

SAWASDEE



{CITY GUIDE}

THIS IS BALI

INDONESIA

1

**Serene stays in
the jungle**

Hotels

2

**The best of
Indonesian flavors**

Food & Drink

3

**A beach club for
every vibe**

Nightlife

CURATOR'S NOTE

Bali is one of Asia's most popular holiday destinations on account of its surfable waves, balmy weather and scenic rice paddies. Scratch the surface a little more to find the Balinese people and their vibrant culture are also part of the feel-good vibe. The mostly Hindu community is known for its friendly easy-going personalities, calm accommodating ways and willingness to share their ancient customs and traditions.

The island's main beach hubs of Seminyak and Canggu have a thriving café and restaurant scene, with seafront bars and clubs providing perfect sundowner destinations. In the jungle, Ubud is similarly alive with visitors tapping into the lively craft and craft community. Journey beyond these places to experience mountain highs and village life.

No matter where you are in Bali, healing and wellness and, increasingly, sustainable tours and experiences, make this one of the world's most beguiling places. Enjoy!

– Penny Watson

The stunning Pura Luhur temple in Uluwatu is just one of many holy sites on the so-called Island of the Gods





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IN THIS ISSUE

Bali is an island of abundance, not just in its upscale resorts and beach clubs, but also its jungles, mountains and wildlife – not to mention its diverse cultures.



TRAVEL GREEN

From rice growing to volcano trekking, eco-tourism is a great way to experience Balinese culture.



Shop with a purpose

Sustainability-themed local brands to check out when you're in Bali



Bali's best sunrise

Hike through the night to Bali's most famous active volcano to enjoy the island's most stunning sunrise.



REST AND RESTORATION

Bali is all about wellness, be it in body, mind or soul. These soulful retreats champion all three.



Bali's day of silence

Without music, electricity or even WiFi, Nyepi is an amazing opportunity to unplug and reflect.



SOUL FOOD

Incredible cuisine from across the archipelago can be sampled at these Bali restaurants.



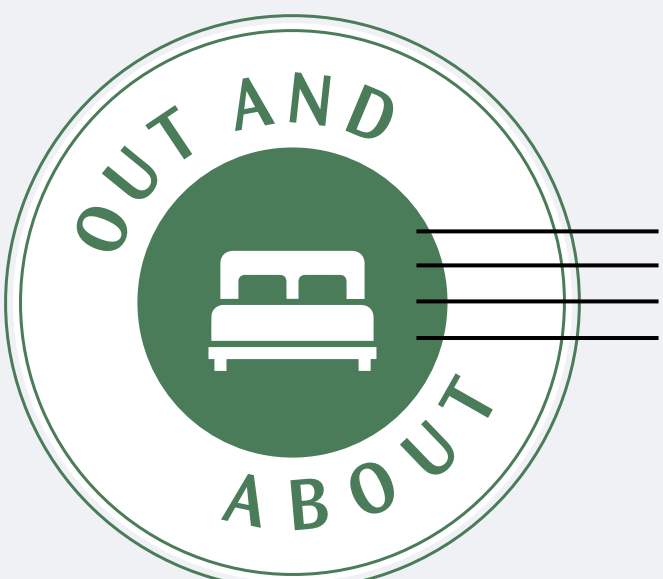
A chef's guide to Bali

Eka Sunarya, chef at the eco-lux resort Buahan, Banyan Tree Escape, discusses his favorite spots.



FUN IN THE SUN

A day at a beach club is mandatory in Bali. If you only have time for one, make it one of these.



WHERE TO STAY

Beyond the surf and sand, the tropical jungle and mountains hide some amazing stays.



Neighborhood watch

Pererenan combines the chill vibe of a local village with shops, restaurants and beachfront activities.





TRAVEL GREEN

From rice growing to volcano trekking, eco-tourism is a great way to experience Balinese culture responsibly while helping local communities.





ASTUNGKARA WAY

Social enterprise Astungkara Way is championing Bali's regenerative rice-growing families and their fertilizer-free crops. Visitors can support the cause by joining an educational afternoon learning about the natural rice cycle, enjoying an overnight micro-adventure in bamboo pavilions or putting your backpack on for the 135-kilometre Coast to Coast regenerative walk.



BALI CONSERVATION ADVENTURES

Why are certain animals and habitats endangered? Who or what is the cause? How can we help? These are the key questions volunteer organisation Bali Conservation Adventures wants tourists to be able to answer. Sign-up to release sea turtles, restore coral habitats and help Bali's ancient Kintamani dog breed.





TOGETHERNESS PROJECT

The Togetherness Project is a grassroots organisation striving to connect village communities and their customs with curious travellers. On the Pesalakan Cultural Village tour, village leader Made Astawa leads guests on a rice field walk before introducing them to village life, including Balinese cooking, ikat weaving and temple offering.



EKOWISATA MANGROVE

One of Bali's wild mangrove habitats – toxic for a decade – is slowly being cleared of tidal plastic so that its marine habitats can thrive again. Guided by former fishermen and prawn farmers from the surrounding Wanasari neighborhood, visitors can collect rubbish on kayak tours through the lush mangrove wilderness.





BALI ECO TOURS

“Good tourism” has been the purpose of Bali Eco Tours since 1999 when the Ubud-based company started tempting tourists with experiences that celebrate Balinese culture and the island’s stunning natural landscapes. Activities across the island include rice field treks, “lava and ash” volcano walks, downhill cycling and canoeing adventures.



Shop with a purpose

Bali's eco-conscience is gaining momentum with sustainable brands that combine design aesthetic with a do-good ethos.

John Hardy Seminyak

The iconic jewellery brand now has a gallery-style space in the retail hub of Seminyak. Shop rings, earrings and the brand's famed chains.



Kevala Ceramics

In Denpasar, this shop and factory-with-a-difference employs over 100 Balinese artisans who create bespoke ceramics by hand.

Plastik Kembali

From neighbouring Lombok Island, Plastic Kembali is at the forefront of turning plastic waste into intricate pieces of art that hang in Bali's best galleries and boutiques.



Threads of Life

Handmade from local fabrics and natural dyes, this fairtrade shop and gallery in Ubud supports artisans from across Indonesia.

Indigo Luna

Earth-friendly yoga and swimwear label Indigo Luna uses plant-based dyes and sustainable fabrics such as recycled materials made from landfills and ocean detritus.



Bali's best sunrise

**A night of no sleep is a small price to pay for
this memorable hiking trip**



Late nights in Bali are not uncommon, with its abundance of beach clubs. But visitors might consider an all-nighter for very a different reason: catching the sunrise at Mount Batur.

At 1,700m above sea level, Bali's famous active volcano lies at the center of two concentric calderas, resulting from two separate eruptions more than 20,000 years ago. The calderas, the resulting Lake Batur and of course the peak itself together comprise a stunning hiking experience.

The majority of visitors do the hike in the middle of the night, starting at roughly 2am. While most of the two or three hour hike is done in complete darkness – with only your headlamps to guide you – the reward is more than worth it. You reach the summit just in time to enjoy the sunrise as it casts a magical light over the clouds above and below – all with a hot drink and a light breakfast in hand.

To beat the crowds – and to avoid the late-night rising – try the sunset hike instead. It's not as popular, but the solitude is worth it for many people.

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Gdas Bali, Ubud



REST AND RESTORATION

Bali is synonymous with wellness, be it in body, mind or soul. These luxurious and soulful retreats champion all three.





ASA MAIA, ULUWATU

Uluwatu's latest wellness resort has a holistic approach that mixes yoga, hypnotherapy, tummo breathwork, meditation and blind massage. Guests stay in luxuriously refitted traditional Javanese wooden houses dotted around a central swimming pool, and enjoy infrared sauna and hot and cold contrast therapy baths. Plant-based and pescatarian dishes feature on the poolside restaurant menu.

PHOTOS BY LAWRENCE N(ASA MAAIA), BALI INTERIORS (SOULSHINE)



SOULSHINE, UBUD

Musician Michael Franti's Ubud resort hosts retreats that fuse wellness and wellbeing with music. Retreat themes include Pilates, dance, writing, photography and yoga, and visitors stay in traditional villas or modern luxury suites. Sound healing, spa treatments, pools with swings, a waterslide and a stage all add to a playful vibe.





ESCAPE HAVEN, CANGGU

In a quiet pocket of busy Canggu, luxurious Escape Haven focuses on nurturing retreats for small groups of women. Six-night (minimum) stays have themes including surf, yoga, Ayurveda healing, detox and, the latest, Balinese healing. Revel in beautiful rooms, unlimited spa experiences, twice-daily yoga classes, healthy food and healing rituals.



ONE WORLD, TEGALLALANG AND UBUD

With a new second location recently opened in Ubud, One World retains its reputation as the go-to for authentic Ayurveda retreats. Tapping into the centuries-old Hindu holistic medicine, specialised one-week (minimum) Panchakama detox programs include medical practitioner advice, morning yoga, twice-daily spa treatments and a diet to suit personalised needs.



GDAS BALI, UBUD

Gdas is completely on-message when it comes to health and wellbeing. The new luxury resort’s state-of-the art spa facility has just opened, offering the gamut of holistic healing – focusing on sleep, emotional balance, detox and balancing the mind. Five-night retreats are all-inclusive of plant-based meals, daily yoga and meditation and spa treatments.

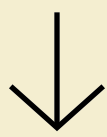


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Bali’s day of silence

Without music, electricity or even WiFi, the annual religious holiday of Nyepi is an amazing opportunity to unplug and reflect.

On an island famous for its many kinds of activity, it might seem counterintuitive to plan your trip around Nyepi. Bali’s so-called Day of Silence is a kind of spiritual lockdown, when Balinese Hindus devote themselves to reflection, and abstain from any activities that distract from this soul-searching endeavor.



That means that you will not find any cars, motorbikes or even people on the streets. Visitors are asked to stay in their hotels and can expect the airport closed as well. The main telco provider switches off the internet – though private connections run at their own discretion.

While to some it might seem like a lost day on their holiday, others take the cue to do some spiritual reflection of their own. Many resorts provide Nyepi packages and activities on-site.

To truly experience Nyepi, arrive a few days prior and soak up the preparatory rituals and parades taking place in many towns and villages. The eve of Nyepi sees many loud processions of *ogoh-ogoh* (demon effigies) – an amazing sight before hunkering down for 24 hours.





Home by
Chef Wayan



FOOD FOR THE SOUL

Incredible cuisine from across
Indonesia's archipelago can be sampled
at some of Bali's best restaurants.





KAUM, SEMINYAK

Kaum, part of Potato Head Beachclub, was one of the first restaurants in Bali to truly champion the different food styles found across Indonesia, from West Sumatra's rendang beef and Jakarta's gado-gado to Bali's *cumi suna ceku* (braised baby squid). Book an al fresco table for beach views.

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HOME BY CHEF WAYAN, PERERENAN

Inconspicuous unless you know it, Home by Chef Wayan is a casual-looking eatery that surprises first-timers with its authentic local dishes, served to a five-star standard. Chef-owner Wayan has worked in some of Bali's best restaurants and is the author of *Paon*, a Balinese cookbook. Classic dishes include Bali's famous *babi guling* (roast suckling pig).





NUSANTARA BY LOCAVORE

With more than 17,000 islands, 1,300 tribes and some 700 languages, it's no wonder Indonesia claims over 5,000 traditional recipes. It's this regional diversity that Nusantara chefs share with diners on a menu that includes *kepiting raos* (deep-fried soft-shell crab cooked with young papaya) from the Maluku Islands, and Sawah duck with Aceh-style curry from North Sumatra – all in an elegant, memorable setting.

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THE KELUSA

On a fairy-lit, open-air deck overlooking the lush Payangan rainforest north of Ubud, this underrated restaurant, part of the boutique Samsara resort, has a menu split between classic European dishes (pan-seared barramundi with beurre noir) and Indonesian favourites (*cakalang woku* – grilled tuna with spiced turmeric broth). All dishes are presented with chef Iwan's creative flair.





BUAHAN, BANYAN TREE ESCAPE

This five-star resort is sustainably designed to complement the jungle surrounding its 16 “no walls, no doors” villas. The Open Kitchen restaurant is similarly geared. Headed by Chef Eka Sunarya, who grew up in the village, the menu is dialled into the zero-waste, farm-to-table zeitgeist with a menu focusing on Bali’s forgotten flavours.

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A chef’s guide to Bali

Chef Eka Sunarya, chef at the eco-lux resort Buahan, Banyan Tree Escape, discusses his favorite spots in Bali to eat and relax.



Best place for lunch: Nusantara by Locavore, in Ubud, serves up an incredible range of authentic Indonesian dishes that would be hard to get anywhere else.

Most peaceful place: Deep in the Balinese jungle with the sound of the river in the background.

Favorite view: The seven-peaks mountain view over Buahan Valley is one of my favorites. I'm fortunate because I see it clearly from work at the resort's Open Kitchen and Botanist Bar.

Most inspirational Bali chef: My mentor, Chef Agung Gede, who is the executive chef of St. Regis Bali. He opened the door for me to enter the culinary world, from a steward to a kitchen helper. His passion for Indonesian gastronomy continues to inspire me to this day.

Best beachfront venue: Potato Head Beach Club in Seminyak. They have good cocktails, great music, fantastic sunsets – all I need to spend an afternoon on the beach.

The dish I'm most proud of: Timbungan fish, prepared in a traditional way, in bamboo and cooked on a wood fire. It's one of the dishes from the Balinese Heritage Lunch, a communal sharing style offering at Buahan.



**More insider food recommendations at
[Sawasdee.thaiairways.com](https://www.sawasdee.thaiairways.com)**

St Tropez



FUN IN THE SUN

A day (and a night!) at a beach club or bar is pretty much mandatory when you go to Bali. If you only have time for one, make it one of these.



THE LAWN



Cozied up to the beachfront near Batu Bolong, The Lawn is all things to all beachgoers. Take to recliners for coconut cocktails under beach umbrellas, sit poolside in big lounge chairs for tunes and a tempting wine list or head upstairs to Skool Kitchen, a salubrious spot where Bali’s whose-who hang.

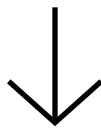


LA BRISA



Boasting views of surfers catching waves at Echo Beach, La Brisa is an oceanfront hangout with a fittingly Robinson Crusoe aesthetic. Styled from the wood of reclaimed fishing boats and kitted out with nautical paraphernalia (old glass buoys, seashells and marine rope) this is the place to don bikinis for poolside lounging, settle in for a seafood lunch or dance to DJ tunes, cocktail in hand.

PHOTO BY LA BRISA



ST TROPEZ



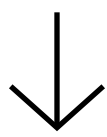
St Tropez is so close to Berawa Beach you can almost feel the sea spray. Riffing off the Mediterranean scene, the menu is nouvelle French and Italian (from garlic snails to wood-fired pizza) paired with a European wine list. Cocktails and DJs add to the party vibe as the sun goes down.

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KARMA BEACH



Accessed via a funicular from Ungasan’s Karma Kandara resort, Karma Beach is one of the most spectacular oceanfront locales in Bali. Its sandy-footed venues – Tiki Beach Bar and Le Club 22 – canvas the entertainment spectrum, from day beds, live music and traditional beach barbecues to cocktails and dinner overlooking the big beautiful blue.



CANNA BALI



Tiered like a wedding cake down a sloping cliff in Nusa Dua, Canna Bali is for beach lovers who appreciate luxury and service as much as sun rays and sandy toes. Lounge in chic tents on the seafront or on daybeds by the pool, and dine on the casual deck or sky-high at romantic Cliff restaurant. Cave is Canna's late-night DJ venue.

Nusa Lembongan

The three islands that comprise Nusa Penida are among Bali's essential day trips. Of them, make special time for Nusa Lembongan, catching an easy ferry from the sleepy town of Sanur. Beach hop, snorkel with Manta Rays, scuba dive with mola mola – or sunfish – and kayak around the mangroves in relative peace and quiet.



More insider food recommendations at Sawasdee.thaiairways.com

Munduk Cabins



WHERE TO STAY

Beyond Bali's surf and sand, the tropical jungle and mountains hide some amazing stays.





Bambu Indah

Founders John and Cynthia Hardy prioritised sustainability and Balinese culture when creating this paradisaical resort on the banks of the Ayung River, in Sayan, near Ubud. Guests are accommodated in Bali's most exceptional bamboo architecture – including a fairytale bamboo treehouse – and can spend their days lounging by natural water pools fed by a waterfall.

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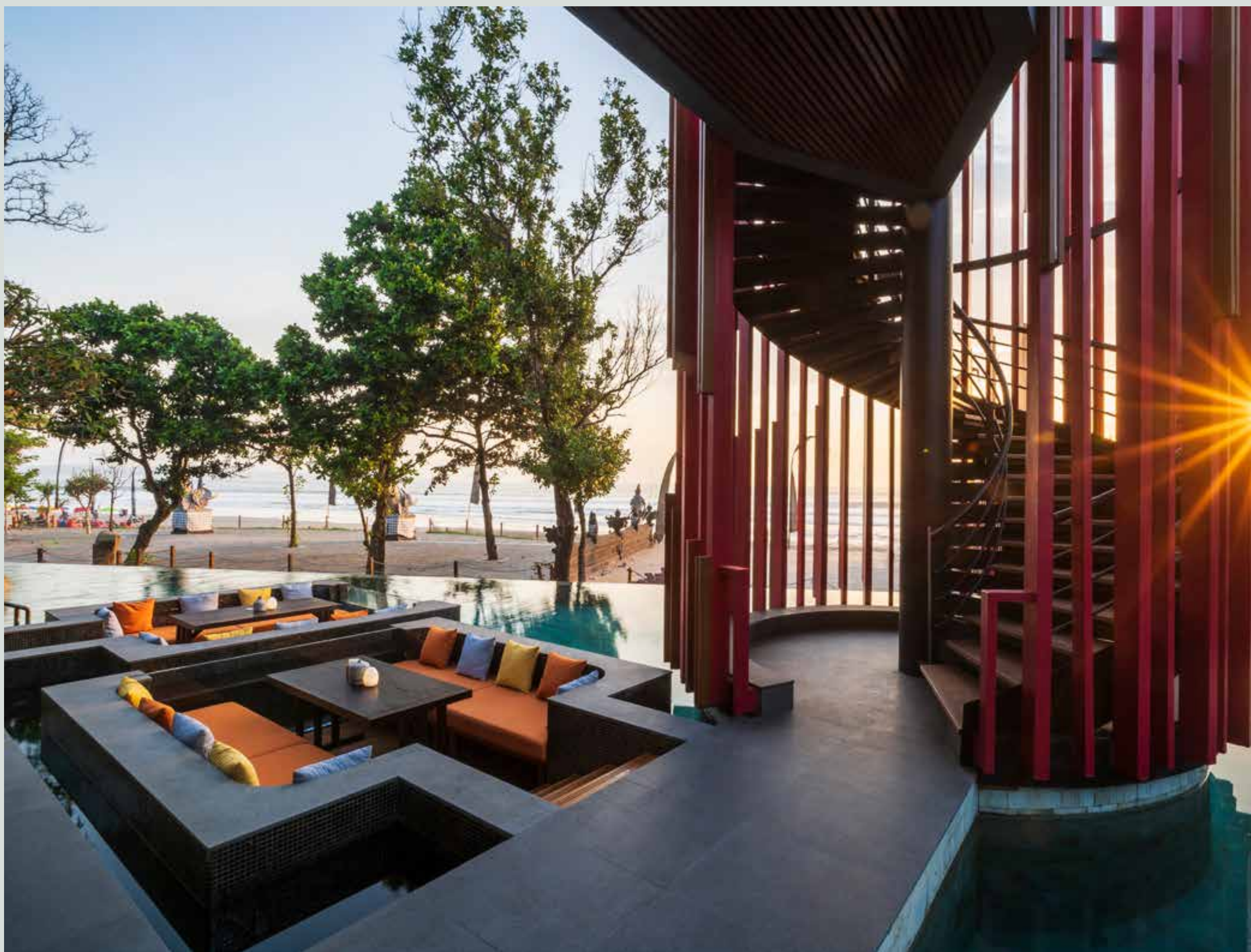


Munduk Cabins

On a jungle-topped mountain looking west to the volcanos of Java, this boutique establishment has just six quality villas built in Indonesian architectural tradition. A swimming pool with a glorious hot tub, and a fire pit complete with marshmallows are a match for the chilly mountain air. The Indonesian restaurant has killer views.



PARTNER PROMOTION



Hotel Indigo Bali Seminyak Beach

This beachfront bolthole is nestled amid nearly five hectares of lush grounds, offering a breather from action-packed Seminyak. The first Hotel Indigo property in a resort location, its 270 rooms boast daybeds and spa-inspired bathrooms, while guests at the 19 villas can luxuriate in private outdoor pools and marble bathrooms. Book a treatment at the 10-room Sava Spa, and sunset drinks at Tree Bar or the Japanese-inspired SugarSand. Learn more [here](#) or follow on [Instagram](#).

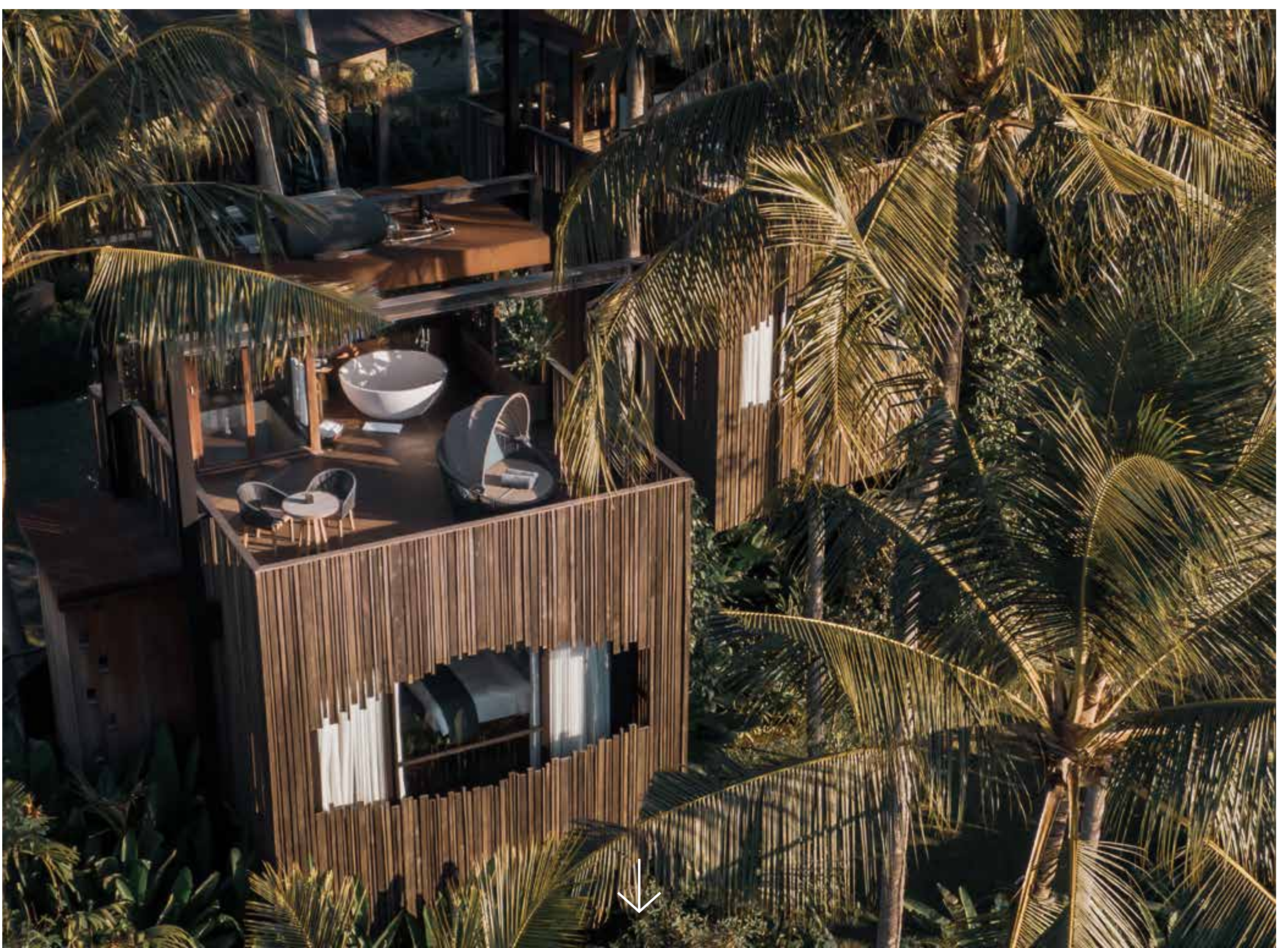




Hoshinoya

Hoshinoya, north of Ubud, is hidden on a leafy hillside that slopes down to the sacred Pakersian River. Its luxe villas are of exceptional quality, a combination of Japanese structural design, and creative Balinese fittings. Impressively, the villas have semi-private swimming pools that are cleverly interlinked to create the illusion of flowing waterways.

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Nirjhara

The surrounding rice paddies and tropical greenery are eclipsed only by this Tanah Lot resort’s waterfall – or *nirjhara*, which spills into a waterhole near the resort’s lavish tiered swimming pool and Ambu, its Indonesian restaurant. Twenty-five keys include seven treehouse suites with rooftop bathtubs and stunner sunset views. The Retreat spa is fittingly geared to travellers with taste.

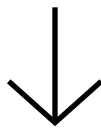
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Tira Vilagna

This mountain resort, amid an alpine forest on the volcanic slopes of the Kintamani highlands, is Bali’s answer to cooler climes. Its 22 luxe suites are housed in traditional century-old Javanese *joglo* houses, and include cosy beds, quality linen and organic toiletries. There’s a restaurant with volcano views and, in lieu of a pool, a Japanese-style onsen.

PHOTO BY PENNY WATSON



Pererenan

This traditional village combines the chill vibe of a local community with boutique shops, cool restaurants and beachfront activities.



Dewa Baruna
and Gajah
Minah statue

Bali's Pererenan neighborhood is hot right now, and not just because of its sun-drenched beach action. Just a short motorbike ride from busy Canggu, on the southern surfer coastline, this traditional village combines the chill vibe of a local community with the attraction of boutique shops, cool restaurants and beachfront activities.



The main street, Pantai Pererenan, is where all the action lies, but the little side streets, lined with fragipani trees, are worth exploring too.

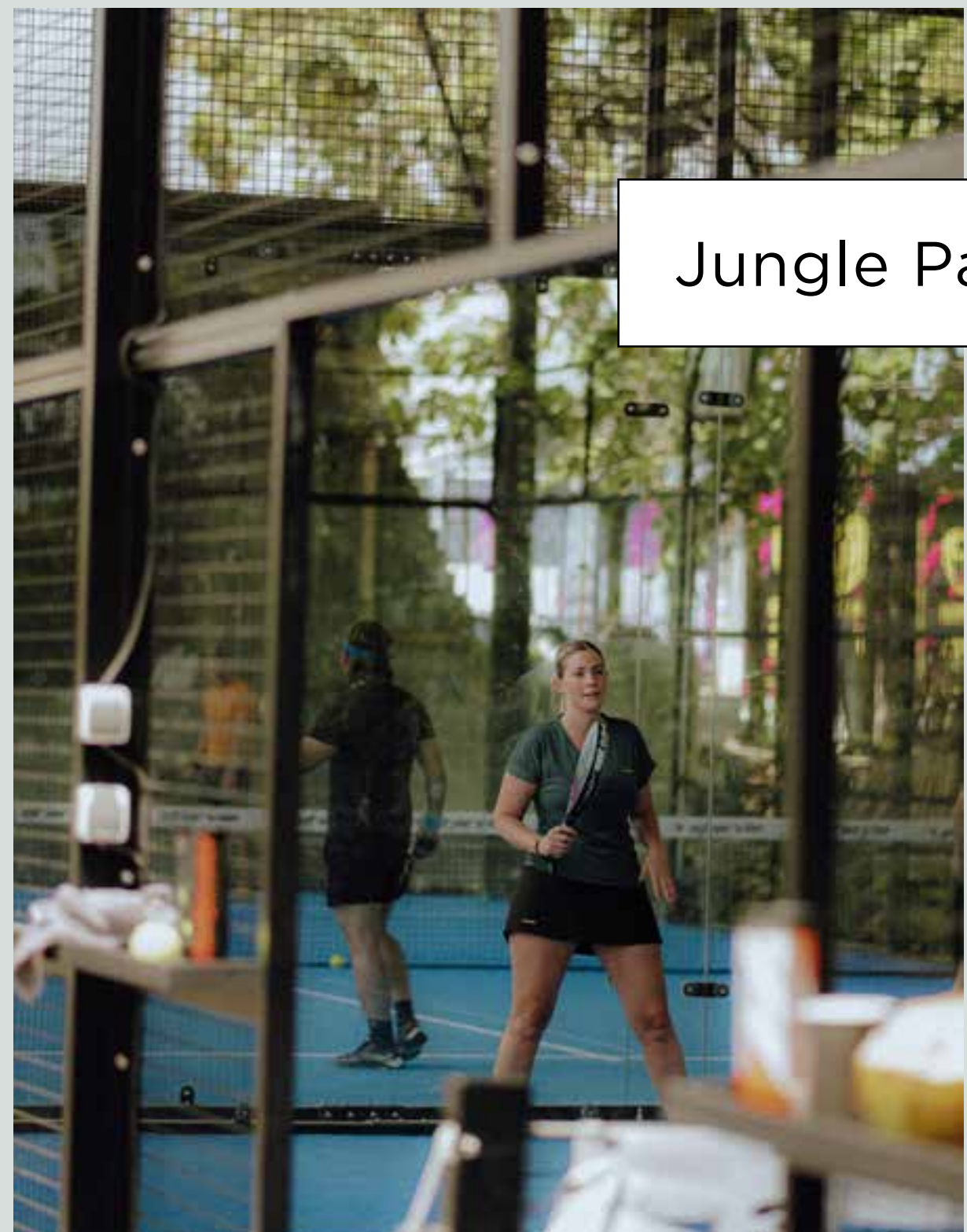
Start the day with a spicy chai and smoothie bowl from much-loved **Rize**, a café and restaurant that fuses Indian cuisine with contemporary food trends. If coffee is your drink of choice, **Baro**, just up the road, is known for its wickedly good sourdough bread, cardamom buns and Melbourne-worthy lattes.

Zig-zag north for retail therapy at **Myra Penaloza** with its eco-chic clothing, **Boemi Botanicals** for natural beauty products and **Kuratik** for gifts. Korean joint **Soogi Roll** and, down a side street, **Island Wok** make quality lunches on-the-go. Or take your time amid the rustic recycled wood scenery at **The Woods**.

After an afternoon breathing session at **Breathwork Bali** or a game of **Jungle Padel**, you'll be ready for a vino and French fare at streetside **Bar Vera** or a beachfront cocktail and bar snacks at **Sol**.



Baro Bakery



Jungle Padel

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