

Here Comes the Sun

As the tides in Thailand shift from ultra-conservative to modern and stylish, swimwear designers are striking a pretty balance between functional and flirty. **Ashley Niedringhaus** finds four Bangkok-based labels making a splash.



The playful Tennis one-piece by April Pool Day.



FOR RESORT DAYS
MAILLOT & CO.

With a brand identity rooted in modern updates of timeless classics, Maillot & Co.'s halter necklines and crisscrossing spaghetti straps are modern updates to your mother's maillot. "Our brand is centered on a minimalist approach," says Suchanan Lohawitoon, designer and managing director. Lohawitoon's cool-girl-with-a-twist designs have taken the conservative one-piece to embrace color-blocking and the less-is-more trend. Drawing on her landscape architecture background, which inspired a love of design, the suits in Maillot & Co.'s collection are building blocks for style, where personal flair can come from wraps, jewelry and other accessories. [instagram.com/maillotco.swimwear](https://www.instagram.com/maillotco.swimwear).

FROM TOP LEFT: SHAHAR LEV; COURTESY OF APRIL POOL DAY; COURTESY OF MAILLOT & CO. (2)



Maillot & Co.'s Crossback one-piece in limited-edition "kale."



FOR BEACH EXPLORERS
APRIL POOL DAY

Designer Lilanan Ronakiat knows the best swimsuits work as well on the pool deck as they do on the street, which is why scooped backs and modern florals dominate her recent collection. "Swimwear is no longer just about function," Ronakiat says. "Pieces need to have a stylish aesthetic." To pull off that sexy-but-not-too-revealing look, Ronakiat pairs old-school looks with an inspiring element, like high-waisted bikini bottoms or an on-trend print or cutout, to create something distinctive. With a focus on classic silhouettes, her swimsuits can do double duty and effortlessly transition from day to night: wear the one-piece as a bodysuit with shorts, or dress it up under a sheer dress. [aprilpoolday.com](https://www.aprilpoolday.com).



Sunny shades of Water and Others' original set.



FOR POOL-PARTY COOL
WATER AND OTHERS

This Bangkok brand was founded in 2016 by a trio of friends aiming to create modern swimwear that is fashionable both in the water and on land—and business has boomed on the most modern of platforms: Water and Others' Instagram followers can browse the catalogue-like feed of real women and social media influencers modeling the swimwear, then use the brand's shopable Line account for quick-fire ordering. Their on-trend designs include high-rise briefs for a modest and slimming hourglass figure, and flirty frills on a full-coverage bandeau top. Vibrant reds and punchy pinks, including au courant "millennial pink," dominate the color scheme, while deep greens and navy hues add classic options. [instagram.com/waterandothers](https://www.instagram.com/waterandothers).



FOR SLEEK SURFWEAR
V ACTIVEWEAR

The mantra "form meets function" is the heart of V Activewear, says the brand's designer and owner, Teerut Wongwatanasin. The former runway designer is embracing the social media era for inspiration and income, with nearly 90 percent of his sales coming from Line. "With the rise of social media, Thai women are embracing Western fashion trends," Wongwatanasin says. "While my ready-to-wear collections were very conservative, I can push the envelope more with swimwear, and my clients are willing to be more revealing." Don't expect barely there string bikinis; his sporty designs in the upcoming summer collection are practical and rugged with a feminine touch. Long-sleeve bodysuits are made from a thicker UV-blocking nylon-spandex mix for flattering support, and deep front zippers reveal as much or as little cleavage as you like—ideal for his newest muse: female surfers hitting the waves in Phuket. [vactivewear.com](https://www.vactivewear.com).

FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF WATER AND OTHERS (2); COURTESY OF V ACTIVEWEAR (2)



V Activewear's Ballet Bodysuit is sleek but sturdy.