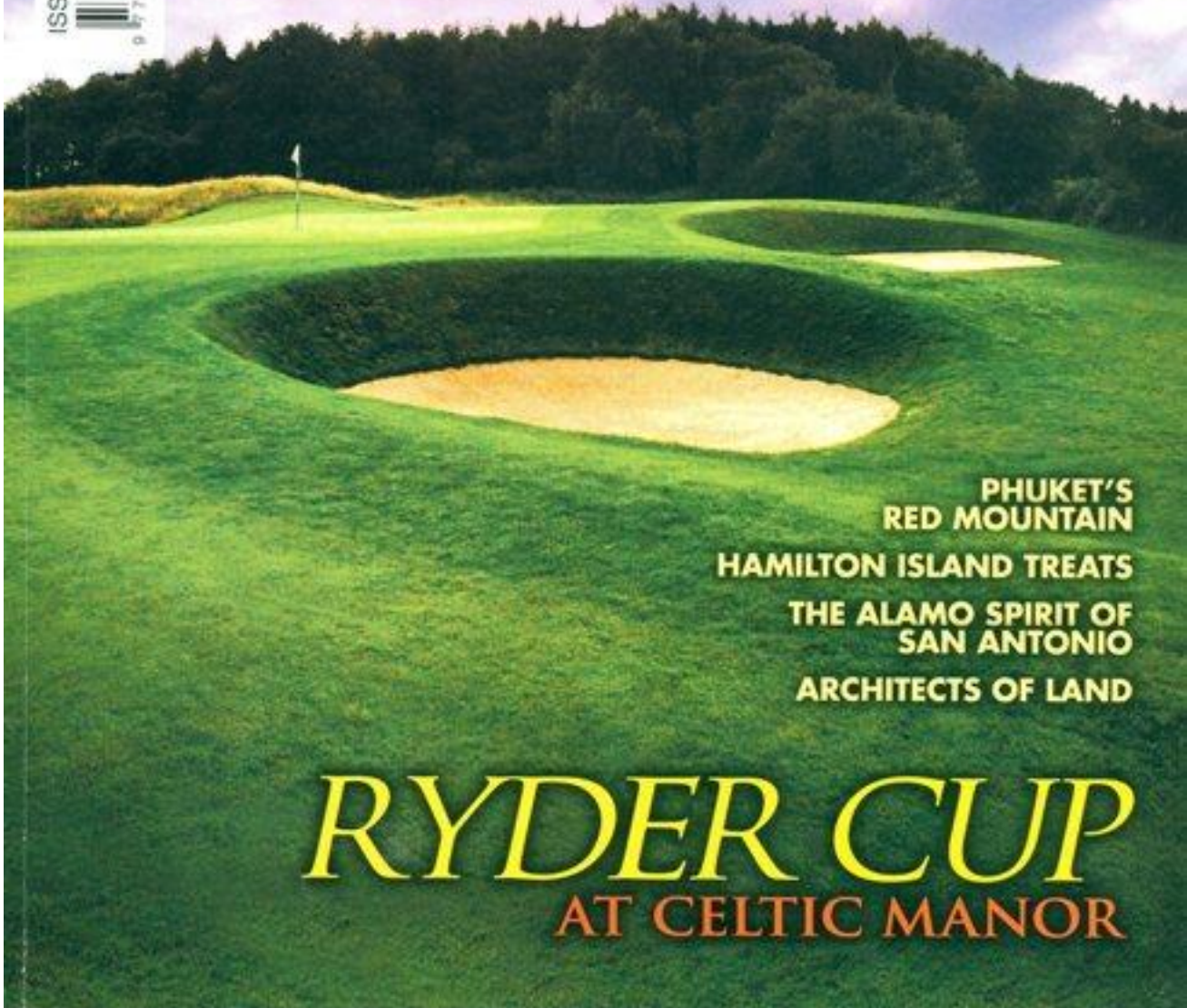


# GOLF VACATIONS

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**PHUKET'S  
RED MOUNTAIN**

**HAMILTON ISLAND TREATS**

**THE ALAMO SPIRIT OF  
SAN ANTONIO**

**ARCHITECTS OF LAND**

***RYDER CUP***  
**AT CELTIC MANOR**





**DUSIT MAGNATE**  
**CHANIN DONAVANIK**

Having grown up under the bright lights of the hotel and hospitality business, you could say Khun Donovanik has the family business running through his veins. Inspired by his mother from a very young age, Donovanik takes pride in carrying on the family tradition, and gives us an insight into what sets Thai service apart on the world stage.

INTERVIEW BY SUSANNA LO

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF DUSIT INTERNATIONAL

**GV: How long have you worked in the hotel industry and how long have you been with Dusit International?**

CD: I've been involved with Dusit ever since I can remember. As a child, I grew up with my mother's hotel business around me. I often accompanied my mother on her business trip and hotel visits, and always appreciated her profound passion and dedication in Dusit and in the tourism industry. It was my mother, Thanupuying Chanut Piyaoui, who first started the company over 60 years ago, and passed on her dream and vision to me to take the unique Thai hospitality to the world stage. I joined the company as CEO five years ago.

**GV: Was it a challenge to prepare for the role of CEO?**

CD: I had the opportunity to learn about the hotel business



from many seniors who were close to my mother. They always persuaded me to visit lots of hotels and explained to me many useful aspects of the industry. Surrounded by hotel experts and being brought up in a hotel family since childhood, I've learned so much about the industry, and all the knowledge about the business which prepared me for my role today. And I was driven by always knowing that I was going to be the one who carried on this dream - the dream that has become our dream, and the dream of all employees in the entire Dusit family.

**GV: How did golf begin for you?**

CD: I had a Japanese friend who gave me a golf club when I was in Tokyo many years back. And then when I was president of Thai Hotels Association about 12 years ago, I had to play, and didn't do so well, so I had to try to play and practice more.

**GV: Which is your favourite golf course in Thailand?**

CD: I like mountain golf courses, as I feel they are more challenging to play. So when I visit Dusit hotels in Pattaya I always like to play at Siam Country Club, which hosted a few Honda LPGA events, and when I am in Hua Hin I like to play at the Banyan Golf Club.

**GV: How do you think Thailand compares to the rest of the world as an ideal golfing destination?**

CD: Thailand is a great destination for golfers because it is so convenient and excellent value for money. There are plenty of golf courses everywhere

across the nation, be it on the mountains of Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai or by the sea of Phuket. And as to what Thai hospitality is most renowned for, the service is unparalleled. Everyone from the marshals to the caddies to the receptionists, they really provide a service of smiles from the heart. And the quality of our caddies is excellent. They really know their golf. Plus the food at the clubhouses are always good!

**GV: How does golf inspire you personally or professionally?**

CD: I play golf really because I can leave business frustration and concentrate on golf frustration! <Laughs> Playing golf is meditation for me. I'm most inspired by golf because somehow it links with my belief of Buddhism, which helps improve my game a great deal. Professionally, it helps me stay focused and concentrated. This year, for example, when we have encountered one of the most challenging times in hotel industry with the political situation in Bangkok, I could still be on top of everything amidst the crisis, until things have been resolved.

**GV: Thai hospitality is renowned throughout the world. What is it that makes Thailand so special?**

CD: Thai people are very hospitable from the heart. Service is in our DNA that reflects our culture of sharing and kindness to each other even if they're strangers. We approach tourists who wander in the middle of the street to see if they are lost and try to help them



find the way. In hotels, without being asked, we warn our guests of rain and offer them umbrellas on our own initiative. We often have guests who come back to us year in year out. We always give a little extra to our guests to show that we care and to ensure that they will take memorable experiences back home. These are the differences that separate us from the rest of the world.

**GV: If you have a chance to do it all over again – is there anything you would improve or change in your life?**

CD: I could be a professional golfer!

**GV: Where will we see the Dusit brand expanding to in the future?**

CD: We are opening six hotels and resorts in India by 2013. Next year we are opening Dusit Thani Sanya in Hainan Island China, and Dusit Thani Abu Dhabi, as well as introducing the first hotel in New Delhi and the first Dusit Devarana for the company. ●