



# PLAY

THE PAN PACIFIC NIRWANA BALI  
RESORT IS UNDERGOING A FACELIFT  
TO BEAT ALL FACELIFTS. FORE!

JUST DOIN' IT



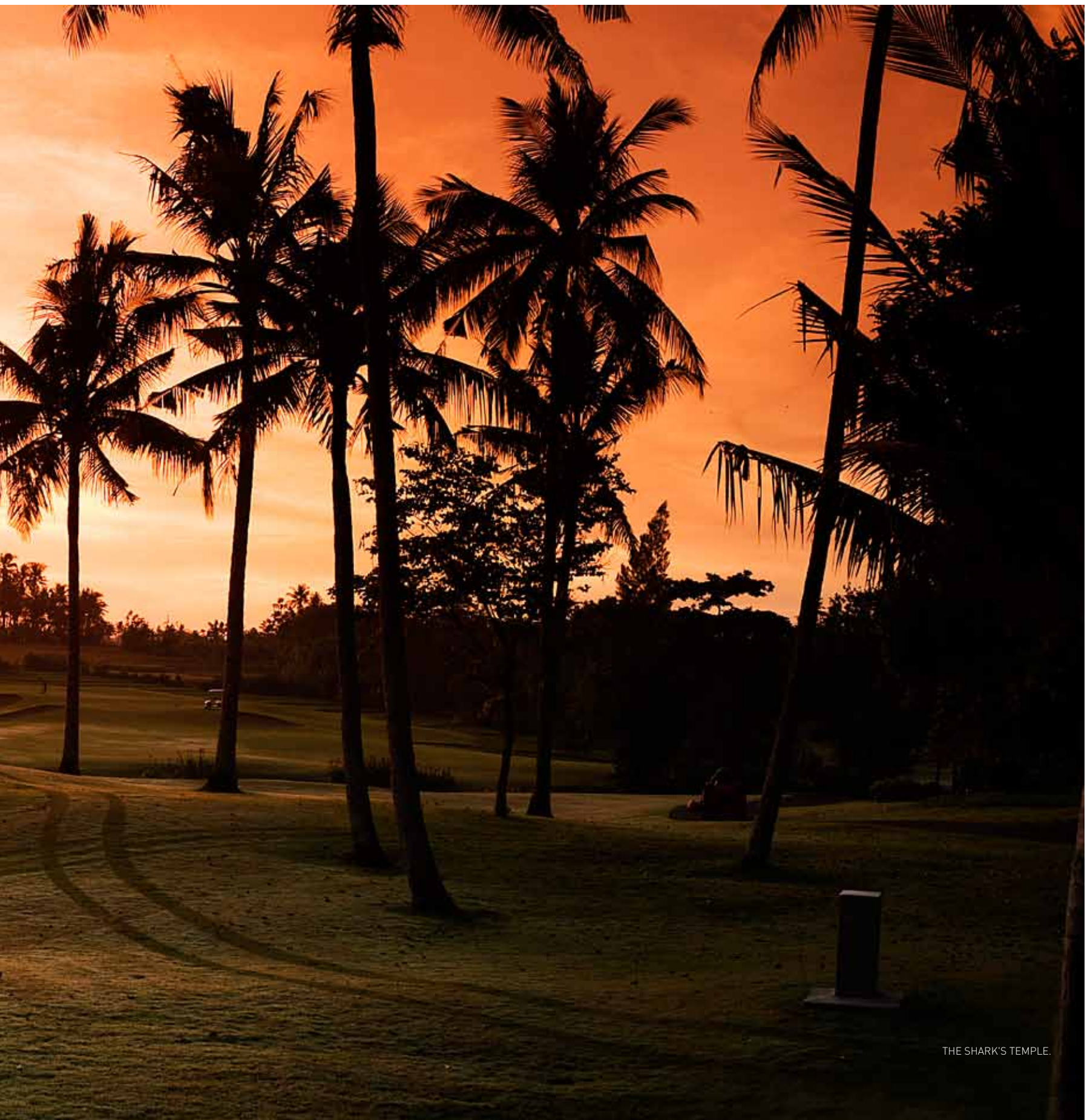






PHOTOGRAPHER NIKOLA KOSTIC WAS BORN IN BELGRADE, SERBIA IN 1973. BEFORE HEADING TO BALI HE STUDIED PHILOSOPHY AT BELGRADE'S UNIVERSITY, WORKED IN TELEVISION AS A CAMERA ASSISTANT, AND WAS IN A ROCK BAND. SINCE COMING TO BALI, NIKOLA HAS CULTIVATED HIS SKILLS IN PHOTOGRAPHY DOING BOTH COMMERCIAL AND CREATIVE WORK. PRINTS OF THESE GOLF SHOTS AND OTHERS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE PRO SHOP AT THE PAN PACIFIC NIRWANA BALI.





THE SHARK'S TEMPLE.

**JOHN Berndt . . . tell us a little about yourself and about how you came to Bali.**

I am a career hotelier, grew up in New York, summered in the surf on east coast beaches, enjoy professional challenges, food & wine events and playing golf – the way it was meant to be played. I first came to Bali in 1997 to assist Ritz-Carlton in opening their property in Jimbaran. My wife and I fell in love with the authentic character of the romantic tropical island and the genuine, gentle spirituality of the Balinese people.

**We hear there are moves afoot to up the ante at your resort – what are your plans?**

The resort has great bones and wonderful potential. Best of all is it's location at the edge of the universe overlooking Bali's iconic Tanah Lot temple – the most revered site on the island, on a beautiful 103-hectare tropical garden oasis that would be next to impossible to replicate in this day and age, anywhere and at any cost. Nirwana has frustrated operators, guests and partner suppliers since inception for many good reasons. The resort, designed by one of Asia's top architectural firms, WATG, is of a similar design to the Ritz-Carlton, now Ayana. The timing of several hardships involving economic crises and terrorist bombings saw that the resort was never properly completed or maintained. It's a shame really, because now it is so much harder stripping back the patch-quilted band-aides rebuilding from scratch and repositioning it as a niche resort and not a makeover of an old one.

**It seems to us the resort has been something of a sleeping giant for a while now . . . we imagine that's going to change.**

Oh yes! We have talked to Sade about doing an opening launch event for us in March. We are working with talented producers and promoters about concert series following our Bloody Mary Jazz brunches Saturday and Sundays with outdoor cliff lawn sunset performances with the Tanah Lot backdrop memorializing the event. Preceding and following Jakarta's music and Jazz festivals we are targeting artists such as Stevie Wonder, Esperanza Spalding, Jakarta Philharmonic Orchestra, Dianna Krall, Chuck Mangione, Kenny G (a golfer) and Santana. We are hoping to host an annual WTA tennis event as a warm up to the Australian Open in Melbourne. The golf course will be modified to host an annual Asian Tour championship and made-for-TV challenge events involving celebrities, young talents, women and seniors.

**OK, it's always been a great golf course. Why should we play golf with you?**

Our 18-hole championship golf course, designed by Greg Norman is his favorite course. It has never been in better playing condition. It is scenic, challenging with memorable experiences on every hole that begs to be played again and again. Just today we played with Miguel Ángel Jiménez hot off the Singapore Open, last month Pablo Martin spent three weeks here playing every day and Scott Barr is returning in January to get married with golf events entertaining his family and friends. Truly it is the best golf experience in the region. The readers of *Asian Monthly* and the World Travel awards have recognized us as the best golf resort in the region.

**Which are the best holes?**

My favorites are the short par fours: 12, 13 and 17 because they dare you to cut the corner for birdie chances that just as often kill the good round you have going! Most golfers prefer the scenic challenges of hitting over the Indian ocean into the wind on par three 14 or our signature hole, 7, with the hundreds of Tanah Lot temple dwellers cheering you on.

**And what do you shoot?**

I work hard at maintaining a 10 handicap playing client golf once a week and twice a month I treat myself to a relaxing round with my wife or (laughs) beers and small money bets with friends.

**The resort...what's the most exciting development going to be for you?**

I have always admired the talents of professional builders, designers and architects. I like to build things and enjoy creating something special that will be appreciated by discriminating people for being useful – appropriately contributing to lifestyle and environmental enrichment. All these opportunities are on Bali.

**Is it just a refit, or are we talking a total change in direction?**

Total reposition appealing to a niche market that appreciates Nirwana's unique barefoot elegance and one-of-a-kind spiritual tropical setting for special occasions, meetings and leisure travel from Australia, Jakarta, Singapore, Shanghai, Tokyo, Seoul and Hong Kong. We have always been well known for value and incredible sunsets, now with the support of a refreshed facility our product, services and programming will bring the richness of this vibrant very special part of the Pacific World to life. It will not only be seen, it will be felt; engaging and heightening every sense – taste, touch, sight and sound – in an experience that is at once familiar, surprising, reassuringly consistent and delightful.

**And now for the important questions...how many types of wine do you stock in your cellars?**

Currently we have over 100 selections of premium wine which we sell at incredibly low margins to counter-attack the extremely high tax which plagues all restaurants and resorts here on Bali. We sell retail wine by the bottle in our new "TLC" café bistro Tapas wine bar. We feature wine by the glass of all our bottle selections in Merica, our contemporary brasserie, Pool Grill and Golfers' Terrace restaurants. We augment a simple foundation of old world favorites with many peppery boutique new world wines from Australia, New Zealand and South African – blends that we can offer at surprisingly good value.

**You have so much land here ... and so few rooms by comparison. What else do you do on the property?**

We have 27 free-standing, privately owned, freehold villa's and are preparing ocean-front lots for custom build-outs. We are building strata title golf resort residences to add to the resort homes and timeshare units already on property. We have 278 hotel resort rooms including 40 Pacific Club ocean view rooms, 22 suites and 12 pool villa's on the ocean and golf course. We are planning on inviting celebrated artists to teach and exhibit in an educational crafts center forum that will provide participatory exhibits with learning opportunities in film, dance, music ceramic, oil, acrylic, photography mediums.

**Are you planning any major golfing events in the next couple of years.**

We hope to host an annual Asian tour event as early as 2013, as soon as we resurface and complete the golf course renovation in addition to hosting fun and challenging made-for-television events, with celebrities, women, popular young up-and-coming stars, and seniors.

**And finally - what are you doing for Christmas!**

As a devout Christian, Christmas is more spiritual than commercial for us, and year end is a time for thanksgiving and reflection. New Years we celebrate achievements and set goals for the future. We have family from the states, Cornell buddies from US and Singapore and golfers visiting from Dubai all making a memorable melting pot holiday. We are all decorated in a natural traditional theme organically inspired by the resort grounds complementing our spiritual serene setting featuring children's choirs, costumed carolers and classical musicians throughout the season with traditional holiday fare in Merica, and alternative popular music in our romantic seaside Pool Grill. We have festive holiday events for the entire family – Christmas and New Years Eve, Christmas and New Year's day. 🍷