

BALI: THE BEACH & BEYOND

PW's Rachel jets off to sunny Indonesia for the trip of a lifetime!

IMAGE: ISTOCK



When arriving in Bali, we know you'll want to make a beeline for the beach (and with those golden sands, we don't blame you), but we discovered that there's so much more to this amazing island than just the beautiful coastlines...

FIVE-STAR WELCOME

The Laguna Resort & Spa Bali is a stunning, five-star resort overlooking Nusa Dua beach and it's safe to say that it's the stuff honeymoon dreams are made of. We were welcomed with a refreshing drink, a cold towel and the sound of a very large gong – the sign of royalty arriving apparently! With interconnecting lagoon pools, a spa, a gym, two amazing restaurants and 24-hour butler service, this is where you should head if you want to do Bali in style.

FEEL THE WARMTH OF THE GOLDEN SANDS BENEATH YOUR FEET



THE SPECTACULAR RICE FIELDS ARE A MUST-SEE

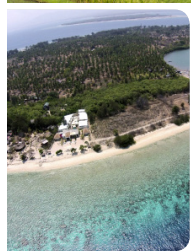
ULTIMATE LUXURY

Our Deluxe Lagoon Access room had steps from our balcony straight down into the turquoise pool – perfect for cooling off mid-afternoon. Come evening, the beachfront restaurant, Arwana, was such a romantic setting for dinner. We sampled incredible fresh seafood with panoramic views across the ocean. As well as romance, the resort is big on relaxation – they have a beautiful award-winning spa and you can even get a massage on the beach. Bliss.

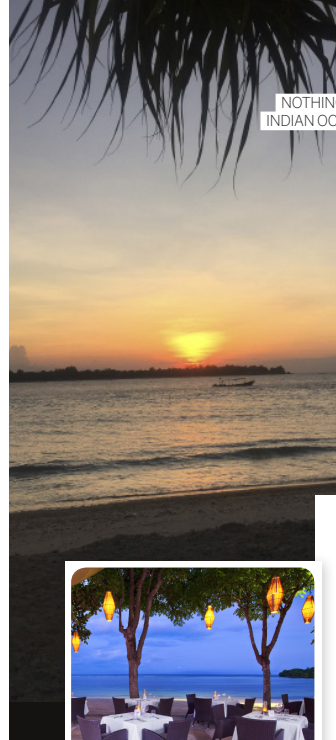
MONKEYING AROUND

Our amazing tour guides from Destination Services took us out for the day to soak up a bit of Balinese culture. We headed to the bustling town of Ubud in the heart of Bali to explore the markets – I even picked up a few bargains thanks to my new-found haggling skills!

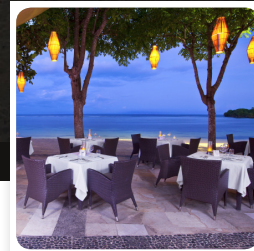
While in Ubud, we visited the Monkey Forest which lived up to its great reputation – but, be warned,



A LUXURIOUS SETTING AROUND EACH AND EVERY CORNER

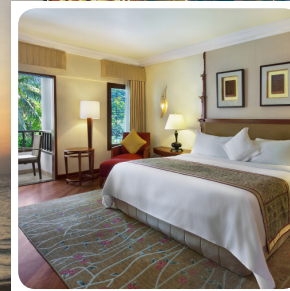


NOTHING BEATS AN INDIAN OCEAN SUNSET!



DON'T MISS

- * **Dolphin watching** – there are lots of boat trips from Lovina beach in north Bali
- * **Drinking from a coconut** on the beach – the beach sellers are keen for you to try
- * **The world's most expensive coffee** – Luwak coffee has been known to sell for over £100 per cup, but in its native home of Bali, it's just a few pounds!
- * **Kuta beach** if surfing is your thing – the waves are incredible



the monkeys are very mischievous (watch those designer sunnies). Tanah Lot Temple was the last stop of the day – watching the sun set at this spiritual landmark was a truly magical experience and one I'll remember forever:

ISLAND GETAWAY

The second half of our trip was spent on the island of Gili Meno, which is the smallest and quietest of the three Gili Islands. After a 30-minute flight to the neighbouring island of Lombok and a 15-minute speedboat transfer; we arrived at our new home – Mahamaya Boutique Resort. What this boutique hotel lacks in size, it makes up for in charm. The attentive staff came bounding out to welcome us as soon as we pulled up to the shore and greeted us with beaming smiles. Our Pool-View suite was modern, clean and (most importantly in the 30°C heat) nice and cool.

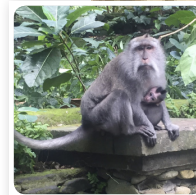


TODAY'S PLAN: COCKTAILS BY THE POOL


ON OUR TRAVELS

A TASTE OF PARADISE

Once we were settled in we took a wander across to the other side of the island. In just 20 minutes we arrived at a stunning beach with the softest sand ever! As the sun set, we headed back to Mahamaya for dinner. With a choice of so many Indonesian specialities as well as western classics, we just had to tuck into three courses each night (sorry waistline!). Five-star food at three-star prices is the only way to describe it – you'll be amazed.



We took advantage of the free snorkels to explore the surrounding reefs and, just 10 meters from the shore, we were swimming amongst beautiful tropical fish. Head out early in the morning to swim alongside the resident turtles too!

If you asked me to sum up our stay in one word, it would be *unforgettable*. The lively culture and picturesque beauty of Bali make it oh-so special and the island of Gili Meno is the definition of paradise with a get-away-from-it-all sort of vibe. 

BOOK IT NOW!

Hayes and Jarvis is offering a seven-night holiday to Bali and the Gili Islands from £1,299pp. The offer includes a four-night, B&B stay at the five-star The Laguna Resort & Spa and a three-night, B&B stay at the four star plus Mahamaya Boutique Resort. The price covers all transfers and return international flights from London Heathrow with Malaysia Airlines.

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