

**CINEMA  
PARADISO**

Asia's Most Stylish ladies play a starring role at the Soneva Kiri resort's charming outdoor cinema

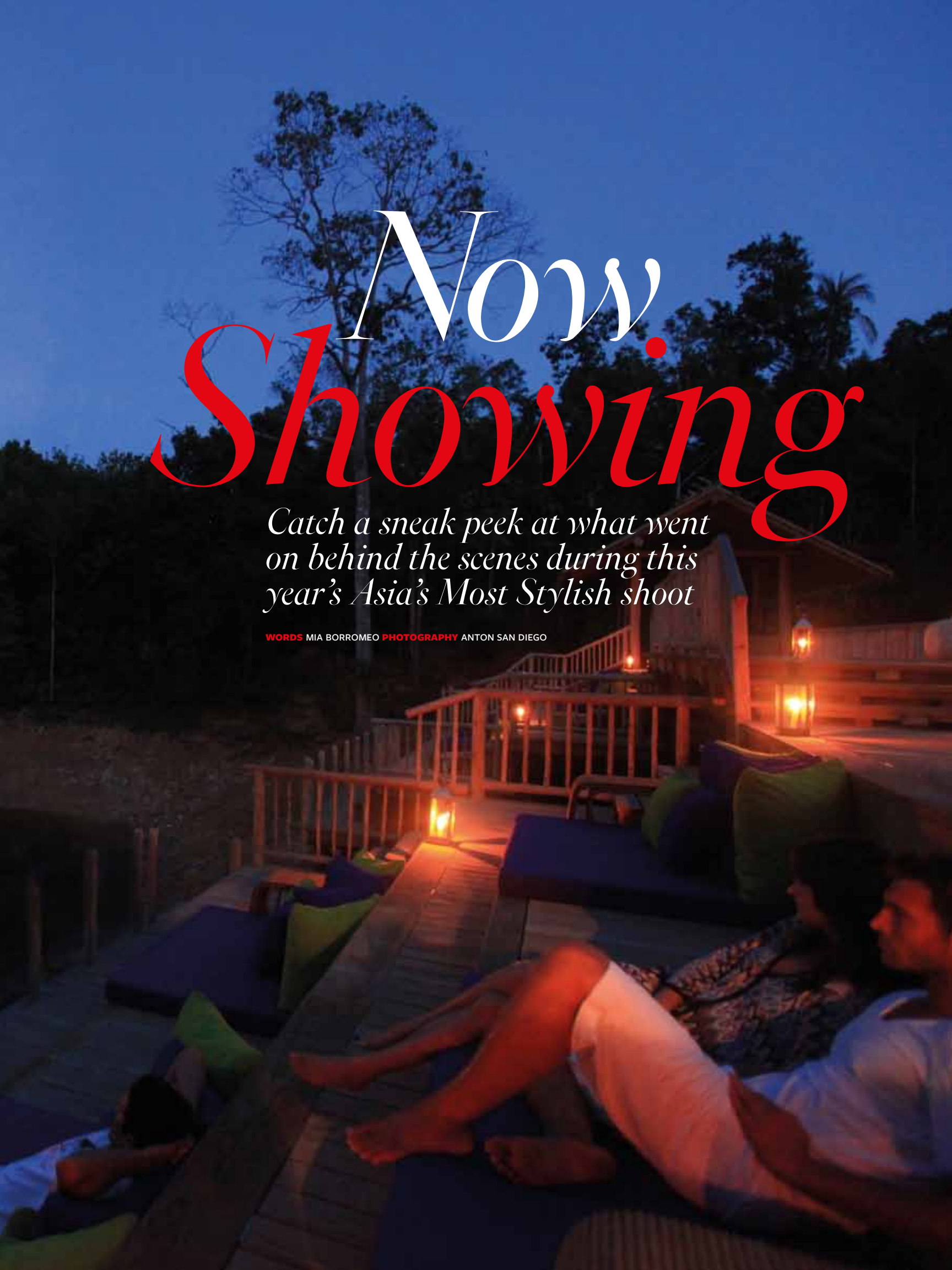


**T**HERE'S NO RESISTING THE LURE OF AN ISLAND GETAWAY, especially one that melds luxury with nature at its most pristine. Throw in the finest Thai cuisine and impeccable service and you'll find yourself in paradise. Now add in seven beautiful women from Asia's major metropolises in glammed-up glory and you end up with one unforgettable weekend. If not for the monsoon rains that led to a few delayed flights and threatened to derail our rather elaborate production, everything would have been perfect. Still, our prayers were heard; the skies cleared and the sun shone for a highly fashionable and memorable few days during the shoot for this year's Asia's Most Stylish at the enchanting Soneva Kiri resort in Koh Kood, Thailand.

# Now. Showing

*Catch a sneak peek at what went on behind the scenes during this year's Asia's Most Stylish shoot*

WORDS MIA BORROMEIO PHOTOGRAPHY ANTON SAN DIEGO





**DIVINE  
DESTINATION**

**CLOCKWISE  
FROM TOP**

The *Asia Tatler* team arrives on Soneva Kiri's private plane; the junior beach retreat; the ladies get styled up for the group shot; Indonesia's Jessie Setiono strikes a pose



# DAY 1

8:00

Although the previous night's thunderstorms and relentless downpour threaten to dampen our first day of shooting, the sun begins to peek through as we settle in at the resort's dining room, which has panoramic views of the bay and the lush tropical jungle. We enjoy a rejuvenating breakfast of wonderful organic produce and freshly baked goodies with Soneva Kiri's gracious public relations manager, Susan Wu.

9:30

The *Philippine Tatler* team has been tasked with producing this year's Asia's Most Stylish shoot. We congregate back at our villa, which has been designated as the official styling salon for the day. The Philippines' most stylish lady, willowy Nanette Medved-Po, strolls in fresh and cheery in her yoga gear, hand-in-hand with husband Chris. Make-up and hair guru Patrick Rosas works his magic. Meanwhile, from the rack full of clothes by Filipino designer Inno Sotto, we settle on an elegant jumpsuit with billowy sleeves. Bold, chunky accessories by Joyce Makitalo complete the look.

10:30

Medved-Po looks stunning in the silk aubergine number as we drive over in our buggies to the resort's tree pod. Created to provide guests with a unique picnic option, it is perched six metres above the ground and accessible only by a cable system – quite a challenge when one is all glammed up and wearing stilettos! Medved-Po gamely climbs the steep stone steps and gets hoisted up to the tree top where the photographer awaits. The precarious location requires quite a few takes, but the resulting shot is undeniably spectacular.

11:30

It begins to rain again, so we postpone the start time for the next lady, China's Li Xiaoling. A painter and men's clothing designer, Li has just flown in from Paris via Bangkok that morning, so the weather gives her a much needed respite after the long flight.



13:30

Following a light lunch, we head back to our villa, where a bag of gowns by Badgley Mischka has been sent over from Shanghai just for Li's shoot. Although she explains that she has never worn the colour plum, she agrees to try it on after some gentle persuasion. Sure enough, the statuesque beauty looks fabulous in the draped jersey sheath. We are joined by Chopard Shanghai's Nicole Tang, who has brought a selection of jewellery for us to choose from. Make-up artist Rosas is in a playful mood and experiments with a variety of looks, while art director Anton San Diego has already rung twice to hurry us over to the next location as the skies are beginning to turn grey again.

15:00

By the time we get to The View, the resort's outdoor bistro, it is completely overcast – and photographer Frank Hoefsmit is disappointed to have lost the light. However, Li immediately starts working the camera and in no time we have a striking, wind-blown shot. Just in the nick of time, it turns out, as the drizzle turns into a downpour, sending everyone dashing for cover.

18:00

Afternoon flights have been delayed due to the rain, but the ladies from Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore finally arrive on the island in perfect time for the official welcome dinner.

19:15

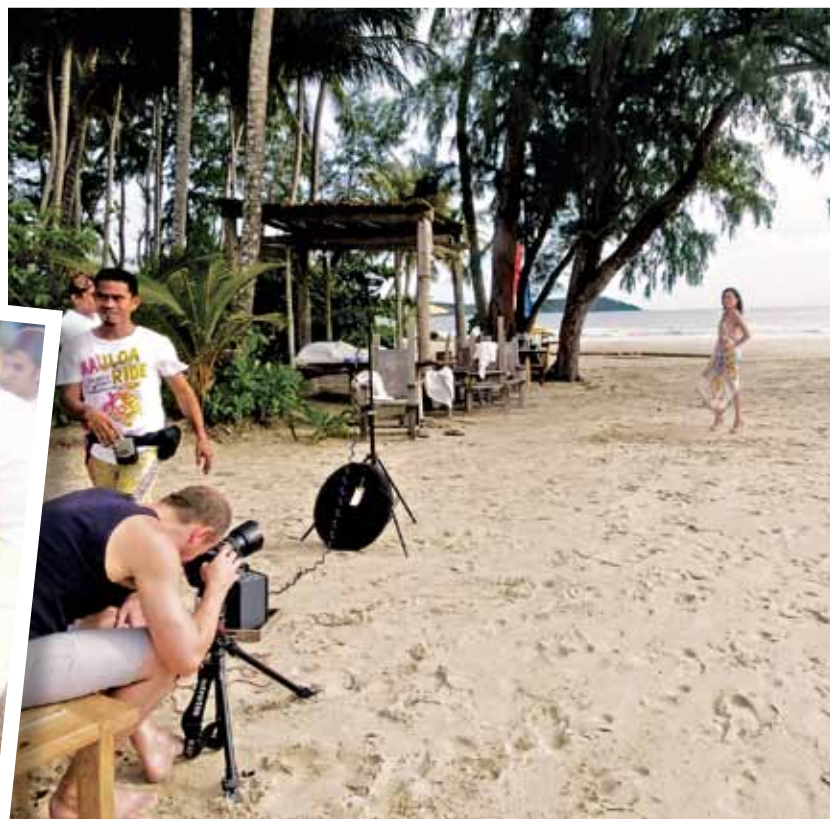
Everyone assembles at the jetty for the speedboat ride along the coast and through the scenic mangroves to Benz's Restaurant. Over chilled champagne and the most exquisite 10-course Thai feast, the ladies introduce themselves and get the chance to meet and mingle.



**NATURAL BEAUTY**

**FROM TOP**

The palatial five-bedroom beach villa; Nanette Medved-Po is not afraid of heights; Li Xiao Ling gets last minute styling adjustments from Mia Borrromeo and Rachel Relucio



**ISLAND LIFE**

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP** Interior of the ocean villa; resort chefs set up a fabulous Thai dinner; Naphaporn Bodiratnangkura Narongdej poses for photographer Frank Hoefsmit; June Rin gets a hair touch-up

# DAY 2

9:00

The group shot is scheduled for today, so the styling salon moves to Villa 21, a splendid six-bedroom private residence. Early-bird Singapore's June Rin arrives first. The neuro-anaesthesiologist is also a serious fashionista and has brought along several colourful options for her solo shot. Oohs and aahs are heard as Chopard Singapore's Ng Shieh Li unveils some dazzling high jewellery pieces. A sudden downpour forces us to move the set from the poolside to the master suite. Reclining serenely on the divan, the mild-mannered Rin cuts a pretty picture in her flowing fuschia off-shoulder gown by Roberto Cavalli.

10:30

Indonesia's Jessie Setiono, a 24-year-old model who is completing her law degree, makes a slender splash on set in shorts, a T-shirt and some stylish eyeglasses. But

Setiono's ready to get dressed up – she brings along a show-stopping lace and floral chiffon gown with cut-outs by Indonesian couturier Sebastian Gunawan that only someone with her perfectly lean figure could carry off. A complete transformation takes place and she emerges from the make-up room looking like a goddess. While Setiono is being photographed out by the seashore, our ever-efficient villa butler prepares a delightful spread of snacks and tea. The rest of the ladies arrive one after another, sending the styling team into full swing.

14:00

The beach at Soneva Kiri's southern tip is the dramatic setting for the group shot. At this point, the heavens are smiling down on us, the sun has come out and it is the most glorious afternoon. The clear blue skies and the gently foaming sea make a stunning backdrop for the seven stylish mavens, who are all decked out in white. Everyone is in high spirits and, after several great takes, we call it a day.



# DAY 3

9:00

We're off to a more relaxed start on our third and final day of the shoot. First in line this morning is Malaysia's Marion Caunter. We choose a figure-hugging dress in bright melon by Victoria Beckham to show off Caunter's hourglass figure. It's hard to believe that she just had a baby girl not too long ago.

11:00

Thailand's vivacious Naphorn Bodiratnangkura Narongdej is next to arrive. This petite lady is a dynamic powerhouse who manages her family's hotel empire. We accessorise her diaphanous printed dress by Emilio Pucci with a pair of earrings designed by Belgian-born jeweller Gonzague Zurstrassen, whose exclusive collection is carried at the resort's jewellery boutique, as well as an elegant timepiece by Breguet.

13:00

After the months of preparation, it's hard to believe that this year's Asia's Most Stylish shoot is coming to an end. Last to be photographed is Taiwan's lovely Adrienne Wang, who arrives with her sister, Lily. Once her hair and make-up are done, Wang slips into a blazing-red Christian Dior gown and steps out looking regal. Thankfully the weather is holding up today and we are finally able to shoot on the boardwalk that leads up to Soneva Kiri's entrance. A mother of four, Wang was a popular television anchor in Taiwan for a decade. She is a natural before the camera and this last shot is absolutely effortless. It's a wrap!



## RAIN OR SHINE

### CLOCKWISE

### FROM TOP

Rain doesn't dampen Marion Caunter's solo shoot; the Most Stylish ladies with the *Asia Tatler* team; treetop dining at Soneva Kiri's tree pod