



SEE YOU THERE

July 2024

INDONESIA

So much more than 'just' Jakarta or Bali which are the most known areas.

Indonesia is the world's fourth most populous country and one of the most culturally diverse. The vast archipelago offers a rich tapestry of experiences with over 18,000 islands each boasting its own unique allure.

The people, most of whom are moderate Muslims, range from modern urban professionals in Jakarta, to village farmers and fishermen on many of the islands, to Stone Age tribal people in West Papua and peaceful, tourist-friendly Hindus of Bali. A former Dutch colony that became independent in the wake of World War II, Indonesia is a land of rich cultural and religious heritage, fascinating architecture, superb beaches and diving, unique wildlife, and remote village life.

Dutch sailors spoke of other-worldly creatures here such as the Komodo dragons of Komodo Island. The country is very spread out which offers huge diversity and is one of those few magical places you still feel alone in untouched beauty.

Continue on for more about my journey and discoveries along the way... starting in Bali.

Surrounded by rice fields, villages, temples, palaces, rivers and art and craft communities, Ubud is a cultural center where life moves at a leisurely pace, particularly in comparison to Bali's more cosmopolitan cities, Denpasar and Seminyak. Ubud is Bali's center for fine arts, dance and music with convenient access to neighboring villages, well-known for their stone and wood carvings as well as bamboo and wooden furniture. There is a 'downtown' with boutiques, restaurants and massage spas of course.

I am beyond excited to share an incredible trip to inspire you.

I went on an adventure to investigate some favorites and some new experiences for clients in the magical country of Indonesia. I had no idea quite how special and interesting this part of the world truly is. I am going to do my best to give you a taste of what we can create for you, your loved ones, family and friends. I was lucky enough to travel with my husband this time and seeing how relaxed he was and how much fun he had... you need to try it too.

Let's start off with getting there. It is a little far BUT only a few hours (2-3hrs) more

than Europe from the west coast so it really isn't too bad after all. There are ways to help keep you comfortable. With several airline options, I chose Singapore Airlines and I was so happy we did. Absolutely incredible and I don't think I have ever been so looked after on a flight before! Called by name, fantastic food and service, comfortable lie flat bed and soft bedding. With air being rather complicated, I can assist you with the best choices, not only with the airline but the aircraft and configuration. As you can see from the photos on the right, business class offerings depend on the aircraft.



Airbus A350 and Boeing 777 aircraft



Regional Airbus A350 and Boeing 787 aircraft



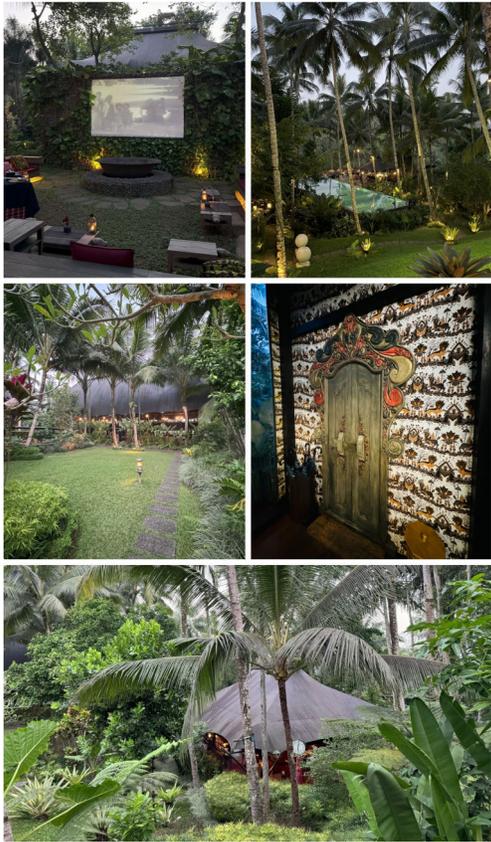
Changi Airport creates a haven to enjoy an arrival, layover or departure as much as possible.



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Other hotels in Ubud

We visited **Capella Ubud** which I can describe as a feeling of being transported into a movie...something like Tarzan or The Jungle Book. Very unique and 'wild' luxury, every building is a tent! If you've been on safari in a tented camp you might know what I mean.



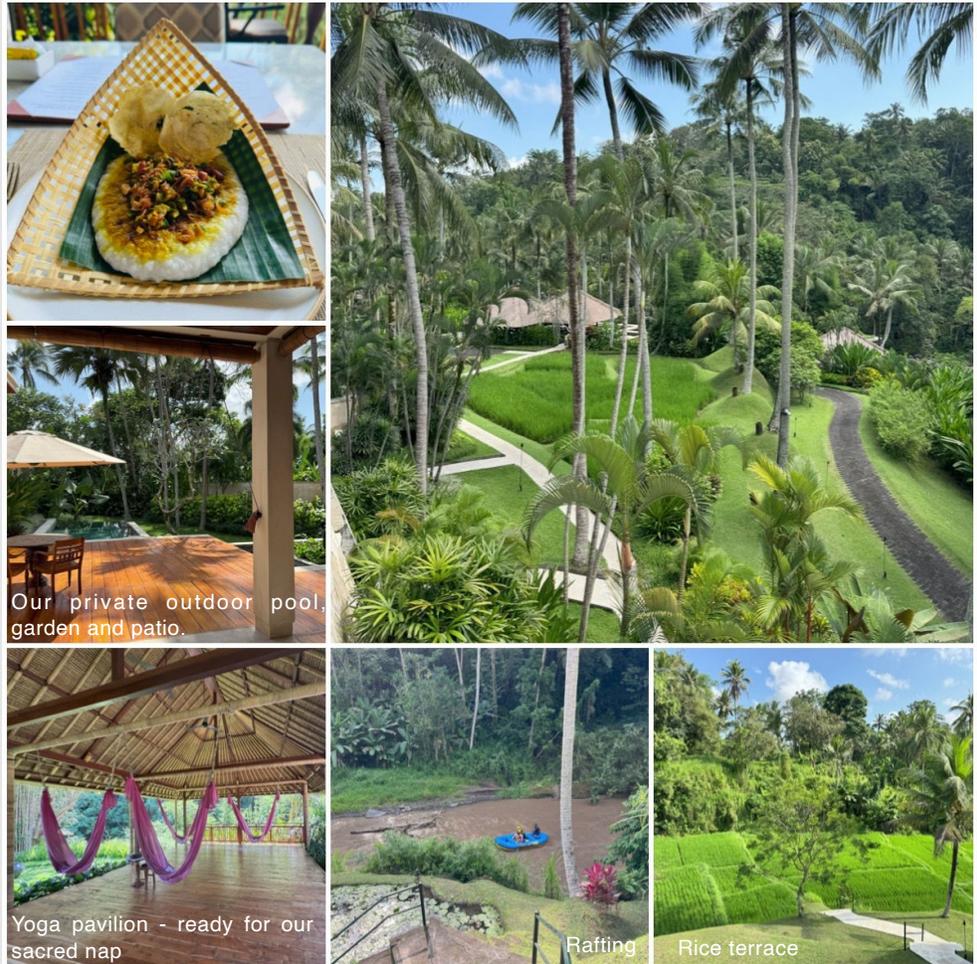
Amandari is a beauty with a traditional Balinese design and dramatic views. Stand alone suites are sprinkled in on winding paths giving you the privacy you'd expect at an Aman resort. Hand crafted local touches are throughout the resort so you never lose sight of where you are. The food and beverages here are amazing topped off with friendly service. Amandari has a program allowing local village children to practice traditional dance classes on property and perform for guests some nights. We were excited to see them perform along with live musicians in immaculate costumes!



Spotlight on Ubud



Ubud is known for its rice terraces and staying at the gorgeous **Four Seasons Sayan** gives you this right on property along with much more!



Our private outdoor pool, garden and patio.

Yoga pavilion - ready for our sacred nap

Rafting

Rice terrace

Bali is blessed with two Four Season Resorts, one at the coast near the airport and one in Ubud which is more like a jungle. You can take a raft from one to the other instead of driving! How cool is that!?! With suites and villas to choose from you are spoiled with spacious and very private areas as you can tell from the photos above. Serene but not pretentious, your every need is met.

Villas are spacious and I love an option of an indoor AND outdoor shower. We were introduced to two local fruits I was not familiar with: Mangosteen which reminded me a little of a lychee but larger, and Snake Fruit - aka Salak, also lychee like but much firmer like an apple, less juicy and less sweet.

With several excellent dining outlets to choose from we were quite content staying on property. Tiered pools, an amazing spa, well equipped gym. The views from almost everywhere are just stunning.



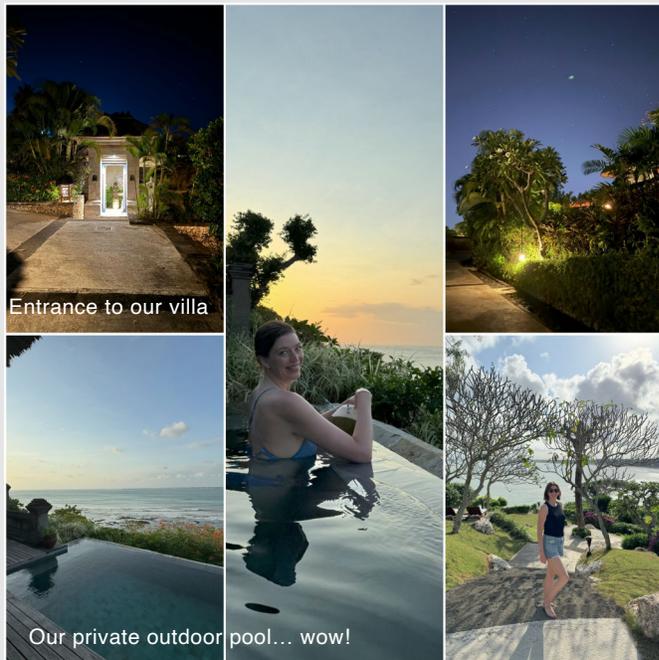
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Exploring around Bali



Four Seasons Jimbaran Bay

The resort is conveniently located about 15min from Denpasar International airport so it is the perfect spot for arrival or before departing Bali. The main thing is to ensure you spend at least a few nights here to be able to enjoy all of the facilities, dining options, spa and surroundings. It is such a fun resort with beautiful villas and their private pools and outdoor spaces are bliss. I did not want to leave! The ocean views are really stunning and due to the layout and landscape of the resort, it is a feature from most places.



Entrance to our villa

Our private outdoor pool... wow!

I was especially excited for a Telu Class! Telu is one of the dining outlets, a bar/lounge oasis that is full of character. Telu derives its name from the Balinese word for "three," and symbolizes the harmony of nature, people and soul. We learned about and tasted Arak and tepache. We even made our own tepache and a cocktail using this. Since getting home, we have actually made our own after learning about this from Jan, the fantastic mixologist!



Private black sand beach

Bali east coast... Amankila. Bali has many different regions and each quite unique with their own attraction. If you're after more of a remote vibe, this is great. When enjoying an Aman stay, your journey often begins with a transfer that sets the mood for your upcoming stay and experience. With pillows, home made snacks, beverages and tv's, you are luxuriously transferred to your destination. Private villas, most with pools (a common trend in Bali) sprinkle across the lush tropical property. Their 3 tiered main pool has superb views and their beach club pool offers another great perspective to enjoy. One of my highlights of our stay was lounging in the beach cabanas, perfectly spaced out for privacy on their black sand beach. Tranquil, private with unobstructed views of the ocean. The servers bring you everything you could want and the prawn salad with Pomelo (one of the native citrus in Indonesia aka Jeruk Bali) was my favorite. During our time in Indonesia we enjoyed Pomelo cocktails, salads and meals with this delicious fruit. Amankila has several dining outlets to choose from and a lovely complimentary afternoon tea that has a variety of different sweet treats and teas served daily.



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Being a Rascal...



Komodo Dragon



SUP & kayaking on a lake in the volcano



Monkeys



Hiking

Nautical paradise



As I mentioned on page 1 of this newsletter, Indonesia consists of multiple remote islands and the best (and only) way to truly explore these treasures is by water.

I found the PERFECT way to enjoy rugged, rustic, untouched areas in a luxurious, comfortable and safe way. Clients have been raving about the Rascal Voyages I have planned for them and I was able to experience this first hand. I went in with super high expectations due to their reputation but this was exceeded in every aspect! The yacht, which I can best describe as a luxurious floating villa, boasting character and charm is a joy to sail on. The staff are truly exceptional in every way. From top level service to amazing, fresh and varied meals and activities and adventures dreams are made of. Between myself and my partners, we are able to curate and cater to your desires and preferences. Rascal is one of my favorite partners because of their relentless pursuit of perfection. The best way to enjoy a Rascal Voyage is to charter the yacht for true personalization. It is also possible to sail with a shared sailing booking a cabin only.

We did the Ring of Fire voyage which covers the lesser Sunda islands of Bali, Lombok, Sumbawa and Flores, which are part of a volcanic arc called the Sunda Arc. Nature's playground with varying landscapes and underwater adventures. We explored volcanos on land and the rich volcanic substrates underwater, along with the abundant marine life that comes with it.

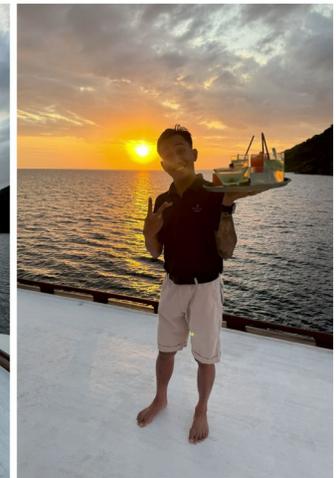
Komodo National Park is a paradise for nature lovers, serious divers and adventure seekers alike. On land, Komodo National Park is home to the famous Komodo Dragons, the world's largest lizards, as well as a diverse array of wildlife and marine creatures.



Private pink sand beach



Golf on the roof deck with biodegradable golf balls filled with fishfood



So many islands...



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Spotlight in the water



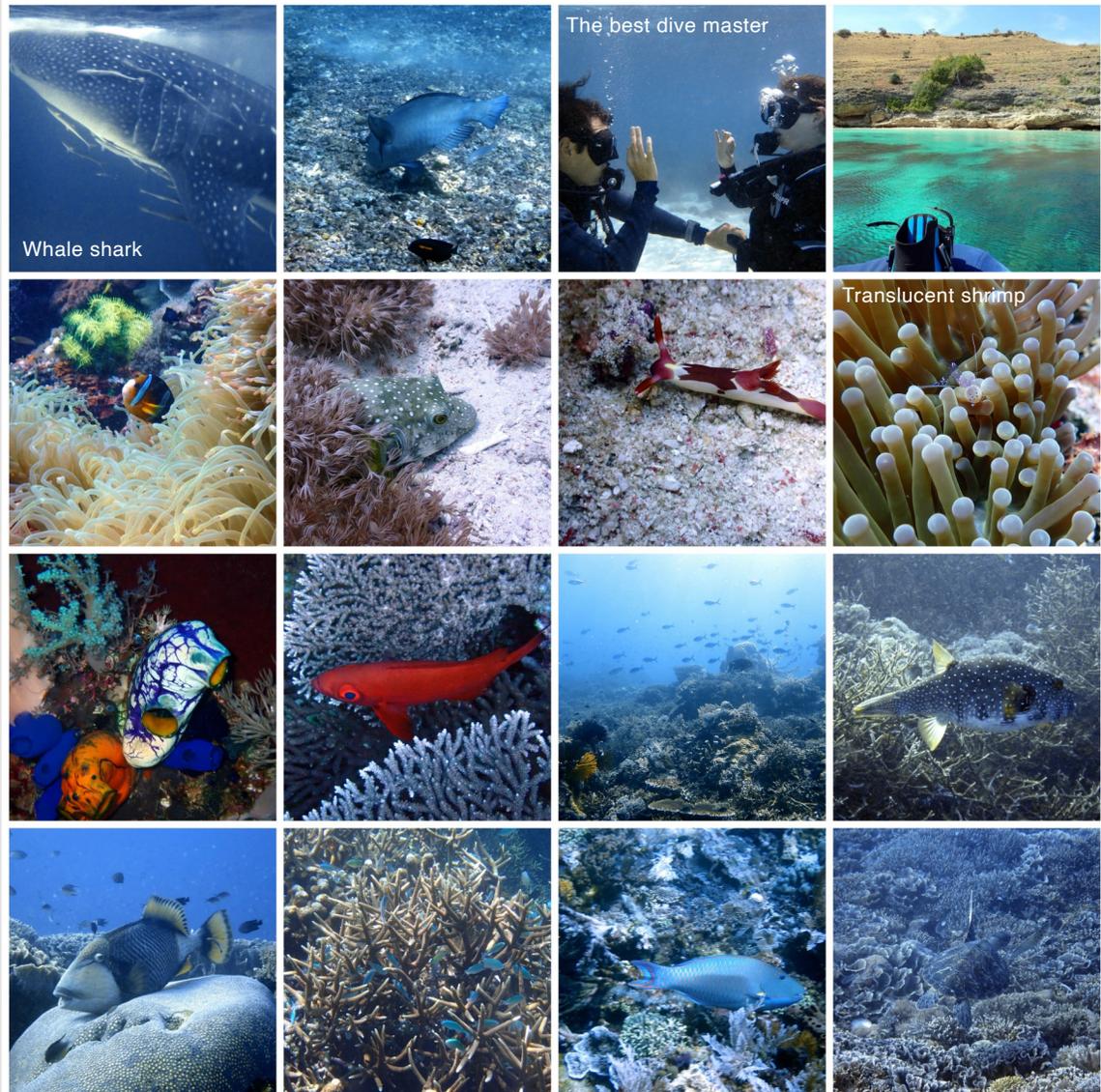
Whether you enjoy swimming, snorkeling or scuba diving, you are going to see so many things.

Underwater never looked so good! The expert snorkeling and diving master/s help and guide you as needed and point out and find all the best things. During this whole adventure I had so many firsts which I don't get to say as often as I would like considering how adventurous I am. Life is short and this was another reminder how brilliant the world is and travel is the best investment of your time to learn and have fun with loved ones.

Something I really enjoyed were the mini presentations of what we were likely about to see before getting in the water. For example, before seeing the turtles, we learned about the local species, how to spot the differences and tell their gender. Education in the best way - real life!

No two days are alike onboard your voyage and everything is optional. If you prefer to chill onboard and enjoy a cocktail and a good book in one of the many spaces you can but chances are, you won't want to miss out on anything. The experience team make sure you feel safe, comfortable and are looked after every step of the way.

Something else I love is that this kind of voyage combines the perfect balance of land and water adventures. Hiking, trekking, diving, snorkeling, wake boarding, water skiing, paddle boarding, kayaking, village tours, bat watching, beach picnics and beach volleyball are an example of some of the things we experienced. Being in nature and active daily left me feeling like my best self! Authentic and responsible travel is what I am so passionate about and something I love curating for clients.



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Wrapping up with some final bits

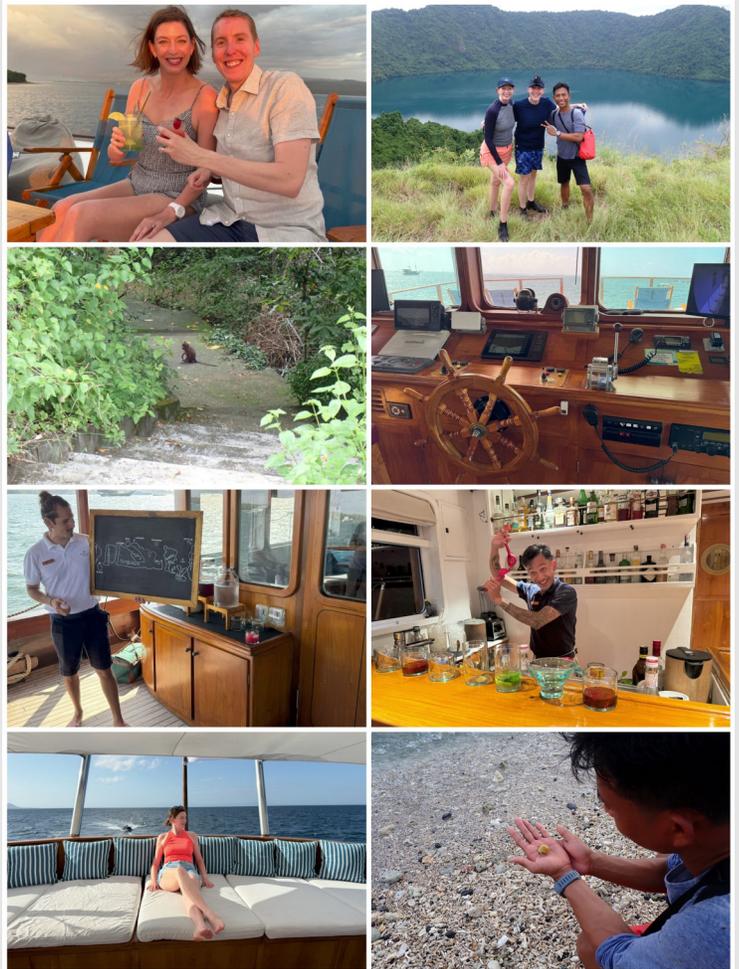


Views of the changing landscapes

Private beach dinner



Friends with the staff by the time you disembark, best memories forever. Hands on experiences enriching your life!



A quick mention about something exciting that happened... I have been nominated as a Travel + Leisure and ILTM rising star for 2024! With this accolade I am invited to exclusive extras with networking at ILTM Cannes in December. It is all about access and being in the know to do what travel advisors do!

Melissa is originally from Cape Town, South Africa and relocated to the Bay Area, California. Her background is in the performing arts, predominantly classical ballet and with that, is no stranger to immense discipline and organization. She is passionate about travel, loves learning about different cultures and tries to experience as many different adventures as she possibly can. After working with travel advisors herself, she realized how valuable their input and services were and decided to invest in the training and skills necessary to be able to provide the highest quality of service possible. Now she enjoys planning dream vacations for clients worldwide.

TRAVEL+LEISURE RISING STAR

Melissa has shown exceptional community engagement, passion for learning, and impressive business growth. She seizes every opportunity to learn, connect with peers, and experience as much as possible firsthand. She is enthusiastic about growing her business and tripled her sales last year, demonstrating her commitment and entrepreneurial spirit.



Valerie Wilson Travel
THE POWER OF ACCESS®



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