

LOOK EAST

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HUA HIN *and beyond*

VIETNAM:

A Shopaholic's
Survival Guide to
Ho Chi Minh City

Ubon Ratchathani's Giant
Candle Festival

Going Green:
Hotels with Eco
Practices in Thailand

Bordeaux Rendez-Vous 2014:
The Bangkok Chapter

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That Which Stays in Our Hearts Forever

At the beginning of this year, a friend and I arrived at Centara Grand Beach Resort & Villas Hua Hin on a warm Friday afternoon to be greeted with cold drinks and a certain quiet flair embodied by the hotel's high ceilings, period-style furniture and topiary gardens, the woman in a long pleated dress playing the harp, and the classic cars from the 1920s onward parked all around as part of the festivities for that weekend's Hua Hin Automobile Concours.

This property, built in 1923, was formerly the Railway Hotel and became a landmark together with Hua Hin's emergence as Thailand's first beach resort when the railway line between Thailand and Malaysia was opened.

My friend and I found a small shop downtown where we rented Rama IX dresses, got old-fashioned hairdos, and headed back for a charity dinner at the hotel, where I was chosen as the runner-up in the costume competition for the outfit you see in the photo.

Because Hua Hin is a traditional place, the party finished early. But we wanted to stay in our gracious dresses a little longer, so we ended up dancing at a local bar with

new Scandinavian friends—who now are good old friends—and taking a barefoot walk on the beach, yes, still in our Rama IX dresses. We felt somewhat like Owen Wilson in Woody Allen's "Midnight in Paris" as we enjoyed the life of yesteryear, but in the present. This contrast of old and new, of traditional and modern, of sophisticated and simple, is the essence of the timeless allure that captivates those who have been to Hua Hin.

We hope you will enjoy the walk back in time we'll take in these pages, to this traditional Thai beach town and its surroundings. This month we will also take you shopping in Ho Chi Minh City and show you how to take memories and leave just footprints at certain eco-friendly hotels in Thailand.

My grandmother always says, "They don't make things like they used to." And she is right. Some vintage outfits never lose their charm; some historic buildings always keep their magic. And certain places that shone in the past will continue to shine, as they have what it takes to enter our hearts and stay there forever. Hua Hin is one of them.

Discover it with Lookeast.

Best regards,

Anita
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Editor-in-Chief



Marianna Dietrich



FRONT COVER

Marrakesh Hua Hin Resort & Spa



Dusit Thani Hua Hin



Escape Hua Hin



Hansar

of Thailand's most impressive swimming locales in which to cool off, to go with its trademark upscale rooms and facilities. Not to be left out, the **Hilton Hua Hin Resort and Spa** (www3.hilton.com) has stylishly appointed rooms with balconies overlooking the sea, and a staggering choice of 10 restaurants and bars from which to imbibe the surroundings. For something different, the Sansiri Hotel Collection's **Escape Hua Hin** (www.escape-hotel.com) has re-created the look of traditional Hua Hin fishing villages, with red-roofed villas set around a beautiful pool, with Sand, Sun, and Sea rooms to choose from, each incorporating different scents, colors, and music. Surrounded by lush greenery, the **Dusit Thani Hua Hin** (www.dusit.com) resembles a Mediterranean villa retreat with Thai touches, and the large pool is flanked by an ornamental lake and lily pond; outstanding service and amenities complement the elegant surroundings. If you are looking for colonial and historic charm, the **Centara Grand Beach Resort and Villas** (www.centarahotelsresorts.com)

bit of Morocco in Thailand, with exotic riad-style mansions with courtyards and pools, plus the award-winning Casablanca Restaurant and Shisha Bar to add to your North African fantasies. The Moroccan craze doesn't stop here either, with The **Marrakesh Hua Hin Resort & Spa** (www.marrakeshresortandspa.com) getting in on the action, with Jacuzzi suites and plenty of mosaic tile work and bright colors to complement the Arabian fountains. The prestigious **Hansar** (www.hansarpranburi.com) has also opened a property in Pranburi, with a gorgeous resort nestled against the 300 peaks of Sam Roi Yot and set on one of Thailand's last undiscovered beaches. Also in this area you will find the swank **X2 Kui Buri Villas** (www.x2resorts.com), set on four acres of virgin beachfront land, and featuring private villas with pools. The Sheraton is also in on the action here with two properties: **The Sheraton Hua Hin Pranburi Villas** (www.sheratonhuahinpranburi.com) has private villas along the beachfront surrounded by lush tropical gardens and waterways, and is a superb spot to get away from it all. Up the road, the **Sheraton Hua Hin Resort and Spa** (www.sheratonhuahin.com) has an immense lagoon-shaped pool, one

Centara Grand Beach Resort and Villas



Sheraton Hua Hin Resort and Spa



Marrakesh Hua Hin Resort & Spa

