

Local beers and wines add to Bali's traditional sea and sun

MICE visitors now have more to do, with upmarket options added daily

Where do Bali visitors start to fully enjoy the island's extensive hospitality — acknowledged by readers of the USA based magazine *Leisure & Travel* as the World's Best Island Destination and as Time Asia magazine's favourite holiday spot?

Getting there is increasingly easy. Besides the usual Australian carriers, Air Paradise International now serves major cities with good frequency and Garuda Indonesia maintains its network from Australia to Bali and other Indonesian and international destinations.

Good news for first timers to the island is that Bali has something for everyone, and actually delivers on that promise. While culture and the arts are the island's claim to fame, there is much more to discover, both above and below the water. World-class resorts offer the highest level of accommodation and service, while other traditional alternatives offer simplicity or home-stay experiences.

Growth in the range of dining options makes "eating Bali" another attraction. A different type of world cuisine with atmosphere and unique experience can be enjoyed every day of any stay. All hotels feature at least one restaurant. Locally-produced beers and wines add to the dining experience.

When the sun goes down, Kuta becomes party central, with a wealth of entertainment and nightlife options from which to choose. From pub-hopping and bawdy entertainment to all-night dance scenes, a choice is found along the main strip. More sophisticated evening options combine dining with cultural entertainment and atmosphere. The party scene goes more upscale the further north you wander. The island's best dining and most colourful and sophisticated nightlife now centres around Jalan Dhayanapura and Jalan Laksmana (aka Oberoi road).

A shopaholic's dream come true, there's nothing that can not be found or discovered, if one takes the time to look. Local handicrafts and garments, branded goods produced for export, elegant furnishings and decorator



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The restaurant at Kori Ubud has 180-degree views of surrounding areas and boast a cuisine that will long be remembered.

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items — the range is limited only by the length of time visitors have to explore.

The many sights and excursions on offer can keep visitors active on the island for days. Museums and architectural wonders, temples and animal parks, whitewater rafting and adventure activities, golfing or trekking — the options outnumber the days of the year.

Beyond spectacular white, gold and black sand beaches, Bali is famed among the international surfing set as one of “the” places to catch waves. Diving and snorkelling sites rival Australia’s famed Great Barrier Reef, yet are little known, and therefore less crowded and more enjoyable. The surrounding warm Indian Ocean waters also can be explored by cruising, ocean rafting, by traditional fishing prahu or on a deep sea fishing charter.

Even those who seek solitude, relaxation, reflection or anonymity will find their place in the sun. Bali is Asia’s top spa destination, with some of the world’s most noted treatment centres. Traditional healing is a way of life for Balinese, and their formulas and

techniques have risen to international standards.

Spiritual retreats are in specialised resorts or simple Buddhists temples, which welcome seekers with relaxation, therapy or challenges for the body, mind and soul. Bali is a living yet evolving museum. The Balinese gracefully share their artistic, architectural, cultural and religious traditions. Yet, perhaps nowhere else on earth do these traditions so easily blend into the modern world such that two become as one.

A vibrant culture, unique arts ceremonies, friendly people and scenic beauty make Bali almost unreal in today’s changing world and it is therefore the main destination for tourists to Indonesia. Bali’s International airport, Ngurah Rai, is the nation’s eastern gateway, served by numerous international airlines and charter flights.

A major attraction of Bali is its unique art and culture. It almost seems that every person is an artist in some form, whether it is painting, weaving, carving, basketry or creating decorations for the many shrines in public areas, on roads, paddy fields, or in homes. Villagers



spend their time in these arts, which are taught to them from a very young age. The soul of the Balinese, which is steeped in religion, finds its expression in the arts. Bahasa Indonesia is the national language, but English is widely spoken.

Only rupiah (Indonesian currency) is acceptable at local stores and restaurants. Most hotels, restaurants and souvenir shops accept certain foreign currencies and credit cards. The Indone-

Continued next page.

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The Jimbaran Bali has a unique characteristic of Balinese culture. The guest rooms say it all. And with other facilities of a deluxe villa, it is no overstatement to claim that a stay at The Jimbaran Bali is a memorable one.



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Travellers' cheques ok

sian rupiah is available in note denominations of 100,000, 50,000, 20,000, 10,000, 5,000, 1,000, 500 and 100. Coins are available in denominations of 1,000, 500, 200, 100, and 50. You can buy rupiah at foreign exchange banks and other authorised moneychangers on presentation of your passport. The exchange rate fluctuates regularly, so check your bank for the latest rates. The exchange rate for US\$1 is the same as Rp. 8500. The use of travellers' cheques in Indonesia is as popular as in any other country. Diners Club and American Express, Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted at hotels, department stores, shops, restaurants and nightclubs. According to Indonesian banking regulations, payment by credit cards is charged in local currency. Some merchants apply a three-five per cent surcharge for credit card transactions.

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME IN BALI

BUSINESS travellers have common experiences at the end of a full day in a conference room or corporate meeting. 'Down' time is often limited and those in a hurry need to make the most of the few hours available before catching the next international flight.

Fortunately, Bali is compact enough to allow easy access to all that the island has to offer. In addition, it is not short of the three elements that allow a harassed executive to chill out: spas, golf and good food.



Le Meridien Nirwana Golf & Spa Resort adds golf breaks in meeting packages.

For starters, taxis are embarrassingly cheap so don't be stingy when it comes to tipping the driver with a 5000 rupiah note—that's about A\$0.75 cents.

Several governments, including those of the UK, US and Australia have travel warnings on Indonesia, including Bali. Heed these warnings. Don't make yourself an easy target. But be realistic.

Having said that, security in Bali has improved enormously. Hotels now have thorough checks of all vehicles entering their premises. The Bali Police have surveyed and certified safety conditions at most top star-rated hotels. And more than ever, the Balinese go out of their way to make a visitor feel safe and welcome.

MICE FACILITIES

MICE events are no longer limited to Nusa Dua. Extensive facilities span the island for events large and small. A good place to start the selection process is at Bali Hotel Association's (formerly Casa Grande Bali) web site

Continued page 48.

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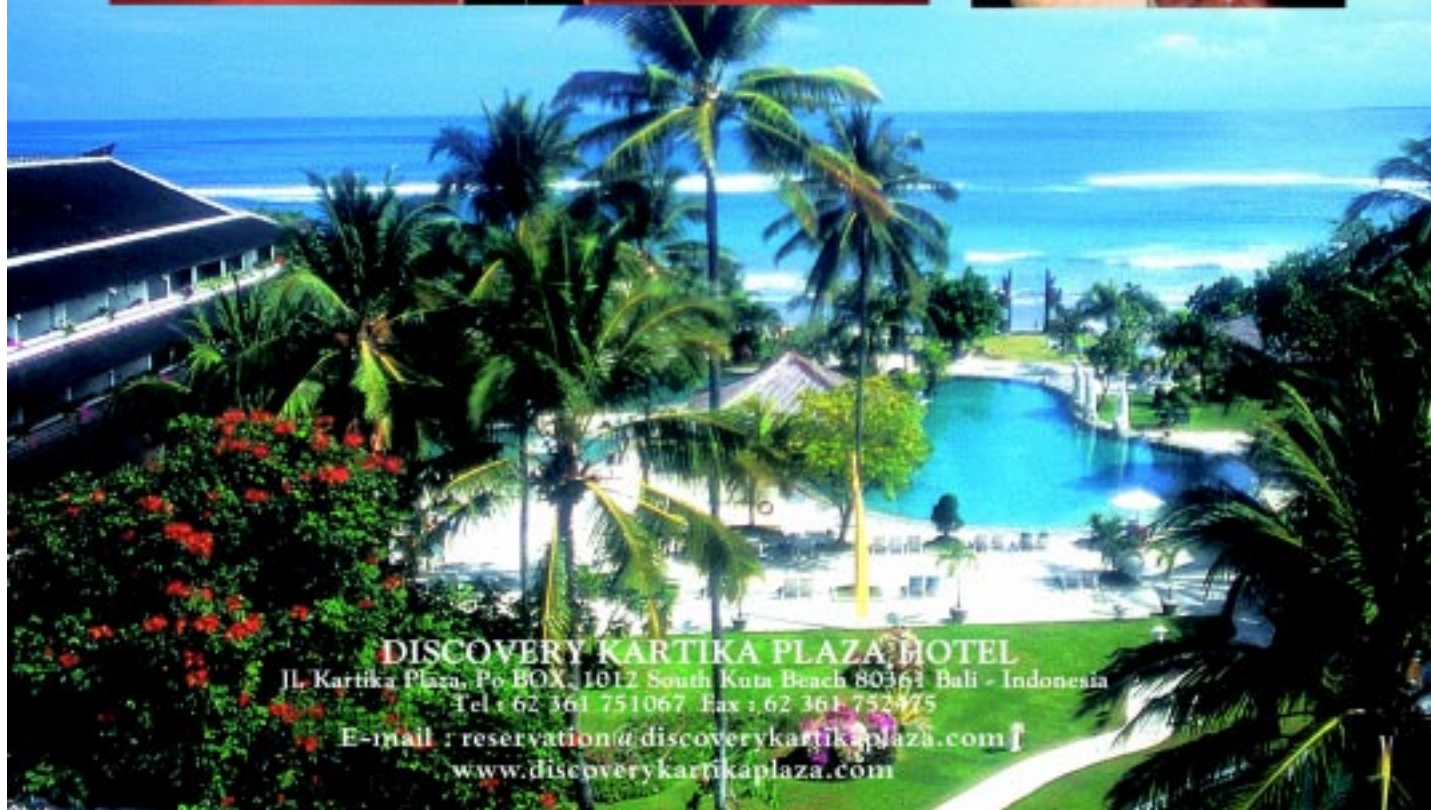
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The five-star Discovery Kartika Plaza is set among spacious tropical gardens, along the best beachfront location on famous South Kuta Beach. Banquet and convention facilities encompass a pillarless convention hall and ballroom, styled after a Balinese palace. With capacity of 350 to 830 persons, it also provides generous pre-function areas. Three breakout rooms are ideal for up to 200 persons each. Combined conference facilities with ancillary outdoor space and warehouse access facilities exhibitions and trade shows — the only such vast venue in Kuta.



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BALI MAGIC. HILTON MEETINGS.

If you are looking for an incentive flavored by exciting events arranged with creative flair and imagination or you plan to hold a conference highlighted by a closing theme dinner. Or perhaps you need something simpler, a board meeting in the morning with golf in the afternoon? Whatever your requirements, Bali Hilton International provides the perfect setting. Our 14 meeting and function rooms are designed to cater for the most elaborate event down to the simplest, and our team of dedicated staffs are also accustomed to coming up with solutions to fit your needs.

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Aside from the extensive facilities at Bali International Convention Centre, the adjacent **Sheraton Laguna** offers intimate boutique-style surroundings with just 270 rooms, and meeting rooms for up to 400. It has a newly redesigned Atisaya Spa.

Having completed upgrades and refurbishments to its Executive and Junior suites and villas, **Melia Bali Villas & Spa Resort** becomes a choice location. A variety of meeting venues, for up to 400 seated, brings Melia Bali into a competitive zone.

In nearby Tanjung Benoa, **Aston Bali Resort & Spa** specialises in small to medium size conferences, emphasising personal service and attention to detail. The resort has a variety of event venues and 168 rooms. **Bali InterContinental** is



Beach front massage at the Bali InterContinental — the cornerstone in MICE activity in Jimbaran.

the cornerstone of MICE activity in Jimbaran. Eight function rooms and a divisible ballroom are only some of the services and facilities offered. With over a quarter of a century of experience catering to island events, Bali Hyatt remains one of the island's premier properties. The truly classic Balinese style resort is beachfront in Sanur.

Discovery Kartika Plaza Hotel offers

Kuta's largest meeting location, with more than 1500 sqm of function space. Wireless conference registration facilities, electronic pre registration and conference management are unique to the resort's @Break business centre. Discovery Mall is a huge new addition to the Discovery complex, making this the biggest property on the block.

Neighbouring Ramada Bintang Bali caters for events up to 400 people with a wide range of facilities. **Ramayana Resort & Spa**, conveniently located between Kuta Square and Kuta Centre shopping malls and above Kuta Sidewalk Arcade, has added a new Resort club, with 10 super deluxe rooms overlooking gardens and pool or Kuta Bay with sunset views. The club lounge serves breakfast and afternoon tea. **Risata Bali Resort & Spa** has another kind of club, with a RCI Holiday Ownership system. **White Rose** is one of Legian's hidden secrets. An oasis in the heart of the chaos, budget rates buy spacious and well-appointed rooms in quiet gardens—just steps away from Kuta nightlife and dining. **Mandira Hotel**, Legian, recently doubled its capacity with the addition of new pool-view rooms. **Jayakarta Hotel & Residence** in Legian provides full conference support services with a 324-sqm convention hall and separate committee room. A complement of 278 rooms and 166 apartments rounds out accommodation.

Continued next page.

Bali booming...

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beach is pristine and ideal for incentive events, without the hassle of the vendors trying to peddle their wares." Keith Bell, the hotel's general manager, said 2004 was a rebound year for Bali in all segments, including MICE.

Bell said 2005 would be better than 2004 results. "Momentum is building in both domestic and international meetings; 2005 should be a great year for meetings in Bali."

Sharon Lee, director of marketing / vice-president sales Sol Melia Hotels & Resorts, said Bali is well on the way or achieve pre-bombing levels for FIT bookings but believes the MICE international market is still catching up. "The difference is that Bali FIT bookings had shifted from Europeans to Intra-Asia MICE business compared to the previous international MICE business. There

are several major conferences booked at Bali International Convention centre (BICC) this year and in 2006 and our position close to the centre is a big advantage." Lee plans to encourage the Indonesia Tourism Board to target more international marketing campaigns to secure MICE for Bali.

The Melia Bali Villas & Spa Resort has completed its 500 guests room renovation and added new Deluxe and Family suite room categories. "We also have expanded our business centre and added a new jogging track," added Lee.

Ritz-Carlton Bali director of sales & marketing Paul Czuba said the resort's meetings business increased 10 per cent in 2004.

"In 2005 we are very optimistic of an increase in the number of visitors coming to Bali.

"International MICE and the incentives business is increasing, especially from the regional market," said Czuba.



Popular Kori Restaurant in Poppies Lane ...

There's more to Bali than meetings, and many resorts cater to that corporate escape or luxurious pre- or post-event holiday.

Villa Lumbung is in the heart of Bali's elegant

restaurant district. The private compound of individual and distinctive villas is a special hideaway. **Villa Sienna** is another of those hidden treasures in the heart of Seminyak. The deceptive back road location opens into a compound of villas around lush gardens. This is the perfect setting for private events and corporate escapes, with penthouse-style accommodations adjacent.

The **Villas & Prana Spa** is just what the CEO ordered for small meetings in a private villa with exquisite relaxation added at the island's latest destination spa. Privacy and simple elegance make this a choice spot.

Kamandalu Resort & Spa caters to privacy and honeymooners, with a ravine-view location north of Ubud. However, it has conference facilities for up to 150 people and caters for banqueting.

WHERE TO EAT

Bali's fine dining options have greatly improved in the last

year or two, although the prices have moved in line with the quality.

You could be adventurous and try one of the many fish cafes clamouring for your custom on Jimbaran Beach, but if time were short, you would be better getting your fork into serious food.

Good choices would include **Kerobokan's Kafe Warisan**, where an alfresco courtyard overlooking paddy fields complements a boutique, art gallery and French restaurant. **Trattoria** is another winner in Pettitinget-with a new second venue-as is **Faces** at the The Bali in Nusa Dua.

In Ubud, **Mosaic**, **Terrazo** and **Lamak** are among the front-runners.

Tepan Noodle at the Discovery Kartika Plaza in Tuban serves an Asian Noodle a la carte menu as well as Japanese teppanyaki, right on the beach. Or, if you're in the mood for Italian try Discovery's **La Cucina**, which specialises in al fresco Italian food.

The popular **Kori Restaurant** in Poppies Lane 2 Kuta has a relaxing bar with an exclusive range of international wines and exotic cocktails. Kori offers a modern international cuisine in a traditional Balinese setting where you'll dine on fresh seafood and succulent grills.

For delegates wanting to stay close to the sporting action whilst in Bali, the **Stadium Café** is the perfect place to meet. With all-day dining in a warm, friendly atmosphere patrons

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can watch live sports events from across the world, football, rugby, soccer, Grand Prix, basket ball, boxing, baseball and many other “Sportacular” events live daily on giant screen.

INDULGENCE

Indulge yourself in the “Javanese Lulur” — a traditional Indonesian preparation — that smooths, softens and exfoliates the skin at the **Nusa Dua Resort Spa**. Originating in central Java, within the royal palaces of Jogjakarta and Solo, the tradition of “lulur” and its regional ingredients of turmeric, sandalwood, sweet woods and spice roots, make this a popular choice.

The **Bali Hyatt Spa** is a sanctuary within the Bali Hyatt Resort at Sanur where you can rejuvenate your body and soul with the proven healing power of aromatherapy and massage treatments. Treatments are individual or in personalised packages.

Tjampuhan Spa in Ubud has a carved stone grotto and offers private therapy pavilions that open on to views of the sacred Oos and Tjampuhan Rivers. A

Spa Adventure Package, which begins with an invigorating half-day trek through the peaceful riverside and traditional villages, concludes with treatments at the spa.

Maya Ubud Spa is thought by many to offer the island’s best spa experience. Individual mahogany spa pavilions are set amidst the rainforest and overlook the swirling waters of the river, only metres below. Specialities include a relaxing Balinese massage, natural facials and organic body scrub.

New and highly recommended is **Chill Reflexology** at The Villas in Seminyak. The contemporary clean-line design of the salon provide a cool, calming atmosphere. Chill compliments The Villas’ up-market Prada Spa facility and offers an alternative experience for anyone who may not want a full body massage. Reflexology treatments are excellent and only fine quality products are used. Rates start at just 80,000 rupiah + tax for one hour (less than A\$15).

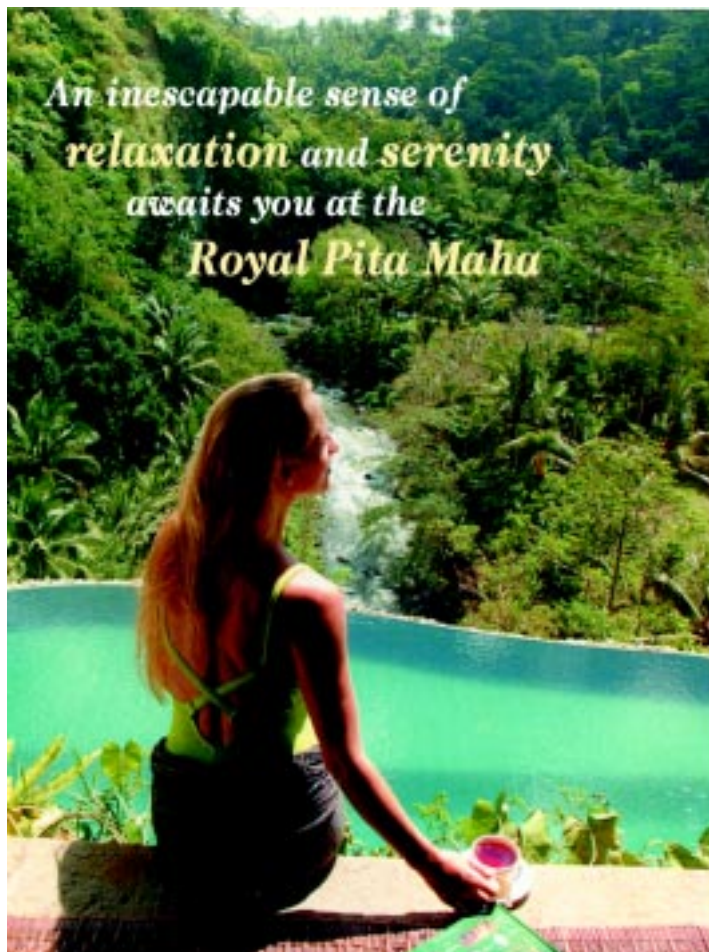
ATTRACTIONS

Sail Sensations’ luxurious 87-foot



Taman Burung Bird Park has a collection of rare and exotic birds from all over the world.

yacht offers you the choice of a visit Bali’s neighbour islands during the day or to enjoy an intimate fine dining experience for the evening at Nusa Lembongan Island which is renowned for excellence in service, food, music, ambience and exclusivity. Exquisite villas and a beach club for day visitors



Located in the spiritually revered and picturesque area of Kedewatan, Ubud, Bali, The Royal Pita Maha’s awesome atmosphere is enriched with its celestial history. Overlooking the Ayung River at Batu Kurung, The Royal Pita Maha is a luxurious expression of the true essence of Bali — an ideal place to pampered, a place of healing, reflection, contemplation, meditation and serenity.

We have excellent MICE facilities in our specially-built Meetings, Incentive & Exhibition Compound and a full range of incentive programs are also available. Please call us for more details.



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make this a total destination experience.

Sobek — White Water Rafting is a leading adventure tour operator that offers guests the opportunity to experience the 'real' Bali with a touch of adventure. Sobek's tours include whitewater rafting, cycling, trekking and 4WD adventure tours.

Taman Burung Bird Park, approximately 40 minutes drive from the Kuta area has a collection of rare and exotic birds from all over the world. It also houses the famous Komodo dragon. The adjacent Reptile Park features all shapes of creepy crawlers and one of the largest Lemon Python snakes in captivity-which loves to be in photos with visitors.

Bali Adventure covers the island with its soft adventure tours, from white water rafting to cycling through the countryside. The Elephant Park at Taro village is the company's most exciting outlet. Sumatran elephants trek through the surrounding forest with guests astride and some of the pachyderms have a penchant for painting, putting a brush to canvas in strikingly interesting creations.



Le Meridien Nirwana Bali Golf was named Asia's best course for four consecutive years.

Bali has some outstanding golf courses. Choose from the **Nirwana Bali Golf Club** at Tanah Lot, the **Bali Golf and Country Club** at Nusa Dua or the **Bali Handara Kosaido Country Club**.

Nirwana Bali Golf was named Asia's best course for four consecutive years. The Greg Norman-designed course features working rice paddies in the rough, with fairways laced by creeks and dotted with authentic

Hindu temples. The stunning 7th hole lies across an Indian Ocean inlet, so players have a challenging tee off across the water. **Le Meridien Nirwana Golf & Spa Resort** adds golf breaks in meeting packages.

SHOPPING

Main tourist roads often are lined with shops and stalls selling crafts of all types. Ubud (25 km north of Denpasar) and the surrounding villages of Pengosekan, Mas and Batuan are famous for 'Kamasan style' paintings, polished woodcarvings and antiques to traditional Balinese carvings made from volcanic pumice. For those who don't like to wander too far from the beach, Kuta and Legian have more modern shopping areas.

The Kuta shops have more than their share of trashy tourist items, but some of the boutique shops in Legian and Seminyak have more quality, although this is reflected in the prices. For serious shoppers **Sourcing Bali** (sourcingbali.com) offers speciality-shopping outings, which can focus on fashion, furniture, home wares or arts and crafts.

Unique Spa experience

Experience the simple pleasure of Ubud life at one of Bali's most important artistic landmarks

Hotel Tjampuhan & Spa is set in a lush tropical Bali garden and river view. Sixty-seven individual dwellings built in traditional Balinese style are scattered among landscaped terraces and gardens, offering private views of the tropical river valleys and the 900-year-old Gunung Lembah temple complex which marks the meeting of the sacred Oos and Tjampuhan rivers.

A visit to the Tjampuhan Spa in its unique carved grotto, is intertwined with the fragrance of distilled oils and herbal essences and the texture and sensation of ground spices, roots, flowers and leaves used in massages preparations.

A variety of massage techniques are available at Tjampuhan Spa including Swedish, acupuncture and traditional Balinese. Treat yourself to a body scrub to invigorate and stimulate your skin.



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Website : www.indo.com/hotels/tjampuhan

Tanjung Benoa, Bali's Costa Brava

THE SCENIC 5km-long peninsula of Tanjung Benoa, once a sleepy expanse of coconut palms and pristine beach, has been transformed into a mature and graceful resort. Culminating in the small harbour at its tip, the peninsula - close to the Nusa Dua resort area - is connected by a sinuous narrow road populated by luxury hotels, private villas, fine restaurants, open-air cafes and numerous water sports facilities.

The relaxed rhythm of the businesses that line Tanjung Benoa's long finger-like road is more Costa Brava or Mallorca in character than that of the frantic pace set by the other southern Bali resorts of Kuta, Legian and Seminyak. The new hotels, upscale shops, and innovative restaurants of the peninsula lend Tanjung Benoa a worldly air, affording tourists no shortage of shopping and dining options.

The peninsula's premier hotels offer deluxe ocean view suites and convention and meeting facilities complete with audio-visual function rooms. The Aston Bali is noteworthy for its resplendent Javanese imperial palace style. In the complex of the elegant Grand Mirage Resort is a thalassotherapy spa specialising in saltwater treatments. Closer to the tip of the Peninsula are the Novotel Coralia Benoa Bali with its handsome coconut wood interiors, and the contemporary Balinese-style Ramada Resort Benoa.

The whole coastal strip is known for fine restaurants and unimpeded views of Nusa Penida Island. Restaurateur and noted photographer Heinz von Holtzen's award-winning Bumbu Bali serves exquisite Balinese cuisine while down the road Rumah Bali caters to groups of up to several hundred and is also the site of a fine cooking school.

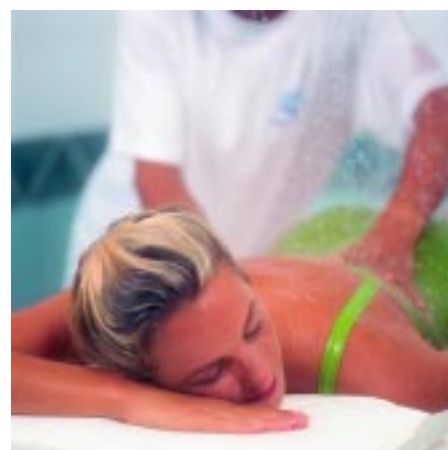
Dance and theatre performances are staged at various hotels and restaurants

throughout the week. Tanjung Benoa is also a mecca for marine sports enthusiasts. Dozens of shops and clubs rent snorkeling and dive gear and offer windsurfing, water-skiing, glass-bottom boats, reef fishing, jet-skiing, power boat and banana boat rides. Only 10 minutes away in Nusa Dua is the Bali Golf & Country Club, one of Asia's best golf courses.

On the peninsula's tip, the quiet port of Tanjung Benoa retains a remarkable



In the complex of the elegant Grand Mirage Resort is a thalassotherapy spa specialising in saltwater treatments



village-like atmosphere. Visitors may walk down the noisy alleyways of a real Bugis Kampong, peer into the smoky confines of a large Chinese Buddhist temple, or stroll along the beach southeast of Benoa past rows of jukung fishing canoes pulled up on shore.

In Tanjung Benoa's harbour, yachts, fishing boats and traditional perahu bob alongside each other at anchor. Offshore in the distance is "Turtle island," the site of sacred sea temple. The reef, lying 200 meters off the peninsula's northeast end, is easy to reach and has gentle current and a surprising variety of fish.

The Grand Mirage is a refined and casual resort, located beachside only 12km from Ngurah Rai International Airport. It is minutes away from the Bali International Convention Centre, the Bali Golf & Country Club and Galleria Shopping Mall.

Fitted with the state-of-art audio-visual equipment, the resort's spacious main ballroom and meeting rooms have the combined capacity to cater to groups of up to 300.

A wide range of customised theme parties, such as a Balinese Village Dinner, Tropical Fantasy, Jungle Night and East Meets West, can be arranged.

Events take place in the open air at poolside, among the resort's beautifully landscaped gardens or in the Rama Theatre. The resort's professional event organisers are able to suggest a wide variety of fun activities and entertainment and cultural programs to further enhance an evening's enjoyment.

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- Accor sets out its stall in Bali -

ACCOR continues to strengthen its presence in Bali with the launch of a new Ibis in Legian and major upgrades to its Sofitel and Mercure Resort properties.

Michel Vivier, Accor general manager operations for East Indonesia, and GM of the Novotel Coralia Benoa Bali, said that with four Accor brands represented in Bali the company could sell to different levels of consumers, and enjoy economies of scale in marketing and sales.

Both the Mercure Resort Sanur, and the Sofitel Seminyak — formerly the Royal Seminyak — have targeted the meetings and incentive markets with their property additions and upgrades.

The Sofitel is well positioned for executive meetings, incentives and corporate retreats, with a main ballroom catering to up to 200 participants and two smaller break out rooms.

The Mercure which reopened in November last year after an extensive refurbishment, offers 184 fully renovated superior and deluxe rooms, in addition

to five family rooms, each with private terrace or balcony.

The Pandu Ballroom is now sound-proofed and updated with the latest audiovisual equipment, comfortably accommodating up to 500 people.

WiFi access is available in all meeting rooms and key public areas, and 17 guest rooms offer two phone lines including data ports for downloading email and logging onto the Internet.

Novotel continues to enjoy strong support in the developing Tanjung Benoa area while Ibis is likely to be popular with the Australian market.

“Bali is looking forward to a very good year in 2005,” said Vivier. “In 2001 our occupancy level was 73 percent. In 2005 I believe it will be close to 80 per cent and in August this year we are budgeting for 96 per cent. So things are looking good.”

Vivier said Bali had been able to weather the storms over recent years be-

cause it’s name was strong in the minds of the travel consumer. Bali is a brand name. Other resorts in Asia are popular but none has the brand name of Bali.

“Added to that the price is right — Bali is less expensive than Thailand — and we have such a wide range of hotel properties to sell.”

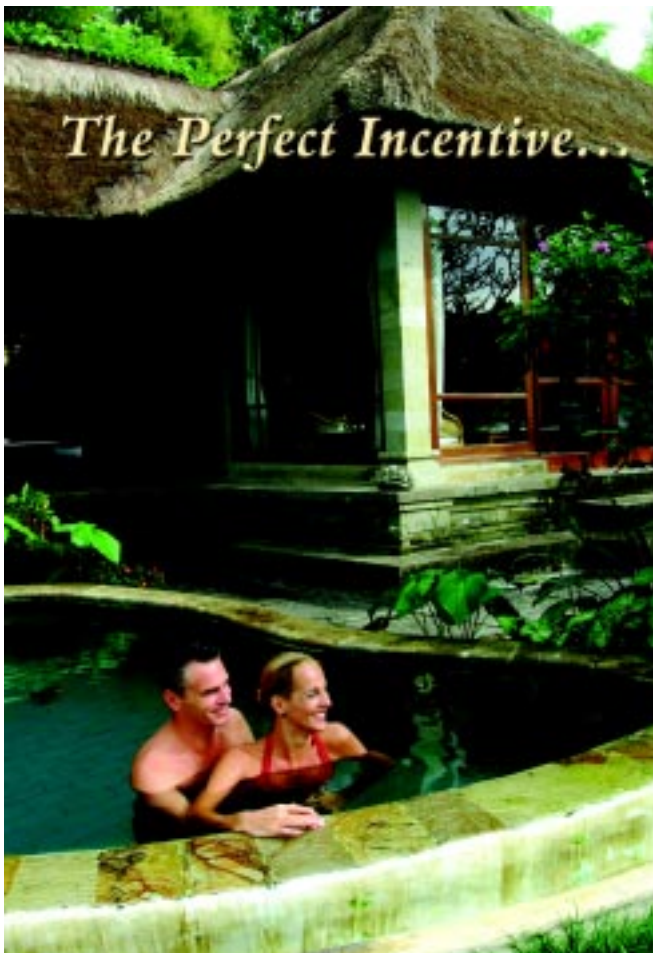
Vivier said Lombok — where there is a Novotel property — was also picking up. “They’ve been achieving close to 40 percent occupancy this year.”

The restoration of the regular ferry service linking Bali with Lombok would be a big help in getting visitors back to Lombok, Vivier said.

He said that Bali could do even better with a little more help from Jakarta.

“The government still does not want to push Bali. They still prefer to promote Indonesia as a whole.”

Vivier said he also hoped the government would extend its visa-on-arrival facility to more countries.



Indulge yourself in the luxurious natural beauty of the Ubud foothills...

Set into the side of the Tjampuhan valley in Bali's cultural heartland of Ubud, the Pita Maha Resort and Spa is a landscaped jewel overlooking the beautiful River Oos. A striking innovation in Balinese accommodation - in addition to the luxurious settings - is the presence of a unique and intimate "plunge" outdoor garden pool in 10 of the Villas, designed for the frequent cool immersion that enhances the golden sultan for which Bali is famous.



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