr. Valentina Rodriguez, specialist in menopausal health. "The interplay between oestrogen, progesterone, and even testosterone in women requires a more sophisticated approach."

This holistic understanding has led to protocols that consider hormone ratios rather than absolute values. Some clinicians now measure oestrogen metabolites, not just oestrogen levels, acknowledging that how the body processes hormones affects their impact.

For women with complex symptoms, cyclical HRT that mimics natural hormonal rhythms may offer advantages over static dosing.

"Some women report better symptom control when their replacement therapy follows a pattern similar to their premenopausal cycle," notes Dr. Rodriguez. "This approach honours the body's innate timing mechanisms."

Back in Dr. Chen's waiting room, the patients represent this nuanced reality. They're not seeking the fountain of youth but rather the tools to navigate middle age with dignity and wellbeing intact.

Their journeys reflect the broader societal shift toward viewing hormonal changes not as inevitable decline but as a health condition deserving thoughtful intervention.

"Ultimately," reflects Dr. Chen, "this isn't about denying ageing. It's about ensuring that how we feel aligns with how engaged we wish to be in the world." In that aspiration lies a universal truth that transcends the hormone debate entirely.

Dr Chen goes to to say it is imperative not to self diagnose or administer any kind of health intervention.

Always use a professional health practitioner or clinic specialising in HRT.



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THROTTLE THERAPY



Samran Trip - Welcome to The World of Concierge Motorcycle Tourism

📍 helmet in one hand, GPS in the other, and Thailand's most thrilling routes at her fingertips Thippawan "Dowey" Samran isn't your average tour operator.

As the dynamo behind Samran Trip Company, she's busy revolutionising Thailand's adventure scene with bespoke motorcycle journeys that'll have you questioning why you ever bothered with conventional vacations.

Forget mass tourism experiences – Dowey's in the business of crafting high-octane adventures that combine the freedom of the open road with the kind of five-star service usually reserved for luxury cruises.



Originally from Thailand's deep south, Dowey moved to Bangkok for university and stayed, building a career that merges her love of hospitality with her organisational talents. While her business partner Tanakorn handles the fun stuff, the motorcycles!

Dowey and her team takes care of 'all the difficult stuff' like flights, hotels, and logistics.

"We offer many motorcycle tours in Thailand, such as a Harley Davidson tour in the north of Thailand," explains Dowey from her Bangkok office. But calling Samran Trip a mere motorcycle tour company would be massively underselling what they offer.



"It takes away every ounce of stress and worry."

Let's dive into what this young and innovative company offers. This three-year-old venture represents the perfect fusion of Dowey's extensive airline and inbound tourism experience with her business partner Tanakorn's passion for motorcycles (he's a serious collector with a fleet of bikes in Kamphaeng Phet, near Sukhothai). The result? A concierge-level travel service that handles every aspect of your Thai adventure, from the moment your plane touches down to the day you reluctantly head home.

First class from the moment the aircraft doors open - "We meet customers at the gate of the airplane and guide them through customs and immigration," Dowey explains with the calm confidence of someone who's navigated thousands of travellers through Bangkok's bustling Suvarnabhumi Airport. "It takes away every ounce of stress and worry."

Samran's specialty is crafting bespoke motorcycle tours across Thailand's diverse landscapes.

Whether you fancy cruising on a Harley through the mountainous north or exploring off-road trails on a BMW adventure bike, they've got you covered, why not do both!

"We can provide the tour program for Harley Davidson including the tour leader, or the customer can just rent the motorcycle and we'll create an itinerary and make all the arrangements for accommodation," says Dowey. "We can arrange solo tours, group tours, or tours that are solo but with a leader if you want a guide, and supply a support vehicle for your luggage."



This flexibility extends to accommodation preferences too. "We can do camping, hotel accommodation, or day trips—it depends entirely on the demand of the customer," Dowey notes. Every tour is fully customisable, with the team helping you select the perfect bike for your build and riding style.

For off-road enthusiasts, Dowey recommends their Enduro tours. "If the customer wants to have a unique off road experience in Thailand, that's entirely different from any other tour, I will recommend the 'Enduro Tour'. My partner heads up the Enduro tours, adventure motorcycling in the jungle." These specialised trips take riders through Thailand's mountain trails, across unspoilt forests fording streams and into remote villages on bikes with "higher suspension travel" and special tires that "grip better in mud, gravel, leaves and dirt."



Don't have your gear? No problem. "Just show up, we'll organise world class quality gear," laughs Dowey. "We can provide all the equipment for a safe and enjoyable tour," including specialised boots with shin guards and other protective gear.

Samran Trip's adventures aren't limited to Thailand. Their tours extend to Vietnam and several European countries including Germany, France, Italy, and Spain. They're even planning trips to the UK for the Isle of Man TT — arguably the world's most famous and demanding motorcycle race in the world.



Within Thailand, popular routes include the northern mountain regions around Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai and southern coastal journeys "from Phuket to Khao Lak and also Khao Sok National Park, Surat Thani. " We're even developing exciting cross-border excursions. "For example we can go to Myanmar—the beaches in Myanmar are very beautiful—and come back to Ranong in Thailand, to enjoy a very special Onsen experience," Dowey explains, referencing their newest wellness offering.

What truly sets Samran Trip apart is their comprehensive approach to travel planning. A support vehicle follows motorcycle groups to carry luggage (perfect for those who can't fit what's in their suitcases on a Harley), they also offer multilingual guides that speak English, French, Italian, German, and Spanish, they've got you covered.

Concerned about dietary restrictions? "We will ask people before they come here what kind of foods they enjoy, if they have special dietary requirements, vegetarian, allergies, or what else they need to eat or cannot eat," says Dowey.

For travellers seeking an experience that goes far beyond standard tourism, Samran Trip offers the perfect blend of adventure, comfort, and authentic Thai hospitality. As Dowey puts it, they deliver "a full 360-degree tour" where every detail is handled with care. Whether you're an experienced rider looking to conquer Thailand's diverse terrain or a traveler seeking a unique way to experience Southeast Asia, Samran Trip's bespoke adventures promise memories that will last long after the engine cools down.

Samran Travel Co Ltd can be reached at:
samrantrip@gmail.com

The Immersive Approach to Teaching Thai Cultural Director Kru Bowie

Meet Bowie Srisuwan, Bangkok's coolest language guru who's turning foreigners into Thai-speaking locals, one-by-one.

Let's be honest – learning Thai can be downright intimidating. Those five tones? The curly alphabet that looks like beautiful art but reads like a mystery? It's enough to make most visitors stick to pointing at menus and perfecting their 'Wai' greeting.

Enter Bowie, the one-woman language revolution behind 'Thai with Bowie,' who's flipped the traditional language class on its head with her uniquely immersive approach that's part lesson, part cultural tour, and part therapy session.

Bowie explains, "Before COVID, my students would learn Thai and I'd tell them, 'This area you have to visit, this food you have to try,'" she says from her spot in Bangkok's trendy True Digital Park. "But when they came back, they'd say: 'We went there but felt too shy to talk to anyone. We're not sure we tried real local things.'"

This lightbulb moment sparked Bowie's genius idea: why not actually take students out into Bangkok's chaotic, delicious streets and teach them Thai on location in real time?



Meet Kru Bowie, Bangkok's coolest language guru who's turning foreigners into Thai-speaking locals, one-by-one.

Let's be honest – learning Thai can be downright intimidating. Those five tones? The curly alphabet that looks like beautiful art but reads like a mystery? It's enough to make most visitors stick to pointing at menus and perfecting their 'Wai' greeting.

Her location tour lessons start at 3,000 baht, and Bowie will guide you through Bangkok's most characterful neighbourhoods – from the fragrant maze of Pak Khlong Talad flower market to the neon-lit food paradise of Yaowarat (Chinatown).

But her repertoire extends beyond these popular spots to include Soi Ching Cha, Talad Plu, Charoen Krung, and a newly discovered floating market near BTS Bang Pai Station.

"It's not like a typical tour-tour going eating food," she laughs. "I help my students feel comfortable speaking Thai.

I'll point out things like, 'Look at how the vendors ask you this question – and here's why.'" What makes these tours special is the preparation.

Students receive audio files with essential phrases and custom leaflets to study before the tour day. "When we meet at the BTS station nearest to our destination, they already know some basics to try out," Bowie explains.

What makes Bowie's approach click is how she personalises everything. Before your first lesson, expect a mini-interview: Why Thai? What's your goal? Where will you use it?



What makes Bowie's approach click is how she personalises everything. Before your first lesson, expect a mini-interview: Why Thai? What's your goal? Where will you use it?

"If they're doing business here, they need different language than someone partying in Phuket," she says with a knowing smile. "I can't teach them formal Thai if their Thai friends are going to laugh at them for being so formal."





"During COVID, some students admitted their weekly Thai lesson was 'the only time I feel good,'" Bowie shares. "Learning a new language rewires your brain – it's not just words, it's therapy." Now based in Bangkok, she offers a hybrid approach – both online and in-person instruction – catering to a growing trend she's noticed: "Especially last year and this year, people are moving to Thailand permanently. The trend of learning has changed from just basic phrases to 'I want to invest my time learning Thai because I want to move to Thailand.'"

Beyond the vocab drilling, Bowie often finds herself as a cultural mediator.

Students message her with screenshots of confusing conversations with Thai partners or colleagues, seeking translations that go deeper than just the words. "Sometimes they're facing cultural misunderstandings with family members – like 'Why don't you pay for this? Why don't you do that?'" she explains. "I'm not saying what's right or wrong, but I help them understand our culture while protecting them from being taken advantage of."

Her "Reading Thai is Possible" program boldly promises to get you reading (yes, those intimidating curly letters) within just 20 hours of online lessons. "Within this 20-hour course with me, you can read Thai," she states confidently. The course covers everything from basic characters to more stylish, complex forms.

Originally from Rajahburi, Bowie started her business before COVID while still working full-time at a university. The pandemic pushed her teaching entirely online, but it also revealed something unexpected about her lessons.

Her background in communication helps her understand more than just linguistic challenges. "I'm really interested in how to connect people, how to learn about that person, how to learn about the culture." What truly sets Bowie apart is how she integrates her passions into her teaching. "I love filming," she says, "so I integrate everything I love into what I'm doing." This enthusiasm translates into engaging lessons that go beyond vocabulary lists.

So whether you're planning a two-week holiday or a permanent move to the Land of Smiles, skipping the traditional language schools and hooking up with Bowie might just be your ticket to actually understanding what's happening around you – and maybe even making a few Thai mates along the way.

As one student put it after finally ordering street food without pointing: "It's like Thailand opened up a whole new level I never knew existed."



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IG: @bowiejourney

Women in Business.



THAILAND'S NEW WAVE OF FEMALE LEADERS

The moment Thanaporn Rangkapanee begins speaking, any preconceptions about her youth fade away. At 32, she carries herself with a composure that blends traditional Thai graciousness with contemporary global savvy, a combination that has helped her medical tourism agency attract an impressive roster of international clients.

"We have more opportunity for networking now," she explains with measured cadence, her tone warm and confident. "We have more and more VIP patients and diplomats from the Middle East and Asia."

She speaks not with the breathless excitement of a newcomer but with the quiet assurance of someone who has found her place in the world.



As her business grows, so do the stakes. "When you deal with VIPs, your reputation becomes paramount," she notes. Small issues that could previously be overlooked now demand immediate attention prior to doing business. Everything has to be perfect.

This transition brings both motivation and pressure.

"You become competitive with yourself, raising your personal bar" she reflects. "Last year we reached certain percentages, and this year we expect more growth, and with more growth comes more responsibility."

What distinguishes Thanaporn is her ability to harmonise seemingly contradictory qualities—she is both modern and traditional, ambitious yet humble, cosmopolitan while deeply rooted in Thai values.

"Thailand is an open country where all cultures collide and are picked up," she observes. "This is our strength in Southeast Asia." This cultural melting pot has shaped her approach to business. When addressing challenges, her response isn't to complain but to pivot and adapt.

Her leadership philosophy embraces global perspectives: "We're supporting our team to be the best version of themselves.

Not just stuck with our old culture—we take all the good things from the UK, from the US for example, and combine them together to be even better at what we do and how we communicate."

When asked about her influences, Thanaporn names two remarkable women who have shaped her approach to leadership and diplomacy.

"My first role model is my mother," she says with evident respect. "I've watched how response-ready she is, how she speaks with such clarity, how she dealt with challenges with intelligence and dignity. I've become who I am today because of her."



Her second mentor—one she's never met but has studied from afar—is Queen Elizabeth II. "The way she handled herself diplomatically, how she navigated different eras with consistency," she notes.

"People respected her because she understood how to communicate appropriately in every situation, how to carry herself with intelligence and grace while still being accessible."





This dual influence has given Thanaporn a leadership template that blends personal warmth with professional poise, particularly valuable in Thailand's high-touch service environment.

Despite Thailand's progressive stance relative to other Southeast Asian countries, female entrepreneurs still face unique obstacles. Thanaporn acknowledges these challenges with pragmatism.

"When I go into my first client meeting, even before I speak, people jump to conclusions and might think I'm too young or inexperienced," she admits. "But once I start speaking, they hear my experience and professional approach and how I handle my communication, which gives them the confidence to work with our agency. That respect comes after they hear what I have to say, and is of course linked to our reputation."

Thanaporn recently attended the Leading Women Summit 2025 in Bangkok, where she found herself surrounded by trailblazers from various sectors. One story particularly moved her—that of a military captain who defied expectations in a traditionally male-dominated field.

"She completed in five minutes what took male colleagues an hour," Thanaporn recounts with admiration. "Even with her feminine touches intact, she showed incredible efficiency. That's the power behind successful women. We see problems differently and often find more efficient solutions."

The Summit reinforced her belief that female leadership brings unique advantages to business. "The women I met reminded me that our approach to leadership doesn't need to mimic traditional male models to be effective. In fact, our different perspectives are precisely what add value."

Looking ahead, Thanaporn's ambitions extend beyond personal success. "If I become more powerful in this business, I would like to invest in education," she states.

Her passion stems from a clear-eyed view of Thailand's position in the global economy. "When you have education, you can run the country well. You don't need to be under any other country—you can be independent."

She points to neighbouring countries like South Korea and Singapore as proof that prioritising education transforms economies. "Look at South Korea in the 1950s—a very poor country. Now it's a powerhouse because they invested in education."

Thanaporn notes that while progress is being made—with women running approximately 33% of SMEs in Thailand—the global average for female business leadership remains around 15%. "That's why we have to increase more," she insists.

Her message to aspiring businesswomen is elegant in its simplicity: "Great leaders inspire greatness in others." This philosophy encapsulates her approach to mentorship and leadership—creating tools for generation after generation and fostering supportive networks. As Thailand continues its economic development, leaders like Thanaporn represent a powerful fusion of traditional Thai values with global business acumen. By maintaining cultural diplomacy while breaking through gendered expectations, they're creating new pathways for the next generation of female entrepreneurs.

This interview is part of our special feature on women in business, celebrating their achievements and examining the evolving landscape of female leadership across Southeast Asia.

This is **polly**
in **sunny cloud** color
comes in size **35**

perforated membrane for
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The Alignment Principle

Charlie Whalley's Key to Effective Leadership

"Don't believe everything that you think."

This mantra encapsulates Charlie Whalley's approach to coaching—challenging perceptions and uncovering blind spots with empathy rather than judgment.

Born in Bangkok to British parents in the late '70s and granted Thai citizenship at birth, Charlie embodies what anthropologists call a "third culture kid"—someone raised in a cultural environment different from their parents'.

"When I went to the UK for boarding school, I felt 100% abroad," she explains. "I had no idea about British pop culture—no Neighbours or Home and Away. It was like going from a simple day school in Bangkok to Hogwarts in the Cotswolds."

She describes an enormous driveway leading to a listed manor house full of secret passages, being sorted into houses—a real-life wizarding school. The cultural displacement was significant.

"British people don't always understand my experiences, and they see me as a 'Farang'," she says, using the Thai word for foreigner. "Yet I had a Thai family who I called 'Mum' and 'Dad' in Thai. No one could know that by looking at me, but it's a big part of who I am."





Charlie's coaching philosophy emerges directly from her varied experiences. "I was very protective of the Thai girls at boarding school who didn't speak much English.

That experience made me aware of how people can be excluded in professional settings too."

In international business environments, she's particularly conscious of language barriers. "Native English speakers easily forget how exhausting it is for others to keep up. I create spaces where everyone feels included."

What sets Charlie apart is her deep curiosity about what remains unsaid. "Coaching isn't just about listening to words—it's noticing what's beneath the surface. I observe body language and energy shifts, offering these as observations so we can get curious about them together."

"What I always tell my clients is that happiness isn't a life without struggle, but knowing what's worth struggling for. When you figure that out, you get up each day knowing your life has meaning—you're going for it, bringing your whole self to it."

One of Charlie's specialties is helping clients recognise and overcome their inner critics. She uses a pie chart metaphor to explain our knowledge gaps: "There's a tiny slice representing what you know you know, another small slice for what you know you don't know, and then the vast majority

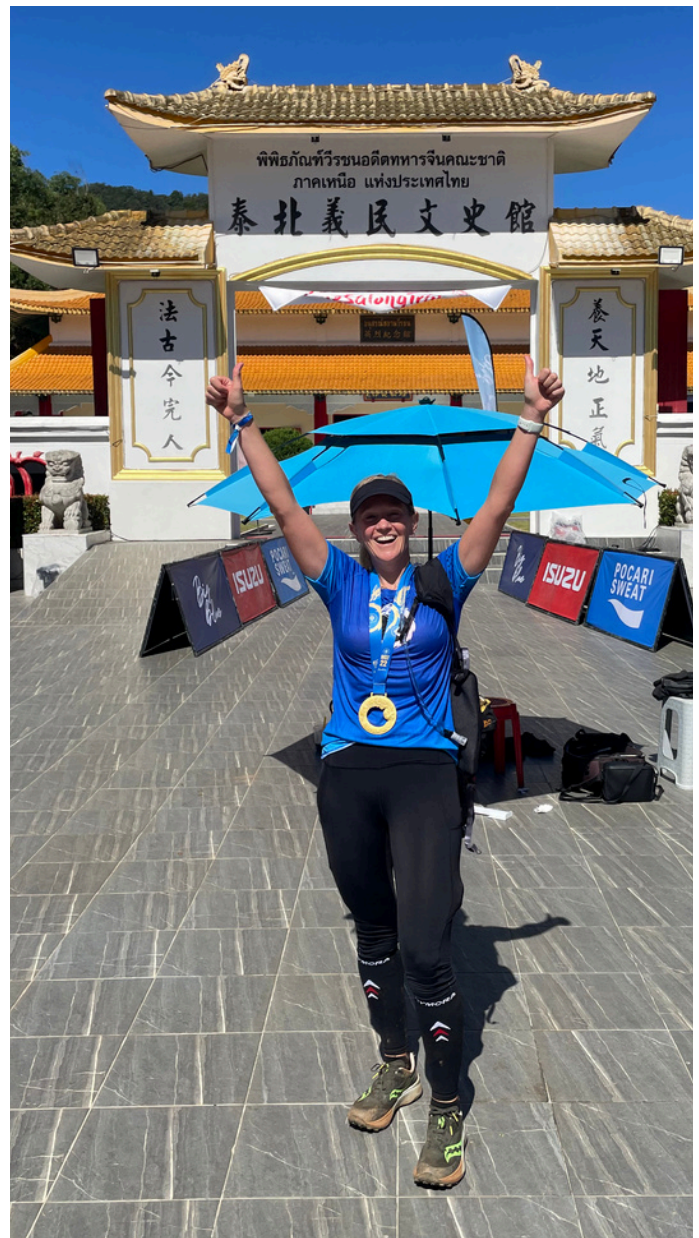


what you don't know you don't know. My job is holding up a mirror so clients see themselves from new angles." She's particularly thoughtful about challenges in professional environments. "Imposter syndrome is real, but I think we overuse it," she says. "If a woman speaks up and is dismissed, that's not imposter syndrome—it's a systemic issue. We must be careful not to internalise external barriers as self-doubt." "International Women's Day is perfect for highlighting these issues so they can finally be addressed."

As a certified Mental Health First Aider, Charlie brings a comprehensive approach to wellbeing. "In the UK, every office has someone trained for physical emergencies. Mental Health First Aid is about noticing when someone's struggling. If someone usually chatty suddenly withdraws, that's a sign to check in."

Her own wellness routine begins before she gets out of bed each morning. "I do a quick check-in—how am I feeling today? I started this during COVID. I use various tools to shift my mindset and energy, and I don't get up until I'm ready to have a good day."

She's currently exploring gentler forms of breathwork. "Everyone knows Wim Hof's intense techniques, but I prefer a more feminine, restorative approach that resets the nervous system and improves sleep."





Living across different environments has taught Charlie the importance of creating small rituals to feel grounded. "When I moved to Paris, I felt disconnected from my roots. I started cooking Thai food weekly and getting monthly Thai massages. Even briefly speaking Thai with someone helped ground me."

Her ultimate comfort food? "Pad Kra Pao," she says, referring to the spicy Thai basil stir-fry. "Though I can't eat it too spicy—I'm not that Thai!" For pure nostalgia, nothing beats Walkers' Salt & Vinegar crisps, a treat from childhood summers in the UK that weren't available in Thailand.

Charlie's unique perspective allows her to see the multidimensional facets that make up each person. With her blend of experiences and coaching expertise, she helps leaders recognise their own path to authentic growth.

Charlie Whalley is an ICF PCC-certified coach and Master EFT Practitioner based in Bangkok. She works with Dramatic Difference, a boutique L&D agency in Asia, and can be contacted via [LinkedIn](#) or www.charliewcoaching.com.

WORDS SHAPE WORLDS

WE
TRANSLATE
BOTH



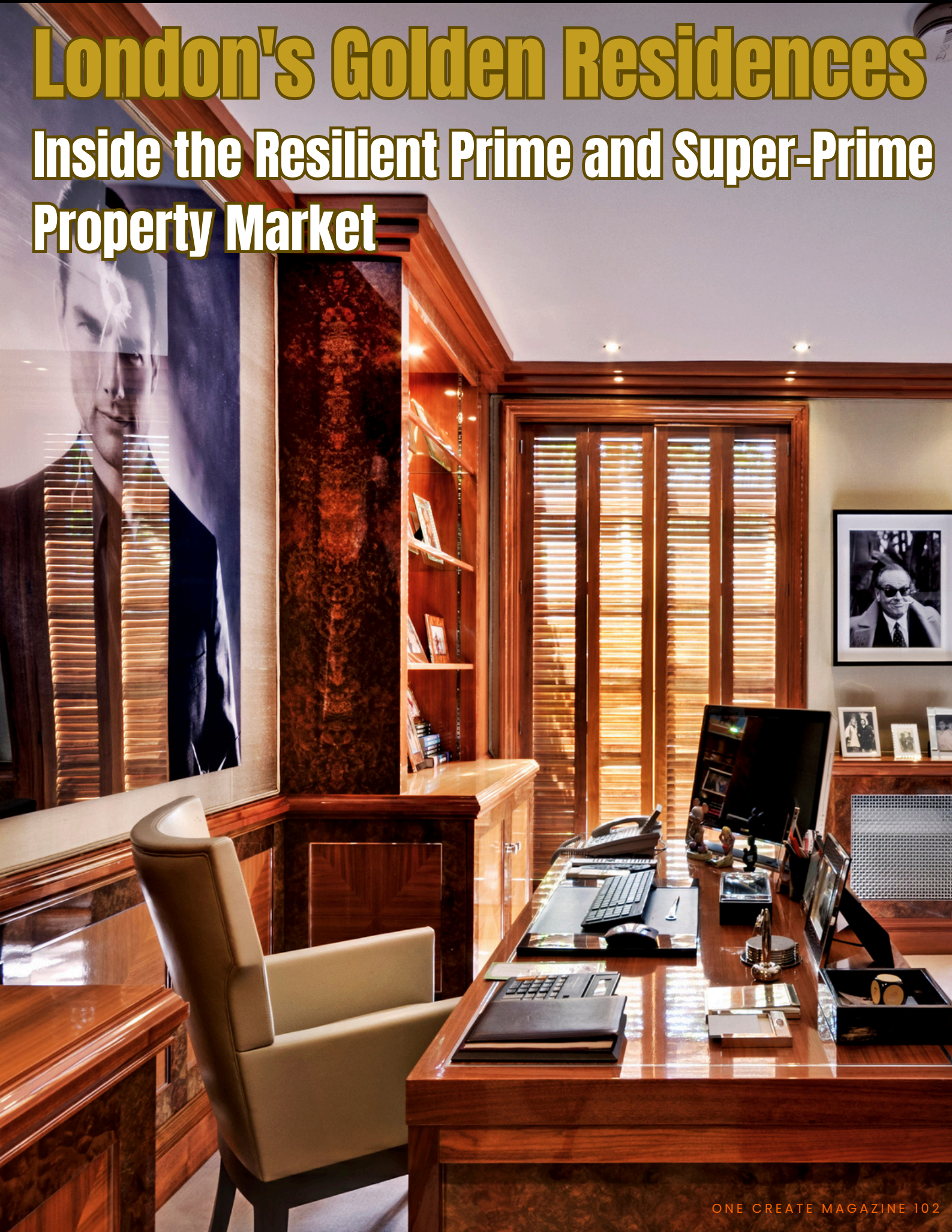
The Same Great Taste.. In Any Language

รสชาติเยี่ยมเหมือนกันในทุกภาษา

Home Life .

London's Golden Residences

Inside the Resilient Prime and Super-Prime Property Market









The rarified air of London's prime and super-prime property market continues to defy gravity, even as the broader property landscape navigates choppy waters. For the discerning buyer with deep pockets, the capital's most exclusive postcodes remain an irresistible proposition, combining heritage, luxury and that most valuable of commodities: prestigious London real estate.

"We're seeing a remarkable resilience at the top end,"


Despite global economic headwinds, the allure of a Mayfair townhouse or a Knightsbridge penthouse seems undiminished. International buyers are returning in force, drawn by the relative value offered by sterling and the long-term investment potential that only London can offer.

"We're seeing a remarkable resilience at the top end," notes Jonathan Arron, Director of Jonathon Arron Residential.

"Properties above £10 million are trading with surprising frequency, often with multiple interested parties."







The pandemic-era exodus to the countryside has reversed, with wealthy buyers once again gravitating towards the convenience and cultural richness of central London living. Areas like Chelsea, Belgravia, Kensington, Hampstead and St. John's Wood continue to command astronomical sums, with average values in these golden postcodes hovering around £2,000 per square foot, and exceptional properties fetching north of £5,000.

What's driving this buoyancy? In part, it's the perennial appeal of London as a safe haven for wealth. But equally important is the evolving nature of luxury itself. Today's ultra-high-net-worth buyers expect more than merely square footage and a prestigious address. They demand architectural distinction, cutting-edge technology, exceptional craftsmanship, and increasingly, impeccable sustainability credentials.





"The definition of luxury has fundamentally changed," continues Jonathan Arron "Today's buyer might spend £30 million on a property, then invest another £10 million in creating something truly unique. The emphasis is on bespoke, one-of-a-kind homes that reflect personal taste rather than simply following trends."

This pursuit of individuality has sparked a renaissance in British craftsmanship, with artisans from across the country being commissioned to create everything from hand-carved staircases to bespoke joinery. Interior designers report unprecedented demand for the rare and the exceptional – whether that's marble sourced from previously untapped quarries or light fittings crafted by leading sculptors.





Even as technology advances, with homes featuring cinema rooms that rival professional theater's and wellness areas that would put five-star spas to shame, there remains an abiding appreciation for London's architectural heritage. Period properties with contemporary interiors remain the gold standard, allowing owners to enjoy the best of both worlds.

For developers catering to this rarefied market, the bar continues to rise. Gone are the days when a concierge and gym would suffice. Today's super-prime developments offer residents everything from wine storage and tasting rooms to virtual golf simulators and private art galleries.

As London cements its position as a global hub for culture, finance and technology, its prime property market looks set to maintain its allure for the world's wealthiest individuals. For those with the means to participate, the capital's golden streets seem likely to retain their lustre for generations to come.









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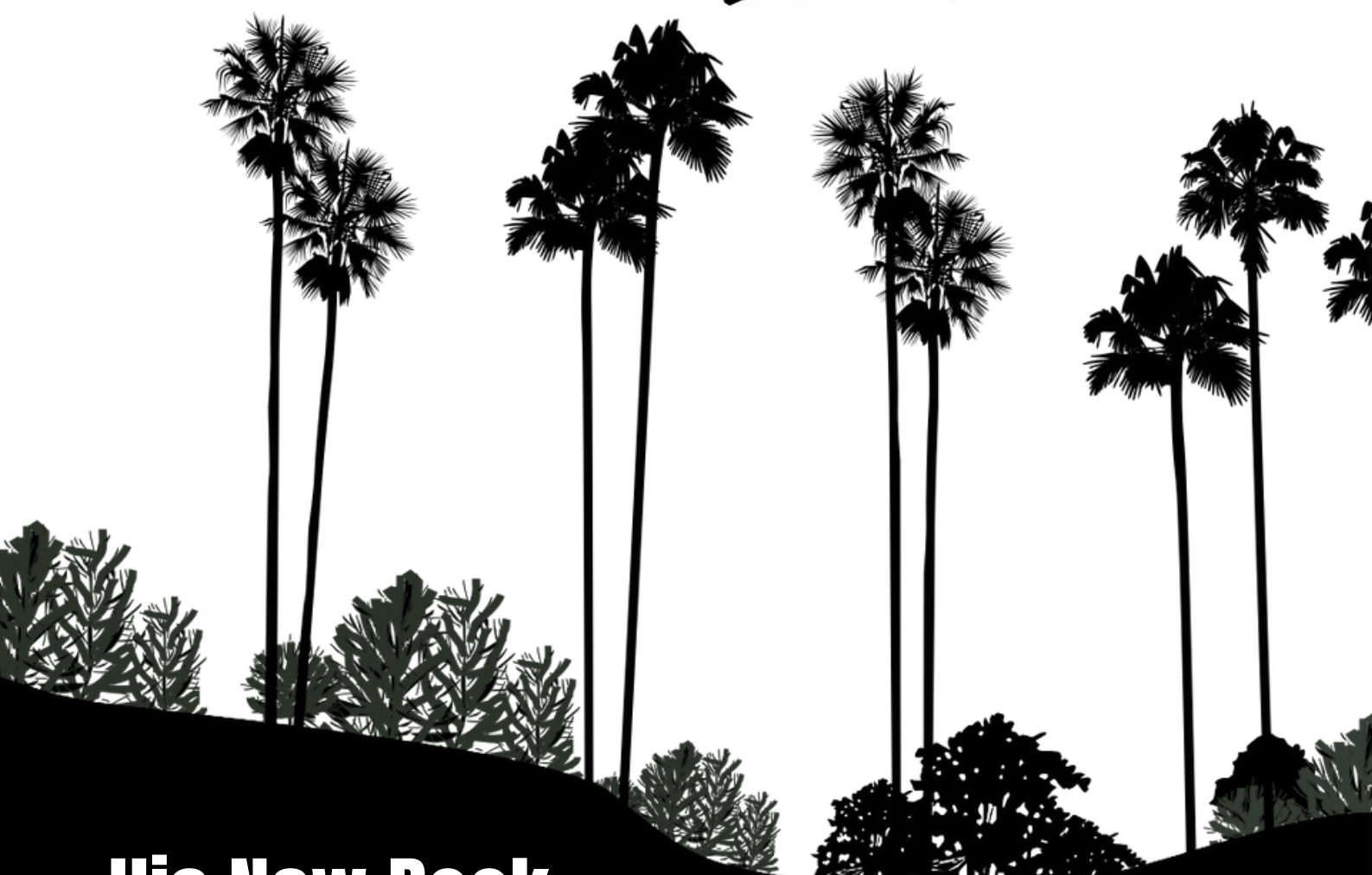
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In Review

Special Interview

Lou Matthews



His New Book

HOLLYWOODSKI

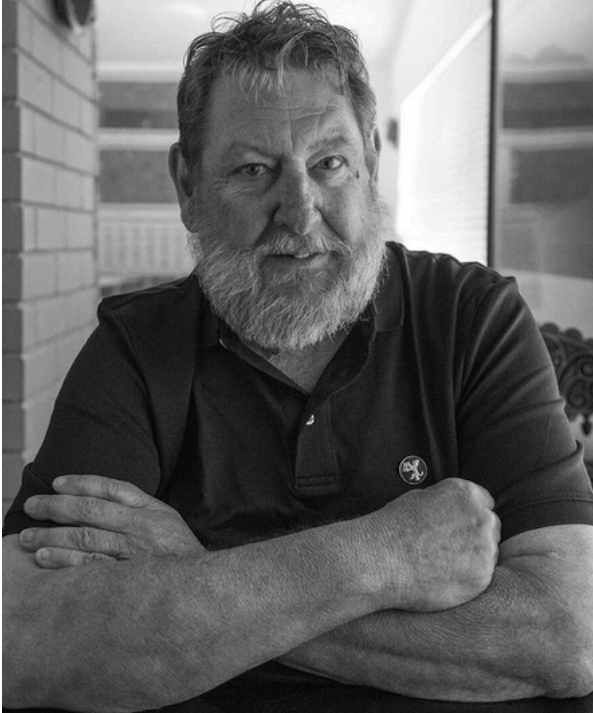
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THE LONG FADE OUT

LOU MATHEWS CHARTS HOLLYWOOD'S MARGINS



From his Beachwood Canyon home, the Los Angeles novelist discusses "Hollywoodski," a forty-year literary project that captures the city's dreamers, schemers, and survivors

Interview by Buzz Langton

It's 10 A.M. in Bangkok when Lou Mathews appears on my screen from his Beachwood Canyon home, where it's 8 P.M. The monsoon rain hammers against my windows as we settle into a cross-continental conversation about "Hollywoodski," his novel-in-stories published in January after decades in the making.

At seventy-eight, Lou Mathews is a fourth-generation Angeleno whose white beard and measured cadence suggest a man who has observed much and spoken carefully about it. "I was born in Glendale," he tells me, referencing notes from my notebook. "My California family dates back to the Gold Rush days."

Lou Mathews Los Angeles credentials run deep, lending authenticity to "Hollywoodski," which chronicles screenwriter Dale Davis's forty-year journey through the entertainment industry's boom-and-bust cycles. The book's fifteen interconnected stories track Dale Davis from promising newcomer to embittered veteran to reluctant sage, a trajectory familiar to many on Hollywood's margins.

"I describe Los Angeles as 'the city of a thousand villages,'" Mathews says, a phrase I notice appears both in my interview notes and in the novel itself. "It takes so long to learn the place."

As editor of One Create Magazine in Bangkok, I'm drawn to parallels between Thailand's labyrinthine capital and Los Angeles—both cities where ancient and modern, traditional and avant-garde, coexist in uneasy proximity. When I mention Thai Town, located about a mile and a half from Mathews' home and celebrated for having some of the most authentic Thai cuisine outside Thailand, he acknowledges the city's multicultural tapestry.

This patchwork quality extends to "Hollywoodski," whose stories span diverse Los Angeles micro-cultures. From Hollywood dive bars to Nicaraguan film sets to elite Westside mansions, Davis navigates worlds that exist side by side yet rarely intersect.

Mathews' own Beachwood Canyon story includes unexpected characters. When he and his wife, Alison (a poet and retired lawyer, according to my notes), moved into their apartment in the early 1980s, they were startled by their property manager—a punk in leather pants and jacket, oddly watering plants.

"This was Miguel Sandoval," Mathews explains, referring to the now-established character actor known for roles in films like "Jurassic Park" and series including "Medium." "We thought we'd made a mistake moving in—this strange punk managing the property. How wrong we were." The anecdote exemplifies the unexpected connections that define Los Angeles and populate Mathews' fiction.

"Hollywoodski" itself had an appropriately Hollywood-esque development hell. "The first story in the book was written probably thirty-five or forty years ago," Mathews explains. That story, "Individual Medley," appears in the collection as one supposedly written by protagonist Davis himself.

"I didn't know at that point there was a book," he continues. "I just kept writing these stories, publishing them in places like ZYZZYVA, New England Review, and Black Clock."

The turning point came after writing "Some Animals Are More Equal Than Others," in which Davis co-writes and directs a doomed remake of Sam Peckinpah's cult film "Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia." This mirrors Mathews' own brief foray into screenwriting.

"I loved taking apart that script and rewriting it," he acknowledges, "but I had no patience for what came next. It took too long to get answers because of the money involved. I was spoiled by the godlike powers you have writing fiction and plays, where there's far less money but far more freedom."

According to my notes, this experience marked a fork in Mathews' professional road. While he could have persisted in Hollywood, he instead chose literature, publishing the novels "L.A. Breakdown" (1999) and "Shaky Town" (2021), alongside teaching at UCLA Extension since 1989, where he was named "Teacher of the Year" in 2002.

"After writing the Alfredo Garcia story," Mathews explains, "I realised these pieces were becoming a progression. I then knew there was a book there and knew the stories that had to be written."

But assembling it just took a long, long time—probably a ten-year period. The last four or five stories, which form a kind of patchwork filling in the gaps, were written in the last year."



Mathews' pre-literary career included stints as a car mechanic and street racer experiences that informed "L.A. Breakdown," which the Los Angeles Times named a "Best Book" of 1999. Looking at my notes, I see "Ken Kiskey stalwart - some/same pencil" written beside "acid pencil" and "Ellen Chadwick - organic garden maven," suggesting influences and contemporaries from this period.

He specialised in British cars, which led to an unusual inheritance: he was given—or as he puts it, "left with"—three or four 1959 Rileys, notable for being the only year that model was sold in the United States.

This mechanical expertise and specific knowledge of automotive subcultures gives his writing the gritty authenticity that critics have praised.

"Hollywoodski" centres on Bowdler's, a fictional bar inspired by Hollywood establishments like the Frolic Room and Power House. It's where Davis and his companions—fellow industry outcasts Oscar Grunfeld and Jaime Rubin—nurse drinks and trade stories. Their conversations form the book's emotional core, a chorus delivering cynical wisdom and improbable tales that reveal the industry's absurdities.

"I have a bunch of friends who had a hit and have sort of lived on that," Mathews notes when discussing these characters' inspirations. "But it's such a strange business. I look at friends who made the wrong choice, who turned down the low-budget independent gig to take the high-priced job—and the low-budget gig turned out to be a 'Drugstore Cowboy' or 'Reservoir Dogs,' while the high-paying gig turned out to be something that came and went. That happens a lot."

While Davis isn't based on any specific screenwriter, Mathews explains he's "more of an amalgam" of figures he's encountered throughout his decades in Los Angeles—particularly during his eight-year stint as a contributing editor and restaurant reviewer for L.A. Style magazine, positions noted in the documents from UCLA Extension.

Mathews studied under Raymond Carver during his M.F.A. program at UC Santa Cruz, graduating in 1972—an experience that shaped the economical prose style evident in "Hollywoodski." "I think about stories for a long time before I write them," he explains, "but the writing process is fairly fast once I start. There's very little editing; most of the time it's cuts.

I really like taking things down to the bone."

He describes himself as "something of a miniaturist," a characterisation that appears in my notes and perfectly captures the precision of his writing. This lean approach defines "Hollywoodski," whose characters often communicate through movie references—a language Mathews speaks fluently.

As we discuss his economical prose, I note parallels between Mathews' style and that of Belgian journalist-turned-novelist Georges Simenon, famous for his lean, unadorned writing and keen observational eye. Mathews nods appreciatively at the comparison. Both writers strip language to its essentials, allowing character and setting to emerge through carefully selected details rather than elaborate description.

Like Simenon's Paris or Liège, Mathews' Los Angeles becomes a living entity through precise, atmospheric brushstrokes rather than panoramic views.

Looking at my notes, I see "theme/stance—out there" with an arrow pointing to "creative community" and "if people don't like the answer, change the question" - phrases that capture both Hollywood's collaborative spirit and its slippery relationship with truth.

The title story alone references dialogue from "Joan of Arc" (1948), "The Hustler" (1961), and "In the Heat of the Night" (1967), alongside mentions of "Easy Rider," the 1976 "King Kong" remake, and "Two-Lane Blacktop."

Among Mathews' playwriting credits, according to my notes, are "Rancho Alisos," "A Curse on Chavez Ravine," "You Did Some Good Work Once," "Jaws of Life," and a radio play called "Captain Manners." His first full-length play, "The Duke's Development," won second prize in the 2000 National Repertory Theatre Foundations National Playwriting Contest - experiences that informed his creation of Davis's dialogue and narrative voice.

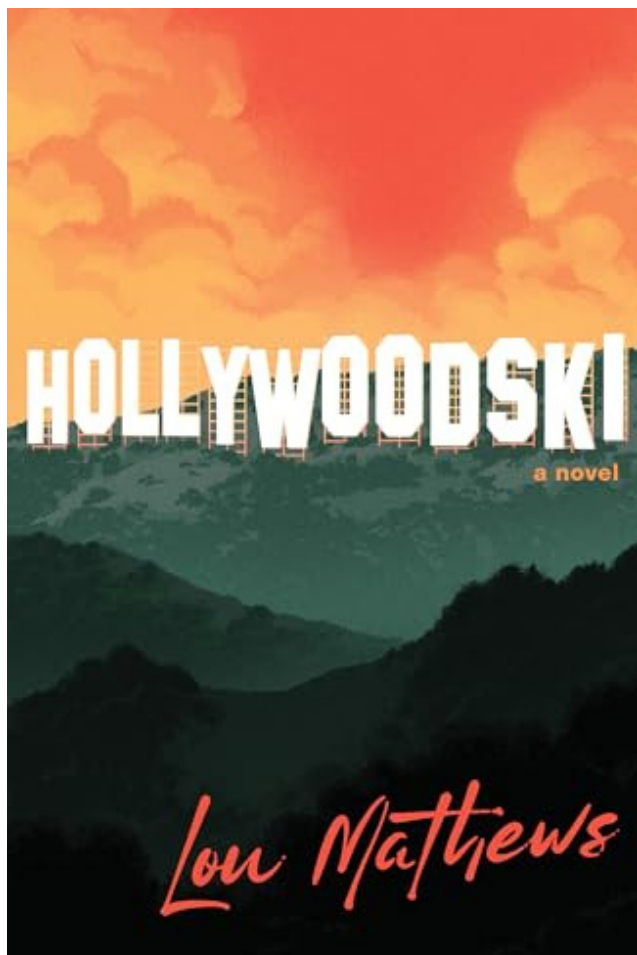
Throughout his career, Lou Mathews has accumulated numerous accolades, including a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Fiction, a California Arts Council Fiction Fellowship, a Pushcart Prize, and a Katherine Anne Porter Prize—credentials that belie the book's themes of creative perseverance despite institutional rejection.

Looking ahead, Mathews mentions several projects, including a short story that has challenged him for three decades: "The Death of a Democrat." With characteristic dry humour, he adds, "That's particularly appropriate right now, don't you think?"

In "Hollywoodski," Mathews has created what critics are positioning as an essential addition to the pantheon of Hollywood fiction, standing alongside works by Nathanael West and F. Scott Fitzgerald in its portrayal of the dream factory's disillusionment and persistent hope.

The book spans from 1967 to 2007, tracking both Davis's personal journey and the industry's evolution from the final days of old Hollywood through the corporate takeover era.

As the monsoon in Bangkok intensifies and night settles more deeply over Beachwood Canyon, our conversation draws to a close. The video connection falters briefly before stabilising to reveal Mathews against a backdrop of bookshelves laden with decades of reading—evidence of a life dedicated to literature rather than screenwriting's fleeting rewards.



"Hollywoodski" joins Mathews' earlier works in capturing Los Angeles in all its contradictory glory—a city of dreams and disappointments, of villages within villages, where the line between success and failure often depends more on timing and connections than on talent. It's a testament to those who continue telling stories despite rejection and setbacks, finding meaning in the attempt rather than commercial success—much like its author.

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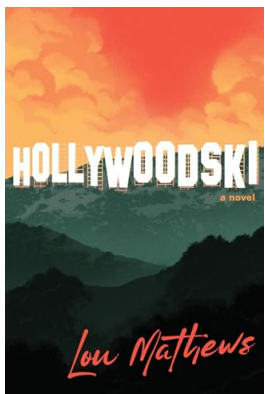
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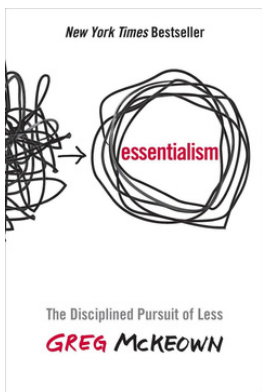
Welcome to the Book-Shelf section of One Create Magazine, where we bring you a curated selection of books that may have flown under your radar but are well worth your time.

Whether you're on a journey of personal growth, seeking spiritual enlightenment, or simply looking for an inspiring read, our recommendations aim to introduce you to powerful works that can transform the way you think and live.

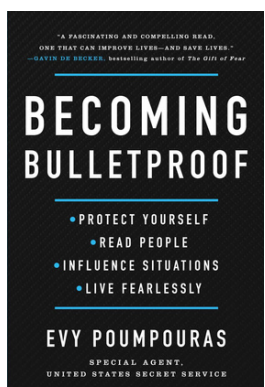
Dive into these thought-provoking books and let them guide you toward new perspectives, deeper understanding, and perhaps even a path to self-discovery or maybe just a damn great read!



Hollywoodski: Lou Mathews's *Hollywoodski* is a darkly comic, masterfully crafted collection following faded screenwriter Dale Davis and his fellow Hollywood outcasts as they navigate the ruins of their careers with bitter wisdom, persistent creativity, and surprising flashes of tenderness. Published by Tiger Van Books



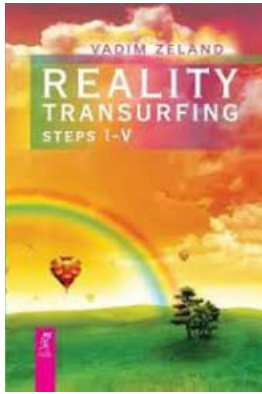
Essentialism: *The Disciplined Pursuit of Less* by Greg McKeown presents a philosophy of deliberately focusing on what is truly essential in life and work, advocating for the elimination of nonessential activities to achieve greater impact. The book outlines a practical framework for identifying what matters most, saying no to distractions, creating systems for effortless execution, and ultimately living a more meaningful life through making fewer but better choices.



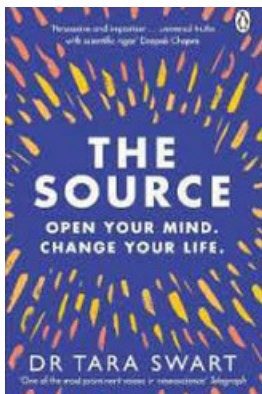
Becoming Bulletproof: by Evy Poumpouras is a comprehensive guide that draws from the author's experience as a Secret Service agent to teach readers how to develop mental resilience, read people effectively, and navigate challenging situations with confidence. The book combines practical security advice with psychological insights on overcoming fear, establishing boundaries, and developing the mindset needed to handle life's challenges like a trained professional.



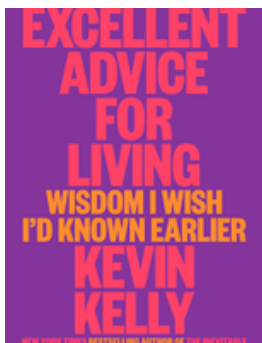
Do It Today: by Darius Foroux delivers practical advice for overcoming procrastination and improving productivity through developing a sustainable system focused on consistent daily action rather than quick fixes. Through thirty insightful articles organized into three sections, Foroux shares his personal journey and actionable strategies for taking charge of your life, maximizing your time, and achieving meaningful goals through small, compounding efforts.



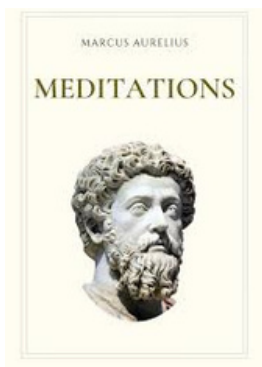
Reality Transurfing: a philosophical practice developed by Russian quantum physicist Vadim Zeland, presents an alternative view of reality where individuals can "surf" between different life scenarios by managing their thoughts, energy, and intentions. The core concept suggests that we don't create our reality but rather choose it from infinite existing variants, with key principles including the pendulum (thought energy structures), importance reduction, coordination of intention, and the abandonment of negative thinking.



The Source: by Dr. Tara Swart combines neuroscience with manifestation techniques, offering a science-backed approach to harnessing brain plasticity and intention to achieve personal goals and transform your life. Dr. Swart bridges traditional mindfulness practices with neurological research, explaining how visualization, action boards, and mindset shifts can rewire neural pathways to manifest desired outcomes.



Excellent Advice for Living: by Kevin Kelly distills decades of wisdom into practical, actionable insights covering lifelong learning, meaningful relationships, passion and purpose, financial wisdom, health habits, community engagement, and reflective living. Kelly's concise guidance serves as both compass and companion, offering readers a blueprint for building a more fulfilled life through small, consistent actions that foster growth, connection, and lasting contentment



Meditations: by Marcus Aurelius offers profound Stoic wisdom through the personal journal entries of the Roman Emperor, providing timeless insights on virtue, resilience, and finding tranquility amid life's inevitable challenges. Written without intention for publication, this intimate philosophical masterpiece continues to resonate across millennia, offering practical guidance for maintaining mental fortitude and ethical clarity in a chaotic world.



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Trailblazing Women Unite at Bangkok's Leading Women's Summit 2025

The intersection of leadership, innovation, and social impact took center stage last month as the Australian New Zealand Welcome Group (ANZWG) in partnership with the Advance Australia Council hosted the highly acclaimed Leading Women's Summit 2025 in Bangkok.

Held at the elegant Hilton Sukhumvit on February 10th, the summit drew 170 distinguished attendees and featured 17 influential women leaders who shared their expertise through an innovative rotating roundtable format that fostered intimate discussions and meaningful connections.

The rotating roundtable design created a uniquely collaborative atmosphere, with each discussion limited to nine participants, enabling genuine dialogue not possible in traditional conference settings.

Distinguished speakers included ambassadors and leaders spanning diverse fields:

- H.E. Dr Angela Macdonald: Australian Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand
- H.E. Ping Kitnikone: Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Canada to the Kingdom of Thailand
- H.E. Millicent Cruz-Paredes: Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines to the Kingdom of Thailand
- Kae Chollada (Mekratri) Sirisant: Founder/President (The Voice Foundation)
- Wing Commander Chuleeporn Sungman: Assistant Director of Operations Division at the Peace Operations Center, under the Directorate of Joint Operations of the Royal Thai Armed Forces (RTArF)
- Jenn Villalobos: Chief Digitisation Business Officer (Asset World Corporation)
- Pamela Hongsakul: Leadership and Media Advisor
- Pol. Col. Dr. Achita Thakur: Lecturer, Guest Speaker, Co-course Supervisor
- Lyn Kok: Founder/CEO (Mula-X)
- Jasmine Ariff: Country Lead (AccelerAsia Pte Ltd.)
- Mo Seetubtim: Founder/CEO (The Happiness Planner)
- Rupali Babu: Co-Founder (COO BCX Design Pte. Ltd.)
- Raphephan Naweera: President/Founder (Wine Aspect)
- Naphalai Areesorn: Editorial Advisor (Media Magination - Time Out, Cocktail), Former Editor-in-Chief (Thailand Tatler)
- Dr. Karine Lohitnavy-Frick: Founder/Master Connector (Midas PR), Chair (PRCA Thailand)
- Opal Piyaporn Kijitkhun: CEO (Senna Lab)
- Lynn Howard: Business Strategist, International Speaker, Author

The summit, strategically aligned with International Women's Day, exemplified ANZWG's six-decade commitment to empowering women and supporting charitable initiatives throughout Thailand. Beyond fostering professional connections, the event raised over 50,000 THB for the Association for the Promotion of the Status of Women's Emergency Shelter.

ANZWG continues its tradition of impactful community engagement, having raised millions of Baht for children's and women's charities in Thailand through signature events like its renowned Melbourne Cup lunch, which generated over 600,000 Baht for charity in each of the past two years.

[Editor's Note: The accompanying photo montage features the summit's distinguished speakers and participants engaging in the dynamic roundtable discussions that defined this groundbreaking event.]



CHANGING LIVES THROUGH THE BEAUTIFUL GAME

Play Football Asia is using football as a powerful tool for social change across Thailand and beyond

In the remote areas of Southern Thailand, where only one in five children has access to organized sports, a remarkable initiative is taking shape. Play Football Asia, a not-for-profit organization, is harnessing the universal language of football to create pathways to opportunity and inspire hope in underserved communities.

"Football has the unique power to bring people together, inspire positive change, and break down barriers," explains Adam Thornton, founder of Play Football Asia. With over 30 years of experience in football coaching and community engagement, Thornton has witnessed firsthand how structured sports programs can transform young lives.

The initiative's recent three-month proof of concept in Thailand delivered impressive results. Working alongside Phuket Andaman FC and local foundations including Sunshine Village, Gate for Football, and Youth Football Home, they provided 100 children with their first-ever match-day experience—completely free of charge.

A SCALABLE VISION FOR CHANGE

Now, Play Football Asia is preparing to launch an ambitious pilot program starting in April 2025. The initiative aims to engage up to 700 children and young people through structured football training, education, and mentorship. While based in Phuket, the program will extend its reach to underserved provinces including Phang Nga, Pattani, Songkhla, and Narathiwat—areas where an estimated 3.5 million children lack structured sports opportunities. "We're building more than just football skills," says Thornton. "Our sustainable model integrates life skills training, health education, and cultural exchange to drive social inclusion and empowerment."

The organization's innovative partnerships with iSportsAnalysis and Cognigoals enhance the program with cutting-edge performance analysis and cognitive training methods inspired by FC Bayern Munich's methodologies.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Play Football Asia is actively seeking individuals and organizations to support their vision through sponsorships, community initiatives, and awareness-raising. With funding options for both six-week (£3,000) and three-month (£6,000) pilot programs, contributors can make a tangible difference in hundreds of young lives.

As Thornton puts it, "Every contribution, big or small, directly impacts lives today."

To learn more about Play Football Asia or to get involved, contact Adam Thornton at adam@playfootballasia.com or visit [The website](#)





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- Proven Excellence: Trusted by leading brands including Le Meridian, Wyndham Sea Pearl Resort, Maison Kyser..
- Global Reach: Featured content in our digital magazine reached over 30,000 readers worldwide in 2024
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ESSENTIAL PACKAGE

- 10 Professional Food / Interior Photos
- 1 Social Media Reel
- Basic Photo Editing & Color Correction
- All Images Formatted for Social Media Platforms
- Digital File Delivery in Multiple Resolutions



PREMIUM PACKAGE

- 15 Professional Food / Interior Photos
- 2 Social Media Reels (formatted for Instagram/Facebook, 9:16 ratio)
- Advanced Photo Editing & Color Correction
- All Images Formatted for Social Media & Website Use
- Digital File Delivery in Multiple Resolutions



PROFESSIONAL PACKAGE

- 20 Professional Food / Interior Photos
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