

# PRESTIGE

The Very Best in Life

INDONESIA



Christina Lim  
Donny Pramono

Vicky Supit  
Resolute Beauty

www.prestige.com



WHEN IT COMES TO DISCOVERING THAT ELUSIVE PARADISE LOST, THE MOST IDYLIC, UTOPIAN RETREAT AWAY FROM THE PROVERBIAL MADDING CROWDS, FEW LOCATIONS RIVAL THE LAUCALA ISLAND, SAYS MARTIN LAING.

One of the great attractions of golf is the opportunity it affords to get away from it all. Taking to the lush fairways and greens provides a means of escape from the hustle and bustle of business as usual; the chance to leave behind the frenetic pace of modern life and enjoy a few hours in a beautiful rural location. For anyone who yearns for the ultimate golfing destination, this has to be right up at the top of their list.

Situated in the Fiji archipelago, Laucala is a private island resort in the Pacific Ocean where visitors will find an almost clichéd perfect haven in which they can indulge themselves. It is the most ideal sanctuary imaginable for rest and relaxation—and golf.

As if the balmy hideaway didn't have enough to recommend it, Laucala has recently developed a full 18-hole championship-quality course. In keeping with a destination of this calibre, Laucala called in top-flight golf course architect David McLay Kidd to design and build a great challenge for players.

The verdant and rugged island is actually, if perhaps somewhat surprisingly, a terrific location for constructing a golf course. And Kidd, who owns the renowned DMK Golf Design, has made the most of the natural terrain and environment in laying out his course. He has utilised the best natural features of the landscape as part of the course. And,



with the tropical island providing everything one could wish for in terms of backdrop and scenery, Laucala is now a stunning new addition to the world golfing itinerary.

When it comes to course design, Kidd says his intention is "pursuing purist golf". His ethos is summed up by an American football analogy: "Golfers are on offence, and we designers are on defence. If the offence scores at will, in any sport, then the defence has failed. As such, we see it as our duty to defend par.

"So much goes into creating a sustainable, manageable development that fits harmoniously with its surroundings. Design is only one factor in our equation. Three other key considerations are construction, maintenance and operation. Each affects the others. The fact that a golf hole can be designed does not necessarily mean that it can be efficiently built, maintained or managed. For example, a set of pot bunkers might be visually appealing from a design perspective. However, if they sit where water collects, or

are difficult to upkeep or unnecessarily slow the pace of play, then those pot bunkers are not very well designed after all.

"Our belief is that the only way to achieve great golf design is to invest time on-site understanding the land and anticipating the potential ramifications—not only before we do what we do, but also long after we are through," he adds.

It is a philosophy that has earned Kidd considerable plaudits for his work. He has also built or is building golf courses in such top-class golfing destinations as St Andrews and Glenelg in Scotland; San Francisco, California; Hawaii; South Africa; Ireland; Mexico; and Morocco. Indeed, his firm has come a long way from its beginning in 1998. Today, DMK Golf Design employs designers, shapers, agronomists and computer-aided design experts.

Says Kidd: "I steadfastly believe that a great golf course cannot be designed within the two-dimensional boundaries of a piece of paper or on a computer screen. My team and I strive to discover golf courses more so than design them, to unearth them rather than impose ourselves upon them. It has been my experience that the best-laid plans in ink often go to waste in the dirt.

"Our hands-on methods are more time consuming but ultimately more rewarding—for us, for our client, and for the golfer," he explains.

Kidd's determination to make the most of what nature has already provided is helped enormously, of course, on Laucala by its Pacific location. The layout winds and winds in and out of the rugged landscape, and the warm climate means the island is lush, green, fragrant and beautiful.

The signature holes are the fifth and 11<sup>th</sup>, which offer spectacular panoramas of the mountains and ocean. The terrain was once a coconut plantation and holes are integrated



into the setting. Kidd has also factored in sea breezes that will inevitably affect play, and has created large greens guarded by carefully-placed bunkers. The course also features significant changes in elevation.

Although still a largely undiscovered island paradise, thanks in large part to its private status, Laucala is sure to be in growing demand

**Visitors will find an almost clichéd perfect haven in which they can indulge themselves. It is the most ideal sanctuary imaginable for rest and relaxation—and golf.**

in the years to come as word spreads of what it has to offer to golfers—and anyone else—who visits.

As with any exclusive resort destination, Laucala has levels of luxury and pampering to be envied. The island has a fantastic spa, excellent restaurants, and that fabulous climate and location. Guests can simply unwind by the pool or beach, or indulge in sporting desires—whether that involves taking to the new 18-hole golf course, or riding horses through the surf. □

