



REVIEWS: AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES IN BANGKOK

Back home, the fall season is when many parents send their kids outdoors to frolic in the leaves after school. In Bangkok — where September temperatures soar and leaves stay connected to their branches — rolling around in fall foliage is, sadly, not an option. But this doesn't mean your kids need to default to endless hours in front of the iPad to keep occupied. These two kid-friendly activities in Bangkok will help your little ones exert their after-school energy — without depleting yours!

by MANDY SMITH

PINK DANCE SCHOOL

PINK Dance School is widely recognized as one of the best schools for ballet here in Bangkok, whether your tiny dancer is breaking in a first-ever pair of leather slippers or is already poised *on pointe*. The school incorporates games and creative play to fuel the interest of their youngest students but is also committed to excellence, instilling from a young age the critical techniques and skills upon which your dancer will build as he or she develops.

By learning to dance, students learn about body confidence, grace and strength — skills useful for all young people and that carry into other aspects of life. (And let's not forget the fringe benefit of a French vocabulary that often comes with ballet lessons!)

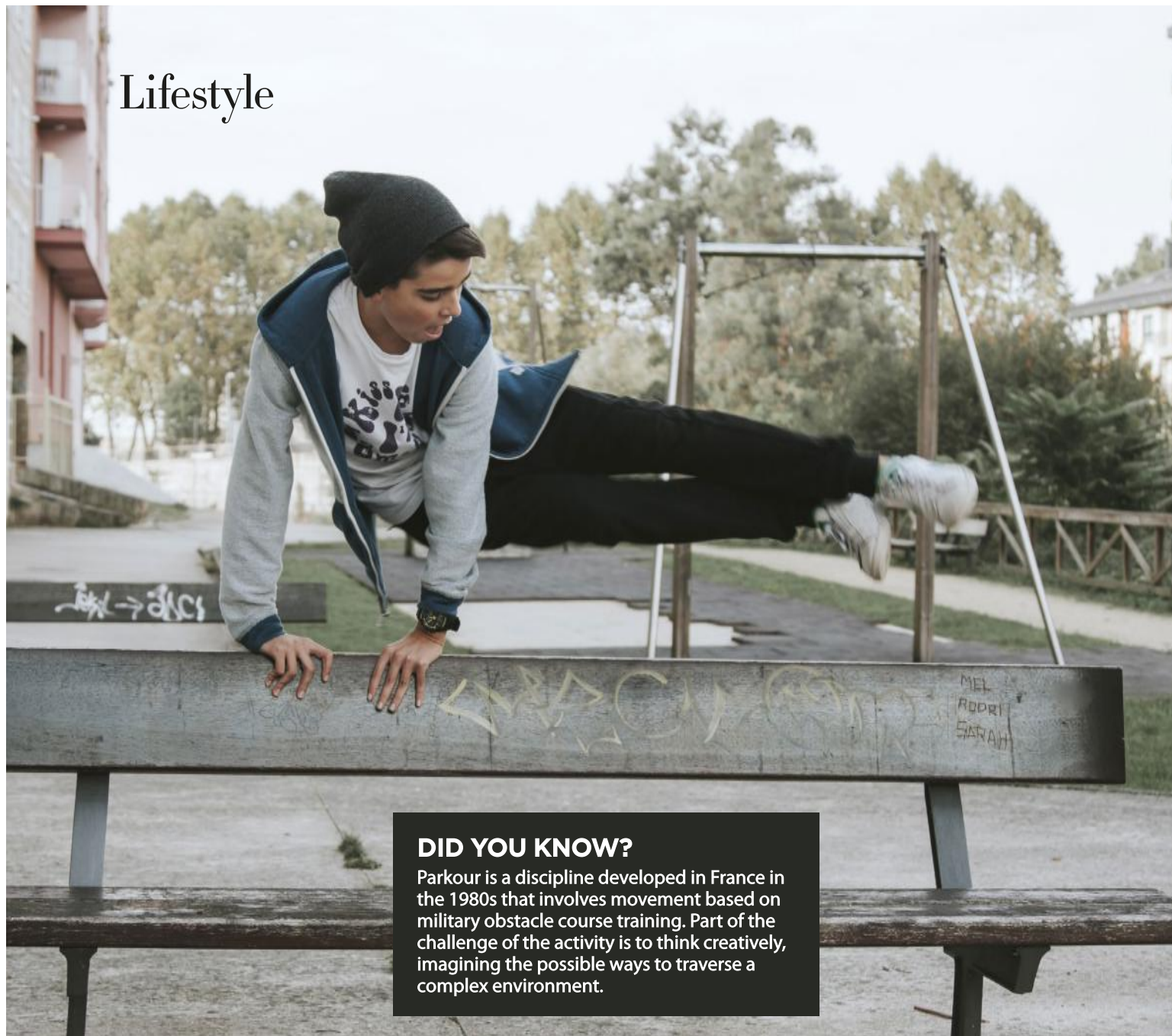
Adorably and aptly-named Miss Pink launched her dance school in 2009, after extensive training and qualifications through the Royal Academy of Dance in London. All of her instructors are Royal Academy of Dance trained and exhibit calm, professional demeanors that earn the respect and adoration of their students.

Annual examinations through Royal Academy of Dance are offered to students who are then certified and graduated to next levels, providing continuity of instruction — something that translates well in case your dancer needs certification to gain entrance to a different dance establishment in the future. Miss Pink has graduated a number of dancers who have been placed in prestigious schools of dance and offered scholarships as a result of her excellent "tutu-elage." The studio is situated in the heart of Thonglor with classes offered on weekdays and weekends. PINK accepts students as young as two years old. Both private and group classes are available.

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Lifestyle



DID YOU KNOW?

Parkour is a discipline developed in France in the 1980s that involves movement based on military obstacle course training. Part of the challenge of the activity is to think creatively, imagining the possible ways to traverse a complex environment.

THE MOVEMENT PLAYGROUND

Tired of your little wild one bouncing off your walls? Take them somewhere it's actually encouraged!

The Movement Playground offers parkour classes to harness your child's ninja skills and reckless abandon, putting these apparently inborn traits to use in a safe and stimulating environment. Within an expansive, warehouse gym space, The Movement Playground replicates a gritty, backstreet-city feel, creating a fun "playground" of sorts, right here in the concrete jungle of Bangkok.

Outfitted with pylon obstacle courses, balance beams, boxing bags, ropes, balls, truck tires, stretching mats, metal monkey bars and free weights, this is a kids' dream-come-true, with two highlights being its indestructibility and the room to run wild. And the group classes on offer take kids through a series of strengthening exercises and agility-building stunts that build balance and stamina.

Perhaps the best thing about the recreational sports at The Movement Playground is that there is no gear or uniform needed to participate. Free running and parkour are known as activities of "the urban playground" and thus require only comfy, loose-fitting apparel — no \$60 cleats

that your kid is going to outgrow in six months! Gear up with shorts and a tee-shirt — if you're really feeling the grunge, your flat-bill cap worn backwards too — and you're all set to tackle some tricks.

This newly-acquired facility in Bangna is easily located and accessible to Mega Bangna, giving you time to grab a coffee with a friend while your little ones burn off some steam. Free trial classes allow you see if parkour is your kids "thing" before committing to classes, but we're pretty sure they'll be begging you to sign them up and *you'll* be happy for your living room to remain intact, while they the scale walls and swing from the ceiling somewhere else.

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