

The Grande Centre Point Hotel is your 5 star luxury home while you rest and recover.



## beauty in bangkok

TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE AND HAVE A HOLIDAY AT THE SAME TIME. TRACY JOHNSTON DISCOVERS WHY AUSTRALIANS ARE HEADING TO THAILAND FOR COSMETIC SURGERY.

WHEN TRINA'S 22-YEAR relationship ended without warning, the 47-year-old was shattered. But the pragmatic Brisbane business owner used the crisis as the opportunity to transform her life. She began exercising, lost weight and gradually got her sparkle back. But despite her slimmer figure, there was one part of her body she couldn't change: she describes the loose skin under her chin as her "turkey neck", explaining it as a family trait.

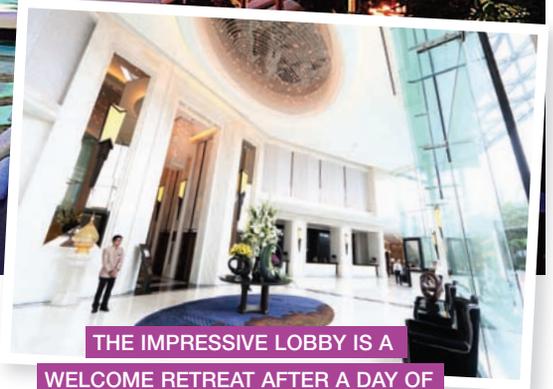
After much research, Trina rectified it with cosmetic surgery. And she chose Thailand as the place to do it.

I'm at breakfast with Trina at Grande Centre Point Hotel in Bangkok. Just days earlier she had a mid-face lift, lower eyelid lift and neck lift (that got rid of the turkey neck) at Bangkok's Bangpakok 9 International Hospital. Although her face is still swollen and tender, she is matter-of-fact about the work and takes her compression mask off to show me her new features. I'm a little queasy having never seen a 'fresh' facelift. The stitches are red and vivid and she looks like she's been in the ring with Mike. Nevertheless Trina explains in detail how she will look once the bruising and swelling

is gone and is clearly pleased with her experience and the result.

Trina is one of 12 women I meet over the next five days in Thailand at the invitation of Medi Makeovers, a Sydney-based company offering 'medical holidays' to Thailand. A growing trend amongst Australians is to travel overseas for cosmetic surgery and dental work and, to date, Medi Makeovers have taken more than 2,000 patients to Thailand.

The women on this trip have backgrounds as diverse as their ages - a mine worker, a model, mums, single young girls and professionals. Mother of five Alison, 37, from Victoria has had what is known as a Mummy Makeover - in her case a tummy tuck and breast lift. She has brought along her niece, Britney, 19, who has had a boob job (paid for by her boyfriend). Melissa 31, from WA has three children and opted for a Mummy Makeover also, Medi Makeover's most popular package. Missy the Kiwi, 46, works for a Queensland mining company and 'wanting to make the most of her holiday' she has a tummy tuck, breast augmentation, liposuction and extensive dental work of crowns and implants.



THE IMPRESSIVE LOBBY IS A WELCOME RETREAT AFTER A DAY OF SHOPPING AND SIGHTSEEING

Everyone has different reasons for having cosmetic surgery. Some to regain their pre-baby body and others to boost their confidence. A couple of the women have experienced vast amounts of weight loss and require surgery to get rid of excess skin. Others simply want to look 'damn hot' for their husbands and partners. However, they all had the same reason for travelling to Thailand to do it. They couldn't afford to have this work done in Australia: rates are roughly 70 percent cheaper in Bangkok. "I simply couldn't find \$20k to have work done in Australia, let alone justify it with five kids to look after," says Alison. Trina's three procedures in Thailand cost AU\$7,200 including airfares and accommodation. In Australia, for the neck lift alone she was quoted \$9,000.

If affordability is the main reason, the other appeal is the ability to recover without the demands of work and family back home. The compulsory 10-night minimum stay for breast augmentation (14 nights for a standard tummy tuck), means the patient can rest, recover and be completely monitored and assisted while enjoying five-star luxury accommodation.



We loved...

### RED SKY BAR

SITUATED ON THE 56TH FLOOR OF THE CENTARA GRAND HOTEL, IS THE ULTRA SEXY RED SKY BAR. EXPERIENCE 360 DEGREE PANORAMIC VIEWS OF BUSTLING BANGKOK BY NIGHT AS YOU LISTEN TO LIVE MUSIC AND SIP ON A COCKTAIL OR TWO.

### GRANDE CENTRE POINT HOTEL, TERMINAL 21

MEDI MAKEOVERS PATIENTS STAY AT THIS GORGEOUS HOTEL ONCE THEY ARE TRANSFERRED FROM HOSPITAL. THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF AT THE HOTEL KNOW THIS IS NOT A TYPICAL HOLIDAY FOR SURGERY PATIENTS SO THEY ARE ATTENTIVE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR GUEST'S NEEDS.

THE ADJACENT TERMINAL 21 SHOPPING CENTRE OFFERS 5 LEVELS OF AIR-CONDITIONED SHOPPING RIGHT ON THE DOOR STEP SO YOU CAN SIMPLY POP DOWNSTAIRS FOR A RETAIL HIT.

Medi Makeovers' escorted groups are scheduled to Thailand several times a year, however you can travel at any time as an individual. Patients are met at Suvarnabhumi Airport and are transported from airport to hospital then onto their hotel. Every step of the way they are guided through their journey and have the added piece of mind of an Australian Medi Makeovers representative staying in the hotel who is available to talk about any fears or concerns the women have.

Once they can move again without pain, the women start to enjoy the sights and attractions of Bangkok with escorted trips to the theatre, dinners, massages and shopping. I got to meet many of these ladies pre- and post-op, so it was great to see them mobile (although some a little gingerly, especially after liposuction and tummy tucks), but by the time I left Thailand they were well and truly into holiday mode with daily massages and shopping.

When I asked whether they were concerned about having surgery in a foreign country (and a developing country at that), all of the women said they had either done extensive research or



*Thai medical staff are renowned for their gentle, caring nature and professionalism.*

had been referred by people they knew.

The majority of Medi Makeovers patients go to the private Bangpakok 9 International Hospital, which performs thousands of cosmetic surgery procedures every year, however there are other hospitals that Medi Makeovers have access to in Thailand. The Thai doctors at the hospital have either been trained abroad or obtained the finest medical education from the most prestigious university in Thailand.

Siam Niramit Show



AMAZING SPECIAL EFFECTS AND  
STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY MAKES SIAM  
NIRAMIT A MAGNIFICENT VISUAL FEAST

The women I met were also unanimous in their praise for the high level of service, care and friendliness of their Thai doctor and nursing staff.

The hospitals and dental surgeries I visited in Bangkok and Pattaya were extremely clean and appeared to be efficiently run. And there are no hideous waiting lists. This is perhaps another reason why more Australians are opting for elective surgery in Thailand for non-cosmetic surgery too, such as knee reconstructions and hip replacements (Medi Makeovers can also arrange these types of operations).

An Australian agency, Medi Makeovers is run by Daniela Pratico. Her first concern is the wellbeing of her clients and their families. She has developed a reputation for ensuring clients feel safe, get the best possible treatment and, if their surgery and recovery allows, enjoy a fabulous holiday. After spending 5 days with Daniela and her team in Thailand, it's evident she cares very much about her patients and her phone never stops ringing as

she organizes everything from hospital checkups to transfers and even sightseeing trips for family members.

A new body may sound an unusual holiday souvenir but after meeting those whose confidence has been transformed after surgery, the experience was a life-changing one – for me, as well as those I met.

And as for Trina? I spoke to her nine weeks after she returned to Brisbane and she is full of confidence. She loves her shapely, new neck and youthful face and is doing something she never dreamt of: online dating. Oh, and she's booking a return trip to Bangkok to have further work done.

[WWW.MEDIMAKEOVERS.COM](http://WWW.MEDIMAKEOVERS.COM)  
[WWW.GRANDECENTREPOINTTERMINAL21.COM](http://WWW.GRANDECENTREPOINTTERMINAL21.COM)  
[WWW.BANGPAKOKHOSPITAL.COM](http://WWW.BANGPAKOKHOSPITAL.COM)  
[WWW.BANGKOKSMILEDENTAL.COM](http://WWW.BANGKOKSMILEDENTAL.COM)

## Things to do

SIAM NIRAMIT IS AN AWARD WINNING SHOW AND ONE OF THE LARGEST STAGE PRODUCTIONS IN THE WORLD. THIS SPECTACULAR SHOW OF THAI ARTS AND CULTURE TAKES YOU ON A JOURNEY BACK THROUGH TIME INTO THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE KINGDOM OF SIAM.

ASIATIQUE THE RIVERFRONT, IS BANGKOK'S NEWEST NIGHT SHOPPING MARKET AND A GREAT PLACE TO BUY GIFTS. FOR A MEMORABLE MEAL TRY BAAN KANITHA RESTAURANT, AN UPSCALE THAI FOOD RESTAURANT AND A FAVOURITE WITH THE THAI CONSUL-GENERAL AND HIS WIFE.



The Thai Village is a popular family attraction in the heart of Bangkok