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Asia's Best Golf Tour Operator 2014



Thailand's Best Inbound Golf Tour Operator 2015

## October 2016 Edition

## Dear Golf Travelers,



Welcome to the latest issue of the Asian Golf Nation, the source for news breaking information about golf in Asia. In addition, unique golf playing tips for South East Asia's tropical environment, announcements of golf travel promotions, and our latest tournament offers are all parts of this newsletter.

It is hard to believe another high

season is descending upon us as it seems like only yesterday we were promoting travel in low season. October is off to our best start ever with 1,245 golf visitor arrivals planned across the region. Our offices are reporting good bookings the Christmas and New Year period as well.

Two out of three of you are choosing Thailand as your preferred golf destination. Most others are travelling to Vietnam, where new courses and destinations are coming up at a staggering pace. Although Thailand and Vietnam have separate traditional and cultural diversity, they both have their own attractions of alluring golf holidaymakers wanting the best in service and golf course quality at affordable prices.

You will find a lot of news and South East Asia golf course updates in this newsletter, which I hope you will find interesting and helpful. So sit back and enjoy this edition of the Asian Golf Nation!

A winner of the 2014 & 2015 World Golf Awards with the title of Asia's Best Golf Tour Operator 2014 and Thailand's Best Inbound Golf Tour Operator 2015, Golfasian has once again been nominated for Asia's Best Golf Tour Operator. Please, vote for us now:



Mark Siegel Managing Director of Golfasian

## In This Issue:

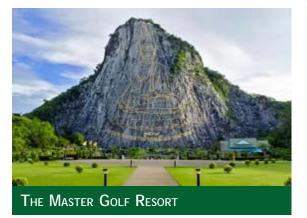




BANGKOK AT NIGHT

MasterCard has just cited Bangkok the topranked tourist destination with 21 million arrivals projected for this year. Bangkok also has some of Asia's best golf courses, such as the two year old Nikanti Golf Club, a one-of-a-kind unique 18-hole track, situated in Nakhon Pathom province west of Bangkok. The capital is a great stopover as part of a dual-centered golf holiday. Other popular golfing destinations such as Pattaya & Hua Hin are only a 1.5-3 hour drive from the city.

The golf, shopping, food, culture, nightlife and convenience and transportation convenience tick all the boxes.



Thailand's most diverse golf destination is set to welcome a new course. The Master Golf Resort is set on a stunning 100-hectare site overlooking the Khao Chee Chan Buddha which is visible from every hole on the golf course. Currently under construction and expected to open late 2017, the course has been designed by Ron Fream and the golf club will be managed by IMG. Zoysia grass is being used for the tees, fairways and rough which is nice to see and should be more playable than the fancy Paspalum more often used these days on other premium courses. The site is only 30 minutes from the center of Pattaya. Stay tuned for more updates.



Long Bien Golf Course has expanded to 27-holes. The additional 9 designed by Nelson Hayworth are a perfect match with the original 18 and together all 27 have the best playing surfaces in Hanoi. The central location is perfect to minimize commutes and the clubhouse is modern and so large it can accommodate 5 Indian weddings, at the same

Hanoi, Vietnam

time. The only downside I see is that caddies are all male and don't speak a word of English.

Also expanding in Hanoi is **BRG King's Island Golf Resort**. The Lake View Course is open for play as normal. The Mountain View Course is closed for extensive renovations, and a new third track, the King's Course, is undergoing earthworks now. This new course is a 19 hole Nicklaus designed layout due to come on stream in 2017 and will take advantage of hilly terrain and surrounding lakes. A separate main entrance and club house is planned as well as access not only by boat, but also by car.

Bintan, Indonesia

With a complete revamp, the Greg Norman designed Laguna Golf Bintan course reopened last month. The course redesign was done by Paul Jansen and it now plays as a par-72 with both nines having holes that run along the Straights of Singapore and several holes with excellent views of the Singapore skyline. The recent focus brings the course back to its original quality and enhances the natural surroundings. In addition to the golf course improvements, the clubhouse has also been refurbished and brought up to Banyan Tree standards. Laguna Bintan combined with several other quality courses nearby makes for a nice golf holiday for couples, those living nearby, and golfers looking for a new winter destination.

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2017 Centara World Masters Golf Championship 11-17 June 2017

\*\*\* <u>Book before 30 November 2016</u> and receive a THB 3,000 TaylorMade shop voucher + 5 bonus entries into the major prize draw. \*\*\*

Book NOW!



http://www.golfasian.com/newsletter/archive/asian-golf-travel-nation-october-2016.html[10/5/2016 4:24:08 PM]

In March 2017 we have our two biggest events in the golfing calendar, the Amari Hua Hin Golf Week and Amari Pattaya Golf Week. Each event sees a field of 120 people from around the world play the best golf courses in each destination. While the tournaments aren't until March 2017, we have 50 players already booked, with most people taking the free room upgrade from the Amari Hotels. Book your position now and don't miss out on a great week of golf!

We have 12 group tours throughout the year and all details of these events can be found on the Asia Golf Week website.

If you would like to book one of our events, or have any questions, please email us at tournaments@asiagolfweek.com



### **GOLF TRAVEL TESTIMONIALS**



My name is Tim Spriggs, an Englishman who lives and works in Singapore. For the past couple of years a group of friends and I have undertaken a short golf tour elsewhere in Asia, last year in Danang Vietnam and this year in Thailand. Whilst we play in Singapore, membership is prohibitively expensive so travelling works out cheaper and we enjoy exploring new places and their golf offer. We loved Danang, but having done quite a bit of research knew that Thailand would be great fun with superb food and some decent nightlife. Notwithstanding, we weren't yet ready for a venue such as Pattaya and thought that Chiang Mai would be a sensible "christening"; for many of us this was the first visit to Thailand.

Working with Golfasian came about because of a simple Google search. Their website was comprehensive and informative and our initial enquiry was responded to promptly which always impresses. We were given some excellent advice about which courses to play and where to stay, preferring downtown. This was only a 3-day trip but it felt good to have everything organised and allowed the golf to take centre stage.

[Read the entire interview online]

[ Read more Testimonials ]

**Congratulations!** 



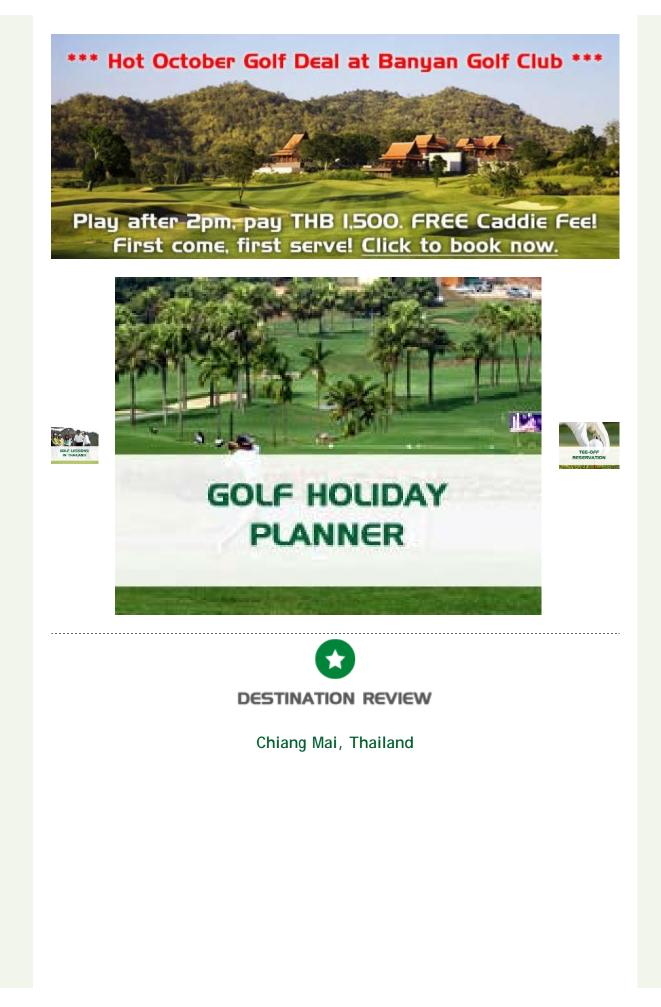
On 24 September Laurie McCourt made a Hole In One (A6) at Springfield Royal Country Club in Hua Hin Thailand. In addition to a certificate they gave him a coupon good for 2 free rounds.

Laurie and Neil were scheduled for a 'Free Day' on the 26th, so they decided to use the certificate and go back while the rest of the group took the day off. That day Neil Townsend made a Hole In One on the same hole. What are the chances of this happening?

"Thanks very much for organising our trip to Thailand. Deb and I had a wonderful time which was greatly helped by the Golfasian staff in Hua Hin. My hole in one (like Laurie's) was on the 6th hole at Springfield on Monday 26th Sept. I think the distance was about 135 yards and I used a 5 iron. Strangely, after playing golf for 50 years and never having a hole in one, this was my second in 7 weeks as I had one at Long Reef Golf Club here in Sydney (playing with Laurie & Ray) on 5th August. Very exciting but quite weird! Can you extend our thanks to the Golfasian staff in Hua Hin for their friendly efficiency. We look forward to returning to Hua Hin in the future," said Neil.

Laurie added that "Playing the 6th at Springfield, 133 yards, I hit a 7 iron, 3 bounces and in the hole. My caddie was ecstatic, jumped on me and nearly knocked me over. As a result of the hole in one we were given 2 free rounds vouchers. Playing with Neil 2 days later we were standing on the 6th tee ,Neil said "another hole in one" and I said "no your turn" and Lo and behold in went his shot. As Neil said, his second in several weeks, and my second this year having one at my club, Long Reef, Sydney Northern Beaches in April, my third overall. Great trip, great staff and does not get better than staying at the Centara."

Congratulations to both Neil & Laurie! Amazing!!!





Chiang Mai, sometimes referred to as 'The Rose of The North', is a place I enjoy returning to again and again. Thai people are well known to be some of the nicest and friendliest people anywhere, and nowhere is that more evident than in Chiang Mai.

Golf wise, Alpine Chiangmai and Chiangmai Highlands are certainly on the 'A' list of Thailand courses and by year end both will be sporting 27 holes. There are also numerous 'B' list courses well worth playing and which offer good value. Many of these 'B' courses have upped their game in recent years with significant improvements to course conditions. Their clubhouse facilities generally still lag far behind Alpine and Highlands, however I don't mind as at least they have their priorities straight!

Though I live in Bangkok and enjoy the big city for all it has to offer, I never tire of visiting Chiang Mai somewhat regularly. The much more relaxed atmosphere makes for a nice contrast with the capital's fast pulse. It's easy to get around, as most hotels are no more than 15 minutes from the airport and most Chiang Mai golf courses within 30 - 45 minutes of the city center. Costs for just about everything are lower than most SE Asia golf destinations, particularly in low season. The natural scenery with the surrounding mountains is spectacular. There are numerous cultural attractions, and though I'm not much for shopping, people who are will have no problem entertaining themselves with the countless night markets, shopping bazaars and even ultra-modern shopping malls.

If you haven't been to Chiang Mai or haven't been there recently, you owe it to yourself to check it out!

View our Chiang Mai Golf Packages | Chiang Mai Golf Courses

## FEATURED GOLF COURSE FEATURED HOTEL



The Chiangmai Highlands Golf & Spa Resort opened in 2005 and significantly added to the quality of Chiang Mai golf courses. The drive to Highlands from Chiang Mai leads through exceptionally beautiful landscape, in an eastern direction passing rice fields and plantations into the mountains.

Its tranquility, high elevation, cool climate, fresh air, pure water, and fertile soil, form the perfect place.

[Read more about one of Thailand's Best Golf Courses]



Located in the city and on the banks of the Ping River, the Ratilanna Riverside Spa Resort (formerly Sofitel Riverside Hotel) offers 75 suites and deluxe rooms each with private balconies. A wooden theme design throughout is combined with modern facilities and ancient Chiang Mai heritage. The Chiang Mai resort offers the highest standard of service and is an excellent choice for discerning Chiang Mai golf visitors.

[Read more about one of Thailand's Best Hotels]





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## Chiang Mai - Bangkok (2-Destination) Golf Package



Chiang Mai is the gateway to the north of Thailand and home to some great golfing. Bangkok is well known for the best shopping in Thailand and also has a myriad of championship golf courses. Stay at golf resorts in both destinations and play top golf courses. The trip between Chiang Mai and Bangkok is a short 1 hour by domestic flight. This Thailand golf trip combines the best cultural sights with excellent golf and is perfect for those looking to both golf in natural surroundings and explore Thailand's capital in one trip. Everything is taken care of for you so sit back and get ready for a golf trip of a lifetime.

View the complete golf holiday itinerary. To meet your preferences and budget please contact us for further information.

**a** back to top GOLF TRIP IDEA Message from the Golf Course GM Derek Schade PGA of Canada General Manager - Chiangmai Highlands Golf and Spa Resort STAF

#### Chiang Mai's Golf Tourism Outlook - A Bright Future

With Chiangmai Highlands' expansion to 27 holes and Alpine Chiangmai's plan to open an additional nine later this year, Chiang Mai is blossoming as a golf destination and meeting increased demand with greater capacity, particularly at the premium level.

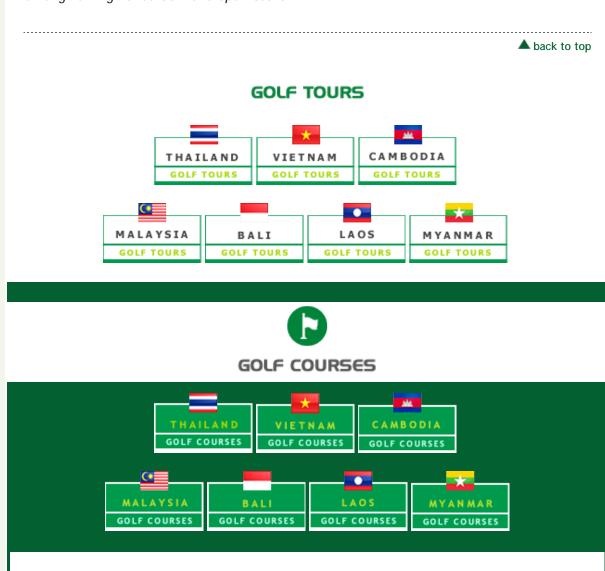
Much of the area's success is due to the lure of the old city and its cultural heritage, but combined with the Northern Thai people's gentle temperament and grace, visitors are made to feel especially welcome wherever they go. This, plus spectacular, mountainous surroundings providing a stunning backdrop to the golf experience, as well as generally cooler temperatures than the rest of the country means Chiang Mai is unique amongst Thailand's golf venues and becoming increasingly popular.

There are now more courses to choose from and more importantly a good number of high quality courses. A combination of the growing market opportunity and a wider selection has had a positive influence, forcing every club to improve their golf offer. Clubs are recognizing the importance of international levels of management and especially optimum playing conditions throughout the year. As a result, several of the courses in the area have undertaken significant investment and refurbishment programmes so are in markedly better condition than in recent times. Importantly, this conditioning is sustainable. Greater attention is being paid to details such as bunker edging, fairway mowing lines, manicured approach areas and consistent green speeds which has resulted in a more rewarding golf experience for visitors and locals.

Chiang Mai is seeing more golfers arriving in what is typically referred to as low-season. A significant impact on golf tourism can be attributed to Asian Golfers travelling to Chiang Mai. We have seen consistent growth in the number of golfers from Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong during the summer months. Unusually, as they normally visit during the "winter" months from December to February, Koreans and Japanese golfers are also arriving in numbers during this period. Overall, there is a mood of optimism in the industry in this area of the country.

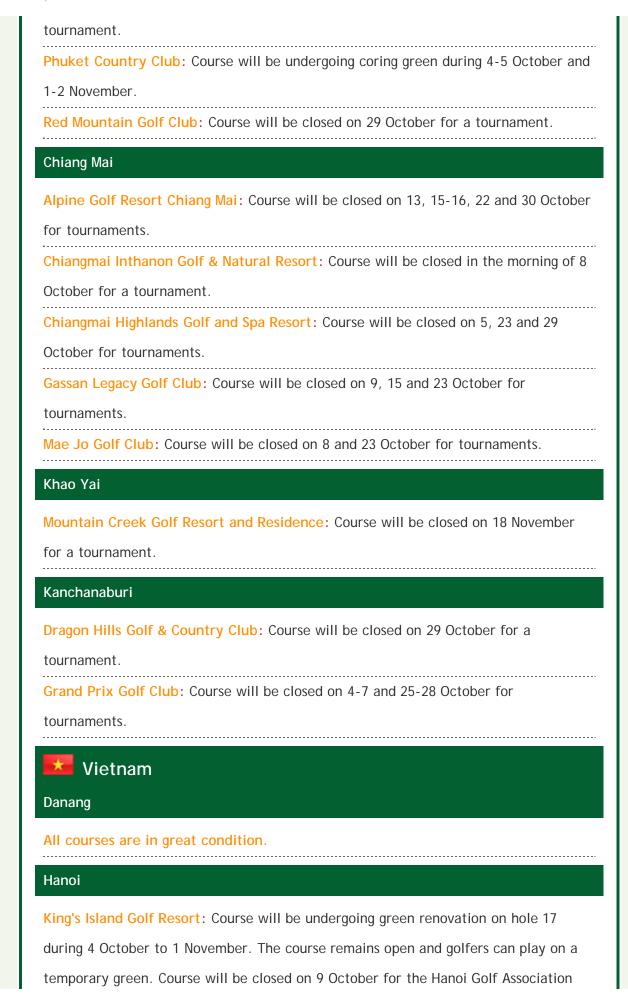
Discover Chiang Mai on your next golf holiday. We are ready to receive you with a warm welcome and great golf.

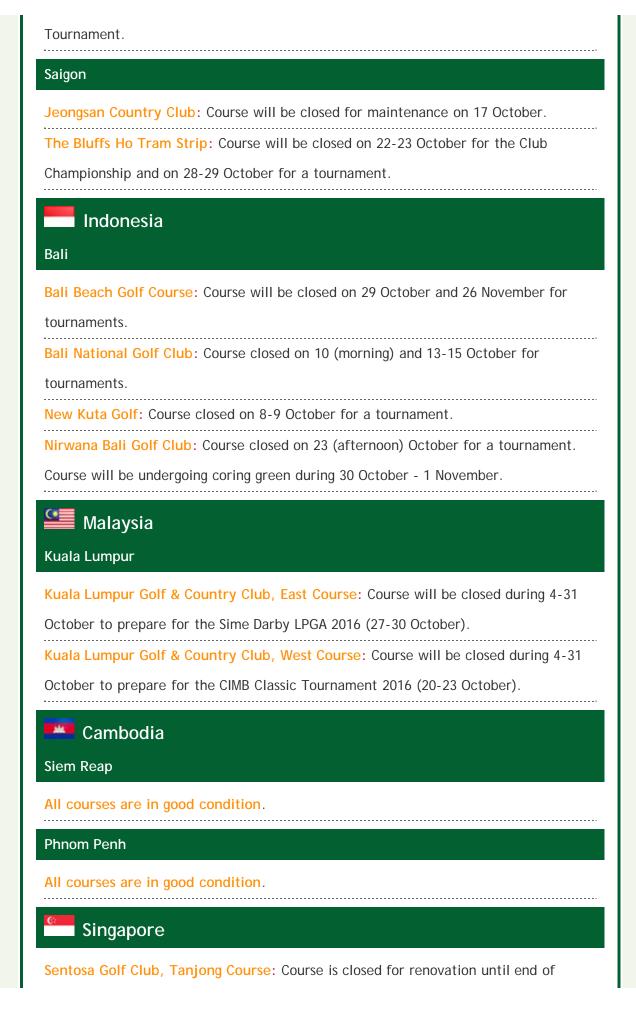
Derek Schade PGA of Canada General Manager Chiangmai Highlands Golf and Spa Resort





C	October for tournaments.
R	Royal Hua Hin Golf Course: Course will be closed 24 December for a tournament.
S	Gea Pines Golf Course: Course will be closed on 16 October for a tournament.
S	Springfield Royal Country Club: Course C will be closed until 31 October for
n	naintenance. Course will be closed on 22 October and 26 November for tournament
F	Pattaya
	Khao Kheow Country Club: Course will undergoing maintenance during October.
	aem Chabang International Country Club: Course A & B will be closed in the
	afternoon of 29 October for a tournament. Course will be closed on 2 November for
	ournament.
	Pattana Golf Club & Resort: Course will be closed on 7, 9, 21 and 29-30 October an
	on 5, 13, 18 and 20 November for tournaments.
• •	Pattaya Country Club: Course will be closed on 8-9 October and on 17 November for
	ournaments.
	Phoenix Golf Golf & Country Club: The mountain course is closed until the end of
	Dctober.
F	Rayong Green Valley Country Club: Course will be closed on 29 October for a
	ournament.
S	Siam Country Club, Plantation Course: Course will be closed on 14 and 28 October
З	and on 5 November for tournaments.
S	Siam Country Club, Waterside Course: Course will be closed on 4-5 October and 20
C	October for tournaments.
S	St. Andrews 2000 Golf Club: Course will be closed on 15, 28 and 31 October for
t	ournaments.
•••	Dhukat
	Phuket
	Blue Canyon Country Club, Canyon Course: Course is undergoing coring maintenan
• •	Juring 3-6 October.
	aguna Golf Phuket: Course will be undergoing green top dressing sand on 17
	October. Course will be closed during 23-31 October for the Phuket Singha Open
t	ournament.





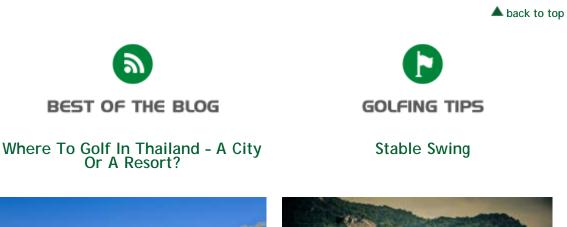




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Thailand has 5 main golf destinations, two are cities (Bangkok and Chiang Mai) and three are beach resorts (Hua Hin, Pattaya, and Phuket).

Bangkok is home to over 10 million residents. However, it's safe to say that Bangkok has the most golf courses of any destination in Thailand. There are 60 golf courses located within 1 hour from the center of Bangkok; of which 20 or so are well-suited for visitor play.

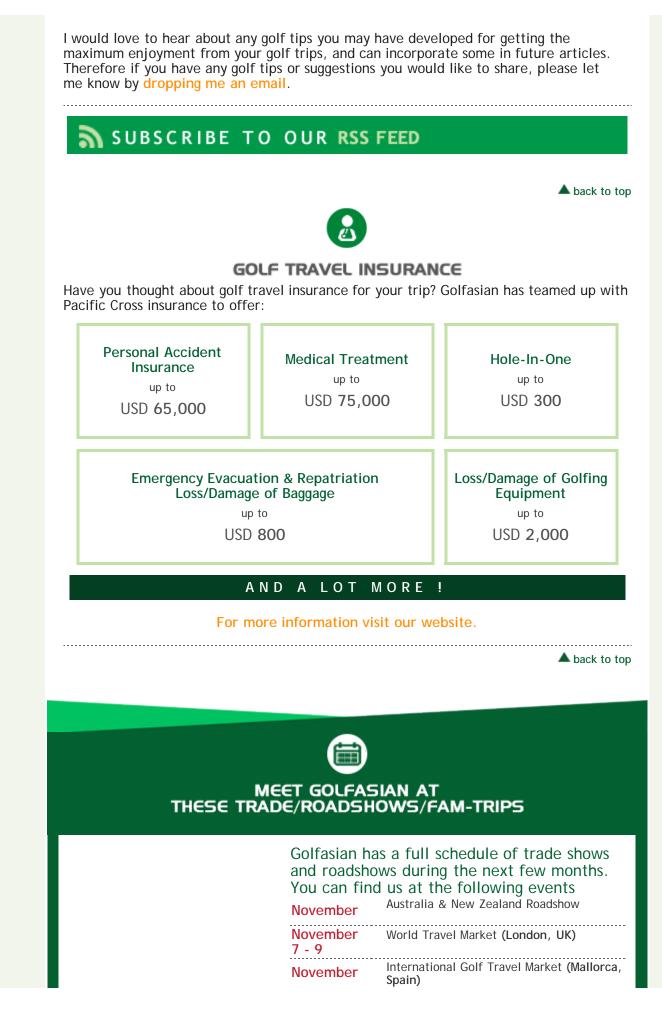


I was watching some coaching on the Golf Channel this week and was reminded of a tip once given to me. On the TV they were talking about the importance of finishing the swing whereas my friend gave me this tip...when swinging, always finish with your belt buckle pointing at the target. It has served me well, why not give it a try.

FOR MORE GOLF TIPS VISIT WWW.GOLFTHINK.COM

#### [READ THE ENTIRE ARTICLE]

Other golf stories can be found at the **Thailand Golf Zone**, **Vietnam Golf Zone**, **Phuket Golf Zone** and **Vietnam Golf Tourism** Blogs where there are over 1,600 original golf articles & commentary dealing exclusively with golf in Asia and golf travel.



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

#### Toll Free US/Canada 1-866-550-2284

E-mail info@golfasian.com

Website www.golfasian.com

## Golfasian Co., Ltd.

SKÅL

Unit 1105, 29 Bangkok Business Center Soi Ekamai, Sukhumvit 63 Road, Klongtan Nua, Wattana Bangkok 10110 Thailand

Gulf Coast Vietnam GOLF A LEGENDARY SHORE

📞 +66 (0) 2 714 8470

+66 (0) 2 714 8471

## Golfasian Vietnam Co., Ltd.

- ♀ 12<sup>th</sup> Floor, MB SUNNY Tower 259 Tran Hung Dao, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City Vietnam
- 📞 +84 (0) 8 3838 6510
- +84 (0) 8 3838 6537

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