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Asian Golf Travel Nation - February 2015



Dear Golf Travelers,

Golf in Asia



Happy New Year friends! Think this greeting is a little belated? No, not if you have Asia in your mind and plans. Read on!

February 19th marks the start of the Chinese Lunar New Year. The coming 12 months will be celebrated as the Year of the Goat. The goat is gentle and calm, which works great on the golf courses as a level disposition and mindset are mental keys to a good score. Two is also a lucky number for the Year of the Goat and I like 2s a lot as it means birdies on par 3s. Therefore, I extend to golfers worldwide, the traditional greeting for this season - "Gung Xi Fat Choy"; may the Goat bring you excellent [golf experiences](#) and many birdies throughout the year.

Please note that throughout the region many of the local staff and service personal will travel back to their hometowns to celebrate the Lunar New Year from February 15-22. Many smaller shops will be closed, but all hotels and golf courses will be open for business as usual.

This February edition of the Asian Golf Travel Nation contains original and news breaking stories on the state of golf in Asia as well as provides useful golf course information, unique golf playing tips for Asia's tropical environment, and special golf travel promotions.

At Golfasian, the busiest time ever seen in Asia golf travel is here and we are excited to see so many happy golfers here. To those who are travelling with us, thank you for your support. To others who are still at home; the winter is not over yet. I hope to welcome you to the sunny skies, warmer temperatures, and green golf courses very soon.

Registration for the inaugural [Accor Vietnam World Masters Golf Championship](#) to be held from 6 - 12 September 2015 in Danang, Vietnam is now open!

Now for the golf news from around the region.

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Golf news from around the region:

Thailand



Hua Hin: The award-winning [Black Mountain Golf Club](#) is ready to welcome the best players from the Asian Tour and European Tour when the inaugural Thailand Classic presented by Black Mountain gets underway this month. The Thailand Classic is the first tournament in the Kingdom to be co-sanctioned by the Asian Tour and European Tour in

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Black Mountain Golf Club



eight years and will see top players from both continents making their way to the award-winning Black Mountain Golf Club from February 12-15. The five-star property, which was opened in 2007, has undergone extensive makeover where the rough is now tougher and greens made firmer and faster for its showpiece.

Pattaya: [Siam Country Club Old Course](#) will once again play host to the premiere ladies professional golf tournament, "Honda LPGA Thailand 2015" from 26th February to 1st March. The tournament will feature the top 60 on the LPGA money list plus 10 exemptions competing in a 72-hole stroke play event with no cut. A prize purse of 1.5 million USD or 46 million THB will be on offer along with a special hole-in-one prize on the Par-3, 16th hole of an all-new Honda HR-V.

If you are in Thailand during these dates, [contact Golfasian](#) if you are interested to attend either of these spectacular golf events.

Vietnam



Hanoi: The Sky Course at [Sky Lake Golf & Resort](#) is officially open. Thankfully the new 18 is more user friendly than the original Lake Course. However, at over 7200 yards from the tips, it still is a challenge. Tee boxes and fairways are grassed with Paspalum, while greens are constructed of dwarf Bermuda. The Sky Course is a public access course, while the Lake Course is reserved mainly for member play. New IMG Management also insures good course conditions and operations. Welcome Adam and Jon!

Phu Quoc: Pronounced "FOO KWOK" and better known as Vietnam's Hawaii, this tropical island now has its own 27-hole international standard golf course, Surrounded by mostly forests, the IMG designed Vinpearl Golf Club Phu Quoc is very similar to its sister course ([Vin Pearl Nha Trang](#)) further up the coast. Once again, the course brings out the best of what this island is known for. Idyllic settings frame most holes while Paspalum grassed fairways are routed amidst the coconut palm trees alongside the China Sea. The three nines have distinct settings as characterized by their names; Ocean, Forest, and Mountain. I look forward to getting over to Phu Quoc in the near future.

Cambodia



Siem Reap: Recently named as Cambodia's premier course, the award-winning Nick Faldo-designed [Angkor Golf Resort](#) is staging the biggest pairs event ever in the country. The Angkor Four-Ball Championship is to be held April 2-4 and is open to male, female and mixed pairs of club golfers. The better ball format is a fun competition that you don't see too often. Playing as a team enables

Siam Country Club Old Course



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Sky Lake Golf & Resort



Vinpearl Golf Club Phu Quoc



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Another good reason to be [registered](#) on the Golfasian mailing list!



participants to compete with an old friend or someone handed-picked to complement your game. Either way it all adds to event fun. Some great prizes are on offer and the team with the lowest 36-hole gross score will be event champs. What blows my mind is the \$285 per person entry fee which is less than the 3 rounds of golf itself, not to mention all inclusive food and beverages, transfers, and player souvenirs. For those wanting to stay at tournament hotels, an additional \$120 gets you into a 5-star hotel with breakfast each day too. This is really too good to be true and the best way I have ever heard to both golf and experience Siam Reap all in one go. A great time for all is on tap for the first week of April in Cambodia. Let me know if you want more information.

With that I wish all golf travellers a great start to the Year of the Goat. The golf, culture and beauty of Asia continue to be perfectly suited for an unforgettable golf experience. Tailor-made itineraries fitting your specific needs, expectations and budgets are our specialty; contact us for a [competitive quote](#).

Until the next month, happy golfing and I hope to see YOU in the area very soon!

Mark Siegel
Managing Director of Golfasian

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Asia Golf Week - Amateur Golf Weeks in Asia



After a great response to our [Hua Hin](#) and [Pattaya](#) amateur golf weeks (some positions still available) our next group tour is going to be in [Phuket](#) starting 8th June.

This event has always been well received for those players looking to get out of the winter season in Australia, and for players looking to play golf mid-year in a warm climate with some spectacular golf courses. The featured golf course in the Phuket event would have to be [Red Mountain Golf Club](#). Red Mountain Golf Course opened in 2007 and is now considered Phuket's most spectacla

golf course. The course was designed to take advantage of a huge variety of landforms and dramatic elevation changes, making it Phuket's hilliest eighteen. The entire Red Mountain site is an abandoned tin mine. The hole routing explores the four corners of the former tin mine property presenting a memorable tour of Phuket's historical landscapes.

Other courses to be included in this 4-round event will be the recently re-modelled and re-opened [Laguna Golf Club](#). The golf course is undulating with excellent putting surfaces and playing conditions. Fairway tiers, depressions and mounds dominate play. Wide fairways are seemingly easy, but golfers

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still need to position their ball to have good scoring opportunities. Many holes on the front nine are defined by the existing water bodies which have been naturally landscaped. The back nine meanders through mature trees. Both nines take advantage of large overhanging trees which influence play and frame most of the holes. The rough areas are a mix of wood chip and native grasses.

Our tournament hotel for Phuket is the [Dusit D2 Patong](#) and is just a short walk to one of the most famous beaches in Phuket, Patong Beach.

Our Early Bird Booking offer is 1 free night accommodation or free round of golf at Phuket Country Club for payment in full prior to 8th March 2015.

[To register for the Phuket Golf Week, please click this link](#)

Other events throughout the year can be found on this link www.asiagolfweek.com

Golf Travel Insurance

Have you thought about golf travel insurance for your [Golf Travel Insurance](#) trip? Golfasian has teamed up with Pacific Cross insurance to offer

- Personal accident insurance up to USD 65,000
- Medical treatment up to USD 75,000
- Emergency Evacuation & Repatriation
- Loss/Damage of Baggage up to USD 800
- Hole-In-One up to USD 300
- Loss/Damage of Golfing Equipment up to USD 2,000
- And a lot more!

[For more information visit our website.](#)

Hua Hin Properties - Mali Residence

[Tropical Garden Village](#) is a peaceful housing development 15 minutes north of Hua Hin and 15 minutes south of Cha Am. The facilities in this private estate include:

- A clubhouse only 1 minute walk from the house
- Very large common swimming pool overlooking a private lake in the complex
- A restaurant next to the swimming pool that is open every day and makes delicious Thai food and breakfasts

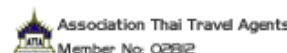
It's a great getaway home and at a price like this it's a steal.

[Tira Tiraa Hua Hin](#) is a lovely, modern condo development in the heart of Hua Hin, walking distance from the Night Market, the beach and the main bar area. This condo is fully equipped and fully furnished - all you need is your luggage and you're ready to move in. It's on the 6th floor of a total of 8 floors, with a beautiful mountain view. At a discounted rate, this is a great price for a city center holiday condo.

To find out more about how easy it is to purchase property and how the prices are comparatively much cheaper than those in the West, please contact the



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GM of our Property Division - Stephen van der Merwe - stephen@golfpropertythailand.com.

Feel free to [stop by our office](#) and see what we can offer or take our property tour (free of charge).

For a complete listing of Thailand properties [visit our website](#).

Golf Travel Testimonials

My name is Shabaz Shah (second from left). I am of Pakistani heritage and have lived in Lahore since 1997, although I was born in the UK.

I have been playing golf since 2004 and am now holding a handicap of 14. I am a member of the Royal Palm Golf & Country Club, widely considered to be one of the best in Pakistan following a comprehensive renovation of the course and facilities in 2003. It is a tight, challenging layout that features tree lined fairways, significant water hazards and tricky greens. A championship course, Royal Palm is host to many Pakistan Golf Association Tournaments.

This recent trip to Thailand was my seventh, but for golf it was my fourth in a row all with Golfasian. My friends and I (a group of 4) come back to Thailand because we feel strongly that Thailand delivers a superb overall experience. In particular, we enjoy our golf with the support of a caddy although we have that back home, but we also think the courses are of a high standard, varied in design with very good conditioning and of course there is the sound of the tropics in the background if you pause and listen.

In addition we feel so welcomed by the Thais who want us to have the best possible time while in their country, plus the weather is predictable.

Finally, if you get the right tour operator that runs everything efficiently and takes any issues in its stride, notwithstanding you have taken responsibility for organizing the trip you can still enjoy it without a care in the world.

My favourite course is Alpine Bangkok which has the "wow factor". Alpine is the complete package - fantastic aesthetics, a wide variety of shots required but totally playable, some really long and wide holes allowing you to go-for-it. Set in serene surroundings with an acceptable travel time from Bangkok and an excellent club house it's a must play. I also love Suwan which used to host the Thailand Open, but it frustrates me because for some reason I don't seem to be able to score well there.



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Vietnam Golf Tours



Cambodia - A Destination Review

Present day Cambodia is a peaceful and welcoming country that has retained the style of its former French colony heritage and mixed it with indigenous cultural charm to completely redevelop itself and regain its proud title as The Pearl of Asia.

The past decade has seen a flourishing tourist industry with some three million visitors per year enjoying a full range of cultural and luxury travel experiences. Since 2005 golf has been proving to be an increasingly important part of tourism in Cambodia.

Siem Reap is the main golf destination in Cambodia. Siem Reap is a small former French colonial town that has been visited by foreigners mainly to see the 1000 year old cradle of Khmer civilization and the Temples of Angkor Wat. There are now three international standard courses each with their own variety and challenges for everyone from amateurs to professionals. In addition, with the temples of Angkor Wat nearby, Siem Reap is proving to be one of the world's best undiscovered golf destinations.

[\[Read the entire destination review\]](#)



National Museum, Phnom Penh, Cambodia



Featured Golf Course - Phokeethra Country Club

Tee off in the 11th century and finish your round in the 21st century at Phokeethra Country Club. Situated in the heart of the Cambodian countryside, offering an 18-hole Championship golf course. With the gently sloping greens and sweeping fairways of the 18-hole, 72-par golf course, it presents a friendly challenge to passionate golfers.

[\[Read more about one of Cambodia's Best Golf Courses\]](#)



Phokeethra Country Club



Featured Hotel - Sofitel Angkor Phokeethra

After a tiring day at the field, enjoy a welcoming glass of fragrance lemon grass tea at Sofitel Angkor Phokeethra Golf & Spa resort, before setting off to the refreshing free form swimming pool with an evening cocktail by the swim up bar or unwinding with our signature treatments at So Spa with L'Occitane and sum up your day with a gastronomic treat at the Royal Court with splendid Apsara dance. The golf resort is located 20mins away by car from the golf club; Sofitel Angkor Phokeethra Golf & Spa Resort offers the experience of contemporary Cambodia redefined in an elegant style that is unique to Sofitel.

Your golf tour at Sofitel Angkor Phokeethra Golf & Spa Resort, simply Magnifique.

[\[Read more about one of Cambodia's Best Hotels\]](#)



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Golf Trip Idea: Siem Reap Cambodia Golf and History Tour

Play golf at the 8th wonder of the world. In between rounds, explore Angkor Wat and its amazing ruins. Daily non-stop flights from Bangkok makes it easy to combine this golf package with any of our golf in Thailand packages.

Recommended Hotels:

- 4 Star [Prince D' Angkor Hotel & Spa](#)
- 5 Star [Sofitel Angkor Phokeethra Golf and Spa Resort](#)

[\[Siem Reap Cambodia Golf and History Tour Itinerary...\]](#)




Golf Course Maintenance Updates

Thailand

- Bangkok
 - **Alpine Golf & Sports Club** - Course will be closed on 5 February for a tournament.
 - **Amata Spring Country Club** - Course will be closed on 3, 17 and 24 February for tournaments.
 - **Bangkok Golf Club** - Course will be closed on 14 & 21 February and 7 March for tournaments.
 - **Cascata Golf Club** - Course will be closed on 6, 18, 25 and 27 February for tournaments.
 - **Lakewood Country Club** - Course will be closed on 6, 11, 13, 18 and 27 February for tournaments.
 - **Lotus Valley Golf Resort** - Course will be closed on 7 and 21 February for tournaments.
 - **President Country Club** - Course will be closed in the afternoons on 6, 13, 16 and 25 February.
 - **Riverdale Golf Club** - Course will be closed on 6, 11-12, 17 and 25-27 February for tournaments.
 - **Thai Country Club** - Course will be closed from 30 March - 7 April for annual maintenance.
 - **Thana City Golf & Sports Club** - Course will be closed on 10, 13, 19 and 26 February for tournaments.
 - **The Royal Gems Golf & Sports Club** - Course will be closed on 9, 14, 18 and 25 February for tournaments.
 - **Vintage Golf Club** - Course will be closed on 26 February for a tournament.
 - **Windsor Park** - Course will be closed on 9, 11 and 26 February for tournaments.
- Hua Hin
 - **Banyan Golf Club** - Course will be closed on 19, 20 and 28 February for tournaments.
 - **Black Mountain Golf Club** - Course will be closed on 16 February for the Thailand Classics.
 - **Imperial Lake View Golf Club** - Course will be closed from 5 - 8 February for a

- tournament.
- **Royal Hua Hin Golf Course** - Course will be closed on 21 and 28 February for tournaments.
- **Sea Pines Golf Course** - Course will be closed from 5 - 8 February.
- **Pattaya**
 - **Burapha Golf Club** - Course will be closed on 28 February for a tournament.
 - **Siam Country Club, Old Course** - Course will be closed from 9 February - 5 March for the Honda LPGA Tournament.
 - **Siam Country Club, Plantation Course** - Course will be closed from 8 June - 16 June for the 2015 Thailand Open.
- **Phuket**
 - **Phuket Country Club** - Course will be closed on 22 February for a tournament.
- **Khao Yai**
 - **Kirimaya Golf Resort & Spa** - Course will be closed on 7 February for a tournament.
 - **Mountain Creek Golf Resort** - Course will be closed on 24 February for a tournament.
 - **Panorama Golf & Country Club** - Course will be closed on 21 February for a tournament.
 - **Rancho Charnvee Country Club** - Course will be closed from 17 - 20 February for a tournament.
- **Kanchanaburi**
 - **Dragon Hills Golf & Country Club** - Course will be closed from 27-28 February for a tournament.
 - **Rancho Charnvee Country Club** - Course will be closed on 8 & 21 February for tournaments.

Vietnam

- **Danang**
 - **Danang Golf Club** - Course will undergo renovation from 4 - 8 May, coring green from 25 - 26 May and fairway renovation from 1 - 30 September (will not affect play).
 - **Montgomerie Links Vietnam** - Course will be closed on 7 March for the Mercedes Qualifier 2015 Tournament.
- **Hanoi**
 - **Chi Link Star Golf & Country Club** - Course will be closed on 19 February for Tet holiday.
 - **Heron Lake Golf Course** - Course will be closed on 8 February for a tournament and from 18 - 19 February for Tet holiday.
 - **Kings Island Golf Resort** - Course will be closed on 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23 and 24 February for maintenance.
- **Nha Trang**
 - **Vinpearl Golf Club** - Course will be closed on 9, 16 and 23 February for maintenance.
- **Saigon**
 - **Long Than Golf Club** - Course will be closed on 8 March for a tournament.
 - **The Bluffs Ho Tram Strip** - Course will be closed on 10 and 24 February for maintenance and on 17 February for Tet holiday.
 - **Vietnam Golf & Country Club** - Course will be closed on 28 February for a tournament.

Malaysia

- **Kota Kinabalu**
 - **Dalit Bay Golf & Country Club** - Course will be closed on 15, 26, and 28 February for tournaments.
 - **Sutera Harbour Golf & Country Club** - Course will be closed on 7 February for a tournament.
- **Kuala Lumpur**
 - **Kuala Lumpur Golf & Country Club** - Course will be closed until 16 February for the Maybank Malaysia Open.
 - **Royal Selangor Golf Club, Old Course** - Course will be closed from 20 January until 31 March for maintenance.
 - **Saujana Golf & Country Club, Palm Course** - Course will be closed until December 2015 for maintenance.
 - **Templer Park Country Club** - Course will be closed in the mornings of 12 - 13 February for the One Asia Q-School 2015.

Indonesia

- All golf courses are in good condition

Singapore

- All golf courses are in good condition.



Golf Tournaments

Amari Hua Hin Amateur Golf Week - March 2015

Date: March 1 - 7, 2015 | Location: Hua Hin, Thailand
[\[Find out more\]](#)

Pattaya Amateur Golf Week - March 2015

Date: March 8 - 14, 2015 | Location: Pattaya, Thailand
[\[Find out more\]](#)

Malaysia Amateur Golf Week - May 2015

Date: May 10 - 15, 2015 | Location: Malaysia

Bali Amateur Golf Week - May 2015

Date: May 17 - 23, 2015 | Location: Bali

Phuket Amateur Golf Week - June 2015

Date: 7 - 13 June, 2015 | Location: Phuket, Thailand [\[Find out more\]](#)

Centara World Masters Golf Championship - June 2015

Date: 14 - 20 June, 2015 | Location: Hua Hin, Thailand [\[Find out more\]](#)

Cambodia Amateur Golf Week - August 2015

Date: 2 - 9 August, 2015 | Location: Siem Reap, Cambodia [\[Find out more\]](#)

Golf Coast Vietnam Amateur Golf Week - August 2015

Date: 10 - 16 August, 2015 | Location: Danang, Vietnam [\[Find out more\]](#)

Vietnam World Masters Golf Championship - September 2015

Date: 6 - 12 September, 2015 | Location: Danang, Vietnam [\[Find out more\]](#)

Siam Country Club Pattaya Amateur Golf Week - October 2015

Date: 18 - 24 October, 2015 | Location: Pattaya, Thailand [\[Find out more\]](#)

Chiang Mai Amateur Golf Week - October 2015

Date: 25 - 31 October, 2015 | Location: Chiang Mai, Thailand [\[Find out more\]](#)



Best of the Blog Thailandgolfzone.com

Golf In Turkey Versus Golf In Thailand

Here are my rankings on the golfing in these 2 countries on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being best.

Quality (30%)

Turkey (8): Golf in Turkey is well-developed, especially the area around Belek (Antalya). There are some 15 golf courses to choose from here, all being located only 30 minutes from the main resorts. Most modern golf course architects are represented including Jack Nicklaus, Pete Dye and Robert Trent Jones Jr.

Thailand (7): Thailand has 280 courses open for play. The best of these courses are located in one of five major golf tourist golf destinations. Hua Hin, Pattaya, and Phuket are the main sea side resort areas. Chiang Mai is northern Thailand, and the capital of Bangkok has 60 courses within a one hour's drive from the city center.

Service (25%)

Turkey (4): There are all-inclusive 5* resorts near the Belek golf courses. However, while the standard of rooms and facilities are high, the services levels are not. Be prepared for long queues and mediocre service. At the golf courses there is an absence of caddies and limited facilities or food/beverages.

Thailand (10): Golf in Thailand equals service. Thai hospitality is some of the world's best and the Thai



Thai Country Club Caddies

golf courses are no exception. Caddies are compulsory at all Thai golf courses for every golfer whether or not golf carts are used, thus ensuring excellent service is available at all times.

[\[Read the entire article\]](#)

Other golf stories can be found at the [Thailand Golf Zone](#), [Vietnam Golf Zone](#) and [Phuket Golf Zone](#) where there are over 600 other original articles dealing exclusively with golf in Asia and golf travel.

I would love to hear about any golf tips that any of you may have developed for getting the maximum enjoyment from your golf trips, and can incorporate some in future articles. Therefore if you have any golf tips or suggestions you would like to share, please [let me know](#) by dropping me an email.

➔ Subscribe to our [RSS Feed](#).



Golfing Tips - Thailand's Caddies

The use of a caddie in Thailand is compulsory at all courses. It should be considered a pleasurable luxury at relatively low cost. As a first for many of us I have noticed several different reactions to having a caddie, almost always good but some less so. Here I offer some tips on how to get the best from the experience for you and the caddie.



- Caddies are 99% female and likely recruited from the club's locality which could mean a town or city or nearby villages. On day one they know nothing about golf and it takes a while to learn the game's intricacies despite the training that all clubs provide. Empathise and remember what it was like when you were a beginner at the game.
- The experienced caddys will likely help a less capable caddie which is a great way to learn; facilitate this by being patient and understanding; the caddys won't get involved if you are visibly agitated.
- Thais are gentle people whose aim is for you to enjoy yourself. If you are having a bad day on the course rather than take it out on the caddie distract yourself by communicating with the caddy about something else (not necessarily speaking Thai), you may suddenly realise that they are just a human being, you aren't playing in the US Open and actually start to play better.
- It is customary, nay mandatory to tip a caddy after the round from about 300 baht. I have heard the comment "she was just a bag carrier" and seen as little as 100 baht offered. Give a thought to the fact that this person has pushed a trolley around for 4+ hours in ninety degree heat and the tip will be a major contribution to her family's general wellbeing. Plus she may only get a round or two a week in low season and it's her sole income.
- Finally, there are many fantastic caddies out there who certainly know the course better than you, are experts at reading greens and will shave strokes off your score. Rejoice in that, but also aim to give something back by providing your next caddie the opportunity to work with someone kind, considerate and understanding whose aim is to have a very enjoyable day in what after all is a past-time for most us.

[\[Read more Golf Tips Articles\]](#)

If you have any other questions regarding golf tips to help you with your game email us at info@golfasian.com and we will reply in upcoming newsletters

For more golf tips visit www.golfthink.com



Meet Golfasian at these Trade/Roadshows/Fam-Trips

Golfasian has a full schedule of trade shows and roadshows during the next few months.

You can find us at the following events:

December 15 - 17 - Australia Roadshow
(Sydney & Melbourne, Australia)

- January 16 - 23 - Middle East Roadshow (Dubai & Abu Dhabi)
- April 27 - 30 - Asia Golf Tourism Convention (AGTC) (Jakarta, Indonesia)

[Arrange an appointment](#) with Golfasian at one of these exhibits.



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If any reader would like to suggest a topic to be covered or better yet contribute materials, photos, or even commissions an article please [contact us by e-mail](#), we welcome the help.

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- Licensed by the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, License No: 79-302/2011
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- Founder and member of [Golf Coast Vietnam](#) (GCV)
- Member of [Bali Golf Paradise](#) (BGP)
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