

VOL. 1/APRIL 23-APRIL 29, 2015

bali *buzz*

By **Jakarta Post**

SIGHTS, SOUNDS & SOUL OF PARADISE

PEMUTERAN "REMEMBER THE NORTH"

▶ WARUNG PULAU KELAPA

▶ 2015 BALI EMERGING WRITERS FESTIVAL

▶ BALI FOOD SAFARI

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The Jakarta Post

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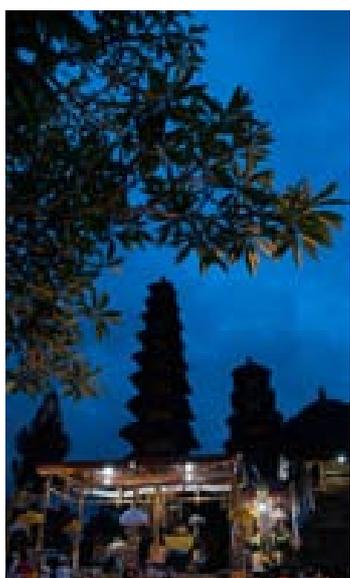
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"A HEAVENL DANCE"

WORDS AND PHOTOS **AGUNG PARAMESWARA**



'Sang Hyang Legong Topeng'



One sunny afternoon, three young girls prepared for an important dance performance.

Putu Diah Anggita, 12, Wayan Winarti, 10, and Made Fibri, 12, were to perform the *an an l n t n*, one of Bali's most sacred dances, at two major temples - Pura Giri Jagatnatha and Payogan Agung, in Ketewel village, Gianyar.

This sacred dance is performed at Pura Giri Jagatnatha once a year and at Pura Payogan Agung every six months, during the *alan*, or temple anniversary.

So sacred is the dance that only premenstrual girls are allowed to perform.

Based on the *a a al ka ati* and *L nta ajaP ana att a* palm leaf manuscripts, the dance was choreographed by I Dewa Made Agung Anom Karna from the Puri Ketewel royal household, who drew inspiration from a dream to compose this sacred, heavenly work.

The magical and spiritual atmosphere the dancers create is thrilling; a breathtaking experience for anyone attending the ritual and watching this nymph dance.

The girls wear glittering cloth with gold weave and colorful *la ak* (front runner cloth)

with an *a k-a k* waistcloth over a white, long sleeved top. They wear heavy make-up on their young faces and flowers and ornaments on their heads.

Prior to the dance, the girls are blessed with holy water and chew two frangipani flowers as part of a purification ritual before wearing a series of sacred masks through the course of the dance.

The masks represent the heavenly nymphs

Sulasih, Nilotama, Aminaka, Supraba, Gagarmayang and Tunjung Biru.

Continually changing the masks they wear, the girls dance to the Semar Pegulingan gamelan orchestra. The dance had only been going for 15 minutes when the rain started to fall. "It is sign that the entire ritual for the temple celebration is complete and being blessed by the gods. The dance is the wrap-up ritual," said the temple's priest. ■



Savor



Warung Pulau Kelapa

WORDS AND PHOTOS LUH DE SURIYANI

bud village is rapidly becoming one of Bali's top culinary centers and offers a hugely diverse range of food, from lines of simple, traditional food stalls to exclusive cafés and restaurants serving Indonesian, Asian, Middle Eastern and Western food.

Amid the bountiful food establishments in the village, Warung Pulau Kelapa is one serving authentic Indonesian food.

Warung Pulau Kelapa, which literally translates to coconut kiosk, is located on Jl. Raya Sanggihan in Campuhan.

When visiting last weekend, a number of employees were seen busy picking fresh vegetables, spices and herbs from the restaurant's organic vegetable garden by Campuhan River.

A small path connects Warung Pulau Kelapa and its garden, allowing customers to pick their favorite vegetables, including choosing from plants rarely found or used in Bali, such as *titi* flowers, *lanta* and *k niki* leaves.

In Java, such leaves are served in the dish *l-mixed* steamed vegetables served with a savory, spicy peanut sauce.

The garden is also filled with tropical herbs and spices, such as ginger, coriander, shallots, galangal, turmeric, lemongrass and pandanus.

The availability of fresh produce picked directly from its garden has added interest to Warung Pulau Kelapa, which serves meals and drinks from all over Indonesia, such as yellow rice, meat soups and satay.

One traditional drink on offer is *l t k* beer from Betawi (old Jakarta). This delicious concoction consists of ginger, cinnamon, cardamom and cloves.

Another special health drink is *in*, which is made of tamarind and brown sugar. "This drink is good for the digestion," said Prayitno, the owner of Warung Pulau Kelapa.

Prayitno is a cultural and political enthusiast. He also manages Setia Darma House of Masks and Puppets in Mas village, near bud.

Despite his age, Prayitno is an energetic and active motivator for local youth. He frequently invites young activists to taste authentic Indonesian food and to discuss cultural and current issues.

"Young people must learn their own history and cultural heritage," he said.

Warung Pulau Kelapa and the mask museum are showcases of Indonesia's rich cultural assets. "Warung Pulau Kelapa exists to preserve the wealth of traditional Indonesian cuisines," he stated. ■

"PRESERVING A THENTIC
INDONESIAN CUISINE"



Sound



2015 BALI EMERGING WRITERS FESTIVAL

“AN ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF PROMISING LOCAL TALENT”

WORDS BY IWAN UNIAR | PHOTOS BY SURYAN EWI

The local art scene will be treated this weekend to a fascinating gathering of young talent from a wide spectrum of artistic endeavors as the Bali Emerging Writers Festival (BEWF) takes place at Danes Art Veranda in East Denpasar, April 24-26.

The festival, which is in its fifth year, has the word “writers” in its name, but since its inaugural event in 2011, BEWF has never tried to be a poets-and-novelists affair. This year’s line-up of 20 speakers also features filmmakers, musicians, singers, as well as stand-up comics.

Eka Kurniawan, an Indonesian author whose works have been translated into English, French and Italian, Terra Bajraghosa, a mixed-media artist and comic book writer, and Sidi Saleh, whose short movie *aa* won top prize in the 2014 Mostra Internazionale d’Arte Cinematografica in Venice, are three of several big names confirmed to speak at the festival.

International guest speakers include Lou Heinrich and Omar Sakr, both appearing as part of the thriving collaboration between BEWF and the Melbourne-based Emerging Writers Festival, and award-winning Singaporean author Noor Hasnah Adam and Singaporean stage performer Deborah Emmanuel.

The festival will feature workshops, panel discussions, movie screenings, concerts and art performances. The full program can be accessed at [ali.in](#).

“BEWF is designed for the younger audience, a fun-filled educational event where they can inspire and be inspired,” said Writers and Readers Festival (WRF) director and BEWF founder Janet DeNeeffe said.

A book launch, photography exhibition and musical concert will officially kick off the festival on Friday evening. Titled *i alik ji* (Behind Bars), the book is an anthology of poems and short stories penned by 21 young inmates at the Gianyar juvenile detention facility in Amlapura, Karangasem. In



cooperation with the Denpasar-based citizen journalism NGO Sloka Institute, the festival organized in February a creative writing workshop, featuring Bali’s leading author Cok Sawitri, inside the prison.

The photography exhibition will feature the selected works of four local young photographers, who participated in the documentary photography workshop organized by the festival. Internationally acclaimed photographer Rio Helmi and *ali*’s Anggara Mahendra guided the young shooters in developing a visual narrative on marginalized communities.

A musical concert featuring popular indie band Pygmy Marmoset and Jakarta-based singer Budi Doremi will top the evening. ■

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PHOTOVOICE

"EMPOWERING PEOPLE THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY"

WORDS DESY NURHAYA | PHOTOS: I E ARANGASEM



The village of Tulamben is one of the main marine tourism destinations in Karangasem, on Bali's eastern coast, popular for the famous shipwreck of the US Army Transport Liberty. Beautiful coral reefs and the biota inhabiting the shipwreck attract hundreds of tourists on a daily basis.

Another popular east Bali area for diving is Amed, where visitors can also enjoy the landscape of a series of headlands overlooking bays lined with traditional fishing boats.

Tulamben and Amed offer scenic natural beauty both on land and underwater, as well as a tranquil relaxing holiday for ocean lovers.

Both these areas have benefited from work by environmental NGOs with local people and dive operators. However, challenges remain to

balance conservation with social life, culture and economic benefits.

The NGOs Lensa Masyarakat Nusantara, Coral Reef Alliance, Conservation International and Reef Check Foundation have been collaborating with the local government and the community to achieve sustainable management, which has resulted in photovoice. This innovative program provides cameras and photography training for people to document important issues in their lives, like the natural environment, their culture and community strengths and challenges.

By using simple cameras, photographs and stories, people gain a visual voice and a process to communicate indigenous knowledge and concerns.



"The pictures and stories provide people with a way to reflect on their own lives and to talk about what they want to protect and what they want to make better."

"Adding captions to the photos, they can explain the knowledge and values of local wisdom that can be used as a baseline for development planning, and sustaining the natural and cultural environment," said Ayu Saraswati, program coordinator.

This information can then be used by decision makers for appropriate development

and conservation in the area, while the community is directly involved in managing its environment, community system, natural resources, culture and development.

Conducted since 2007, this program has been proven effective in some areas of eastern Indonesia.

Tulamben and Amed were chosen as the first locations for photovoice in Bali. Starting last Thursday, 11 participants in Tulamben and 18 in Amed joined the training.

The participants represent a cross-section of local government institutions, fishermen, tourist operators, salt farmers, masseuses and porters.

The training included how to take photos on land and underwater by professional photographer Kartika Dewi Suardana and a lecture from Alit Widusaka of the Indonesian Arts Institute in Denpasar.

Environment-related issues were the most pressing problems revealed.

During the dry season, carelessly discarded trash accumulates on the dry river bed, then when the wet season comes, the trash is washed into the bay - choking corals, killing fish and negatively impacting on tourism.

The expected program outcome will benefit the community, government and all stakeholders, aiding development in general, and in more specific fields, including the management of marine resources in Karangasem. ■



Double Six Beach

WORDS AND PHOTOS **AGUNG PARAMESWARA**

“BALI’S LIVELIEST BEACH DESTINATION”

The once quiet and pristine Kuta Beach is no longer favored as it once was by locals and visitors eager to enjoy a relaxing beach atmosphere with stunning sunsets. The heavy traffic and crowds on the sand mean it is starting to lose its appeal for many.

However, Bali remains a haven for beach lovers and, just along the road, people still take pleasure in the island’s liveliest beach - *Pantai 66*, or Double Six Beach.

Located at the end of Jl. Arjuna, Double Six Beach is adjacent to the island’s most affluent fashion and entertainment hub.

Named after the legendary Double Six club, which no longer exists but has been replaced by a stunning new luxury hotel of the same name, the beach attracts visitors who love its beautiful white sand, the plentiful sun

loungers with accompanying umbrellas, the well-ordered beach sellers offering everything from paintings to carvings and watches, and the extensive range of food and drink options – from food stalls, to beach bags on the beach and luxury restaurants.

There are lifeguards stationed along this stretch of sand and the regular waves make it ideal for those learning to surf, bodyboarding and just playing in the waves – provided you can swim. The broad swathes of sand make it ideal for children to play and adults to walk their dogs or go jogging.

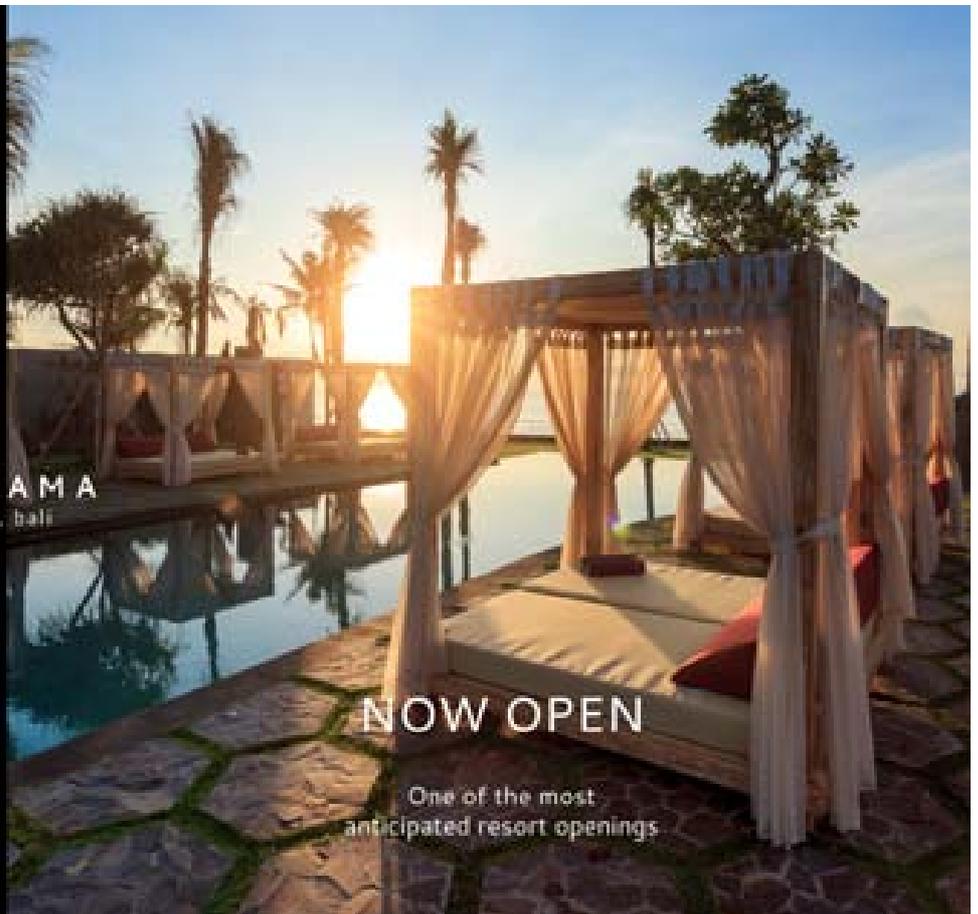
Double Six Beach is popular throughout the year but is much less crowded out of the peak holiday season. So whether you want to laze on a sun lounger or play in the waves, why not head down to Double Six Beach? ■

A Sumptuous
Sanctuary,
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Tranquility
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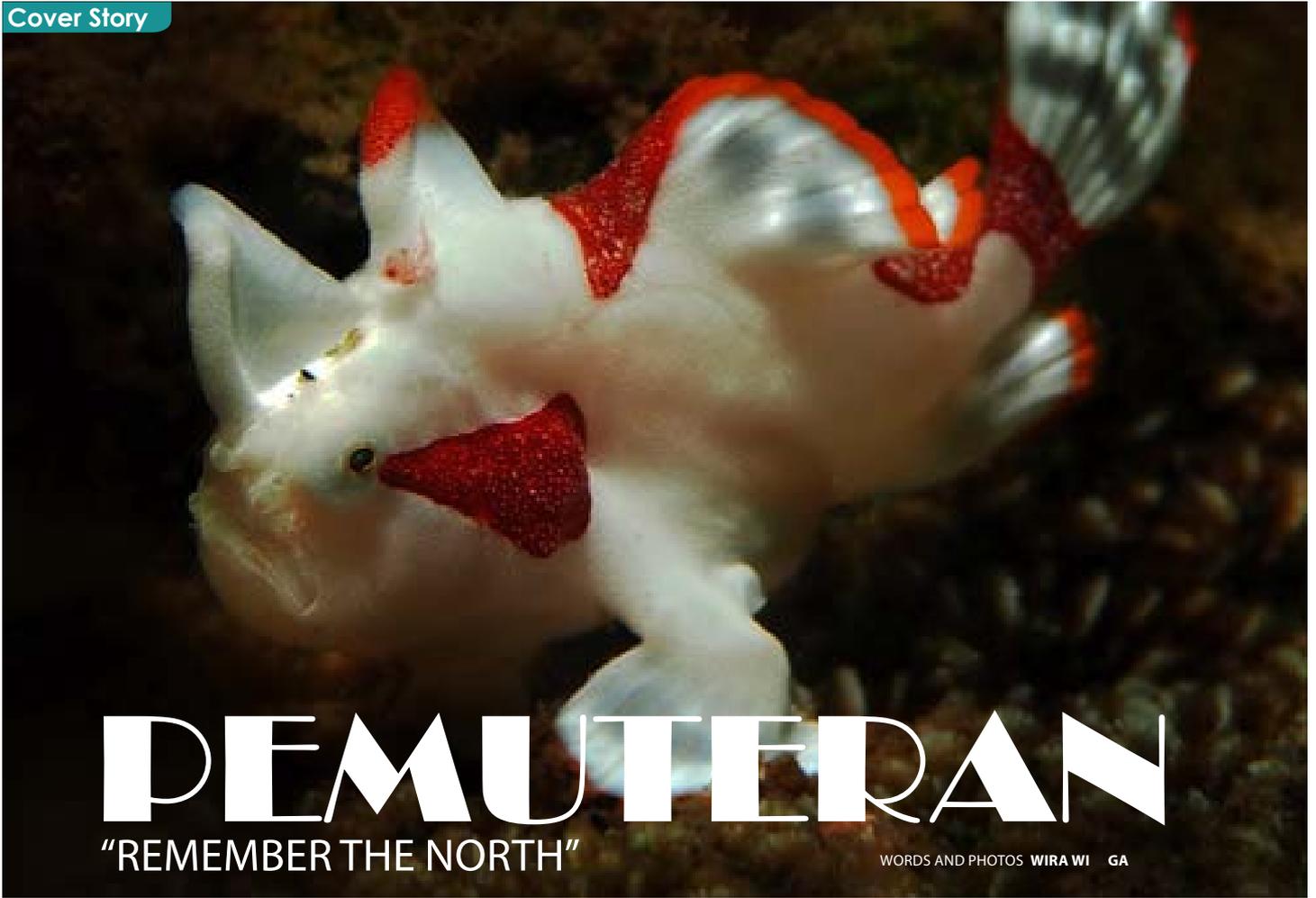
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PEMUTERAN

"REMEMBER THE NORTH"

WORDS AND PHOTOS WIRA WI GA



Four years ago, when Lembah Strait was first mentioned to me by friends, it was described as one of the best dive areas in the world, the Mecca for muck diving and heaven for an underwater macro-photographer.

It was not until a visit there later that year that I started to understand how the unattractive term of "muck dive" could actually attract so many photographers from all corners of the world.

Within the seemingly plain, lacking in coral, mucky, sandy bottom of this dive site lives a vast and concentrated population of very rare underwater creatures and bottom-dwellers seldom, or never, seen anywhere else in the world. Apparently similar traits are shared by other dive sites in other places that host similar creatures.

Recently, realizing that a long Easter weekend was coming up, I sat daydreaming of going to some world-class dive site; but with little time to prepare, skyrocketing flight costs and insufficient time to negotiate prices, it did not look like it was going to materialize. Then my thoughts turned to Pemuteran in north Bali. Much has been said about this place, and despite living in Bali for over two years, I had been making excuses not to go; so I decided it was time to give it a try, especially knowing that the dive sites in that area have a lot of shared qualities with Lembeh.

Driving to Pemuteran takes around 3.5 to 4 hours, depending on traffic and the route. A nice surprise was most of the routes have attractive and mesmerizing scenery. The two routes through the midlands will either take you through the popular Bedugul and Lake

Beratan area, allowing you to make a stop at the tranquil botanical garden, or through the Pupuan rice terraces with their hilly background, allowing you to stop and eat durian on the way.

Staying in Pemuteran, besides the have-it-all dive area on your doorstep and snorkeling sites just off the beach, gives you the advantage of being in the center of three main dive areas. Secret Bay, known for its resident frogfish, is 30 minutes' drive west, while Puri Jati, famous for its resident octopuses, including coconut and mimic octopuses, is 30 minutes to the east. Menjangan Island, renowned for its serenity, crystal clear water and colorful corals, is a short 10-minute drive away followed by a 30-minute boat-ride from the pier.

We dived at Secret Bay and Puri Jati, where the topography is a gentle slope from the beach to around 5 meters depth, and a really wide, flat-bottomed area at between 5-8 m depth, depending on the tide. Being shallow dives, with little or no current, these sites are tailor-made for underwater photographers, giving you the possibility of taking a lot of frames in a relatively long dive.

In the two days of diving at both sites, we encountered banggai cardinal fish, fingered dragonets, longspine wasp fish, porcelain crabs, moray eels, blennies, various kinds of scorpion fish, shrimps, crabs and nudibranches. We also encountered many frogfish, including the rare Hispid frogfish, seahorses, coconut

octopuses and the elusive mimic octopus, which fled at the first sight of us.

Little is known about this northern diving area, especially compared to the popular dive sites of Tulamben, Nusa Penida and Nusa Lembongan. As with other tourist attractions in the north, the dive sites are less talked about and probably less promoted due to the long drive from southern attractions and hotels, and because of this they are often missed by residents and tourists alike.

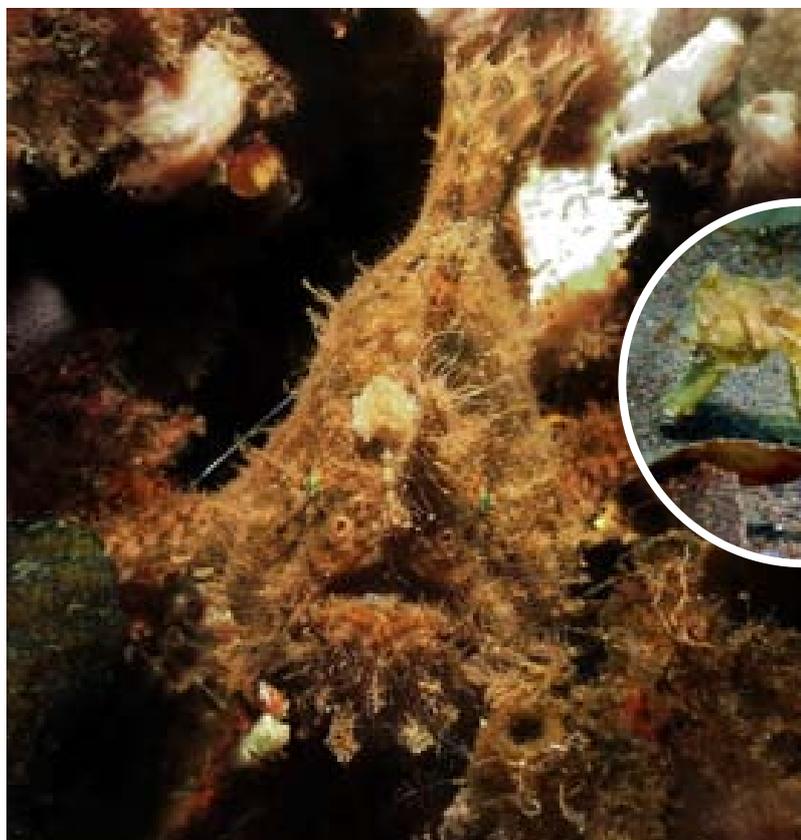
Having dived in many renowned dive sites in southeast Asia, including two of the most popular muck dive sites in the world, in Lembeh (north Sulawesi) and Anilao (the Philippines), I can vouch that the northern dive

sites really deliver, and I still haven't got to the popular Menjangan Island.

On my drive back to Denpasar, I thought how grateful I was that I lived on the island and had been reminded how good the diving here was, and to find out what the northern part of Bali had to offer.

H Fly to Ngurah Rai International Airport in Bali. Pemuteran is four hours away by road. Staying overnight for at least one night is recommended.

Secret bay and Puri Jati are shallow dive sites with acceptable underwater visibility and little or no current. Check with your dive guide to plan the dives for the best conditions on a given day. ■



Savor



"AN ADVENTUROUS
MYSTERY DINING
TOUR"

WORDS AND PHOTOS **EDNA ARIGAN**

As a major culinary destination, Bali offers plenty of places for a food adventure. You can easily find tours that will take you to restaurants serving anything from traditional Indonesian food, generic western food and Indian food, to Japanese food and even Greek Mediterranean – despite the long distance from southeastern Europe.

While most tours are arranged to suit the customers' requests, Bali Food Safari offers a unique culinary adventure on the island. Customers need only make a reservation on the Bali Food Safari website and choose which area they want to explore for their dining tour. Mystery Dining Tours are offered to Jimbaran, Seminyak and Ubud.

Choosing Ubud, as I had not explored it as much as Seminyak and Jimbaran, Bali Food Safari set up a tour and I was picked up in an MPV.

As suggested by the tour name, Bali Food Safari founder Simon Ward, my personal guide on this adventure, gave no clue as to which restaurants, cafes or other dining venues would be visited, only saying there would be three or four venues on the tour. He also requested that we not disclose the venue names, to maintain the mystery for future guests.

The first stop, for appetizers, was in the woods of Sayan village, just ten minutes' drive from downtown Ubud and one of the best spots in the Ubud area to enjoy sunset.

"We try to make the first stop a beautiful place to enjoy the sunset, whether customers chose Ubud, Jimbaran or Seminyak," Ward said.

The culinary journey became more and more interesting with each venue and I kept trying to guess which restaurant, cafe or hotel

would be our next stop.

This program can start with tapas or appetizers in the first restaurant and end with dessert in the third or fourth venue. The food choice at each venue is part of the mystery culinary adventure set up by the Bali Food Safari team.

You may have an Indonesian appetizer, Italian main course, a South American dish for another main course and end with a Japanese-style dessert. And it is very possible that you will visit a five-star restaurant with a famous Michelin-starred chef, a popular bistro, a local

family restaurant where the owner cooks and serves the meals, or a new hidden gem in the area you choose.

The Bali Food Safari team makes sure to only take customers to reputable venues to try and ensure a satisfying Balinese culinary adventure.

"No customer will ever get the same experience at the same venues," Ward added, saying he collaborated with around 30 restaurants across the island.

To enjoy this tasty tour, book 48 hours in advance on [alibali.com](#). The price per person starts from A\$128 (US\$98.80). ■

BALI FOOD SAFARI





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Indulge in a blind chocolate tasting session, skill-up in the language of libation at a wine masterclass, discover the magic of Balinese superfoods and witness a rendang cook-off or a clash of the coffee makers.

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'LAK-LAK' A LÁ MEN GABRUG

"BRANDING TRADITIONAL BALINESE SNACKS"

When you vacation in Bali, or elsewhere in Indonesia, you may want to taste genuine local snacks.

Bali's pastries and snacks, locally known as *jaja* Bali, are as rich and varied as its arts and culture, with a vast array of sweet and savory snacks served as ceremonial food, daily snacks and party sweets.

Lak-lak is a favorite among Balinese people. A perfect match to black coffee, *lak-lak* is popular for breakfast and tea-time.

Made of rice flour and coconut milk, *lak-lak* is similar to a thick pancake and is usually served with brown sugar caramel mixed with grated coconut.

Local women usually cook *lak-lak* for family breakfasts, while some also sell them in traditional markets.

However, two women in Denpasar are creating a trade brand for this traditional snack. "Men Gabrug, Fresh from the Oven" is

written on a green banner featuring an image of a Balinese woman wearing a frangipani flower in her hair.

The banner and the brand are quite eye-catching for passersby. For local people, branding traditional food is unusual; it is viewed as communal cultural property that no one person can claim as their own.

The branding has also become a source of dispute between two families, each having their own version and claiming to have created the brand.

It started in 2012, at a food stall opened for the Bali Arts Festival at the Arts Center.

Ni Made Sutrisni said a member of the festival's organizing committee had created a catchy name for her food stall, "Lak Lak Men Gabrug, Fresh from the Oven", to attract buyers to the stall. After the festival ended, Sutrisni opened another food stall on Jl. Nusa Indah, just outside the Arts Center complex.

A year later, Sutrisni changed the wording

to "Lak Lak Ne Men Gabrug", saying somebody was already using the Men Gabrug brand.

Then one of her relatives also set up a food stall, this time on Jl. Drupadi in Denpasar, under the name "Lak Lak Men Gabrug".

"I never thought of acquiring the intellectual property right to the brand," Sutrisni said.

While Men Gabrug is probably an imaginary figure, the name has become a hot commodity for *lak-lak* snack makers, guaranteed to lure customers.

"Everybody can make and sell *lak-lak*, but each will taste different," she said.

Sutrisni said *lak-lak* should be cooked the traditional way, using earthenware Balinese kitchen utensils.

In her open kitchen, customers can watch her cooking *lak-lak* in a clay pan on a brick stove using a coffee wood fire.

"This is how we should bake *lak-lak* [with earthenware utensils], otherwise it will taste different," explained Sutrisni, while serving the

snacks to several customers. *Lak-lak* is best served hot and fresh from the oven.

"The texture is soft and moist. The coconut milk makes the cake taste so delicious, especially teamed with grated coconut and brown sugar caramel."

She said the green color was natural and derived from pandanus leaves.

Meanwhile, in the Ne Men Gabrug food stall, the traditional *lak-lak* has transformed into a trendy cake.

"My customers are mostly young people - students used to modern pastries and western-style cakes," she said.

Despite the heated brand dispute, both Men Gabrug and Ne Men Gabrug food stalls have popularized the rural snack *lak-lak*, making it a favorite urban cake. ■



WORDS AND PHOTOS LUH DE SURİYANI



WOOBAR featuring Kolombo



Metis Restaurant, Lounge and Gallery



SKAI Beach Club Grand Opening