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BALI'S BEAUTIFUL HOMES AND DECOR

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INSPIRING INTERIORS. STYLE BY DESIGN.

"A VACATION IS WHAT YOU TAKE
WHEN YOU CAN NO LONGER TAKE
WHAT YOU'VE BEEN TAKING."
— EARL WILSON

DESIGNER
KITCHENS
BY METRIC

VILLA OMAH APIK
A NICHE IN
NATURE

*the
holiday
issue*

THE BALI STYLE
TOP 5 RESORTS



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Rustic elegance at
Bambu Indah resort
by John Hardy.

A LIFE IN DESIGN
MEET ARCHITECT
CHARLIE HEARN

BALI'S 10 BEST SWIMMING POOLS •
DECORATE! CUSHIONS AND WALL DECOR

THE BALI STYLE TOP 5 RESORTS

This 'paradise island' has a dizzying array of hotels, with more springing up all the time. We help take away the stress of planning your next Bali holiday with our picks of the best hotels in five categories – luxury, eco-luxe, interior design, beach-side and recreation – and the winners are...

Words **Adam Fenton**

This page: Luxury living, poolside at the Amanusa Villas, Nusa Dua.

1. LUXURY – AMANUSA VILLAS

Opening in the early 90s, the Kerry Hill-designed Amanusa resort is one of the original pioneers of Nusa Dua luxury hospitality. Spacious and timelessly elegant, Amanusa combines clean architectural lines and precision landscaping with natural tones of timber, sandstone, terrazzo and thatched *alang-alang* roofing to create an architectural masterpiece of modernist Bali style. And now, with the recent opening of the Amanusa Villas, the resort is taking things to “an entirely different level”. Imagine the kind of service, luxury and privacy that rock stars or royalty might expect when they come to Bali and you will get some idea of what these ‘villas’ are about.

The word ‘villa’ is actually slightly misleading, as these estates are more like enclosed mini-resorts. With four-, five- or six-bedroom configurations, the villas start at around \$4000 per night and come with a 25-metre lap pool, stand-alone library/media room, central *bale*/dining room/lounge and yet another stand-alone *bale* for formal dining.

This page: Long and cool pool.

"NOT A HAIR IS OUT OF PLACE AT THIS RESORT, WHICH PRESENTS WITH THE STYLE AND PRECISION OF AN ARCHITECTURAL WATER-COLOUR ILLUSTRATION..."

These pages: The spacious 4-, 5- and 6-bedroom Amanusa villas combine opulent design with seamless service to provide one of the most indulgent luxurious hospitality experiences on the island.



Picture an elegant blend of terrazzo, marble, manicured lawns, groves of frangipani trees, elegant modern rattan and teak furnishings, and an abundance of fresh flowers – fragrant cempaka, frangipani and tuberose lovingly tended and arranged by the staff. Each villa is staffed by *two* on-call butlers and a cook who live on site in separate staff quarters. Our butler, *Arta*, had the dignified bearing and unflappable grace of the consummate butler – for whom no request was beyond his ability and no detail beneath his attention. With an uncanny ability to anticipate and discreetly cater to guests needs, Arta and his staff would, unbidden, wash the car, fold clothes and refresh our glasses of lemon ice-water when we were swimming – discreet, efficient, seamless, utterly professional. Not a hair is out of place at this resort, which presents with the style and precision of an architectural water-colour illustration.



Location

On the east side of the southern bukit peninsula, about five minutes drive from the centre of Nusa Dua.

Highlights

Private beach club *bales*, be sure to spend a morning relaxing on the Amanusa's private stretch of Nusa Dua beach – in your own private gazebo. Impeccable service from your private butlers.

www.amanresorts.com/amanusa/home.aspx

2. ECO LUXE – BAMBU INDAH

Style and sustainability can co-exist in exquisite harmony – and *Bambu Indah* is the living proof of that. Hand-crafted, unique, rustic, elegant, organic – *Bambu Indah* whispers to you about what the future of tourism in Bali could be, nay, should be – *must* be. You'll find no manicured lawns or acres of chlorinated swimming pools – instead the rich, dark earth is ploughed and turned and worked into row upon cultivated row of fresh organic herbs and vegetables for the gourmet kitchen.

As you tiptoe across natural stepping stones between rows of organic tomatos and eggplants, you cross a bamboo bridge over a babbling stream – no wait, that's the swimming pool. A panoramic vista of the Sayan gorge greets you and stops you in your tracks. For a moment you can do nothing but admire that expansive view – the quintessential postcard of Bali – rice terraces and flocks of frolicking ducks.



These pages: Rich wood floors and tapestry; Classic, authentic Java design; Open-air bathroom; Spacious entryway.

"SOMEHOW, IN ITS ORGANIC IMPRECISION, BAMBU INDAH ACHIEVES A KIND OF RAMBLING, TIMELESS, MYSTICAL BEAUTY..."



Continue to your room, a rebuilt antique Javanese bridal house – ineffably charming – it fits so exactly in these wonderfully fecund tropical surroundings, like a gingerbread house in a Bavarian forest. You turn back and see the soaring peaked gables of the centrepiece *Minang* structure, a reinterpretation in bamboo of the majestic houses of West Sumatra.

Somehow, in its organic imprecision, Bambu Indah achieves a kind of rambling, timeless, mystical beauty. Here is a resort in balance with its surroundings and it shows in the genuine smiles and greetings not only of the staff, but of the people of the surrounding community. Here, bright-eyed kids still do kid-stuff, like explore and fish and swim in the river – and the elders are glad to greet and welcome you into their idyllic rural existence.

Location

The Sayan ridge road, about five minutes drive from the centre of Ubud.

Highlights

Highlights: A walk through the rice paddies and hamlets of the surrounding countryside. Exquisite John Hardy interior design touches – antiques, custom bath tub, hand-crafted cutlery and amenities. Glass floor of the 'Udang' house sitting on top of a prawn pond. 'Slow food' organic cuisine. Too many to mention!

www.bambuindah.com



3. INTERIOR DESIGN – ST. REGIS

As we took the grand tour of St. Regis Bali, our guide, Lilis, related the story of John Jacob Astor IV, creator of the original St. Regis Hotel in New York City. Astor died in the *Titanic* disaster some years after the hotel's opening, but the link to that legendary icon of elegance and luxury is somehow fitting for this hotel. The hotel's opulent interiors are reminiscent of that grand age – when gentlemen wore tuxedos to dinner and silverware was actually made of solid sterling silver. Not that you'll see many tuxedos here. St. Regis's seaside setting is more suited to bikinis, bathers and breezy tropical elegance.



These pages: The opulent interiors of the St. Regis Bali resort have a nostalgic luxurious quality reminiscent of the grand hotels of the colonial past.



Having won dozens of awards and accolades since its opening in 2007, the resort was recently recognised for its impeccable interiors with a Hospitality Design Furniture Award – Gold Medal for Top Luxury Resort Design. The private villas impress with Balinese artworks and brilliant splashes of colour, hand-embroidered throw pillows, antique wood coffee tables, 300-thread count Egyptian cotton linens, marble bathroom with elegant stand-alone bath-tub, private tropical garden with jacuzzi jet-plunge pool, *bale bengong* gazebo and, for guests in the 'Strand Residences', direct access to the sugar white sands of Nusa Dua beach. But the innovations don't end there.

The resort itself has a few more pleasing surprises up its sleeve – like the meandering, saltwater swimming lagoon, the 'hammock garden', orchid pavilion, turtle hatchery, wedding chapel, lagoon huts and massage jets... yes, heaven awaits you and your family on your next Bali holiday, and its name could be St. Regis.

Location

Nusa Dua.

Highlights

Highlights: A 'hammock garden'? This devoted hammock fan was impressed. The saltwater 'lazy river style' swimming lagoon complete with sunken lounge chairs – so many cool and innovative design touches.

www.stregisbali.com

"HAVING WON DOZENS OF AWARDS AND ACCOLADES SINCE ITS OPENING IN 2007, THE RESORT WAS RECENTLY RECOGNISED FOR ITS IMPECCABLE INTERIORS..."

These pages: The St Regis villas combine indoor and outdoor spaces for maximum relaxation and luxury. Some innovative design flourishes really impress like the saltwater lagoon pool, the "Hammock garden" and wedding chapel.





4. BEACH SIDE – CONRAD BALI

“CONRAD IS THE PERFECT RESORT FOR A FULL-ON FAMILY SUN-AND-SURF VACATION...”

This page: Fun family biking.
Opposite page: Spacious sea-front pool; Fine dining by the seaside.

Conrad Bali oozes epic cool and has attracted stylish travellers from around the globe since its opening nine years ago – how time flies. With its absolute beachfront location on Tanjung Benoa, Conrad is the perfect resort for a full-on family sun-and-surf vacation. The enormous main pool is perpetually fringed with devoted sun-worshippers, and on the beach, thrill-seekers zip past on jetskis and banana boats – or laze the days away in a thatch-roofed Bali gazebo.

Chatting to the resort’s F&B director David Laval, we got the scoop on some plans for exciting renovations that will see the beachfront restaurant and main restaurant completely revamped. Also, the renovated kid’s club is set to reopen with updated games and facilities. David also proudly

mentioned the resort’s efforts to contribute something back to the local community. Fresh organic produce for the kitchen is sourced from local growers, Indonesian artists are regularly featured in art exhibitions at the hotel, and the hotel is a supporter of charities such as the ROLE Foundation which benefits underprivileged children.

The resort’s Jiwa Spa and Wellness Studio is also a favourite with guests, offering relaxing massage and therapeutic treatments. And if you feel like taking the plunge with the one you love, the iconic beachfront wedding chapel is the ideal location to say ‘I do’. For a beachfront family vacation filled with sun, sea, surf and style – you could do no better in Bali than the Conrad Bali resort.



Location

The Tanjung Benoa Peninsula about five minutes drive from the centre of Nusa Dua.

Highlights

Jiwa Spa and Wellness Studio. Fantastic beach-side dining at 8 Degree’s South. Epic style of the hotel design.

www.conradbali.com



5. RECREATION – PAN PACIFIC

The Pan Pacific's enviable location combines recreation, sport and culture like no other resort in Bali. Situated on a whopping 103 hectares on Bali's west coast near the temple of Tanah Lot, the resort includes an award-winning 18-hole Greg Norman-designed golf course.

Apart from golf, the 'Pan Pac' also offers extensive spa facilities and therapies with a fusion of Western products and technology employing the Balinese Hindu "Usadha" philosophy. Other facilities include the gymnasium and *four* pools including an exhilarating water slide for the kids.

There is also an array of exciting activities to try, including cycling in the picturesque countryside and learning the intricacies of Balinese dance. While mum and dad take in a round of golf in the most picturesque setting you are ever likely to see, the kids can indulge in any number of diverting activities including: pottery, dance, cooking, painting and basketball – all under the supervision of qualified staff. Or for something educational, Indonesian or Balinese language lessons are offered, or you can learn to make Balinese handicrafts, like kites and masks – then there's kid's yoga, cinema room and games like Wii – the options are almost endless.

"THERE IS ALSO AN ARRAY OF EXCITING ACTIVITIES TO TRY, INCLUDING CYCLING IN THE PICTURESQUE COUNTRYSIDE AND LEARNING THE INTRICACIES OF BALINESE DANCE..."

Location

Tabanan on Bali's west coast about one hour's drive from the airport.

Highlights

Incredible series of four lagoon-style swimming pools. Adjacent to the breath-takingly beautiful Tanah Lot temple – one of Bali's most important and picturesque sacred sites.

www.panpacific.com/bali

These pages (clockwise from top): 18-hole golf course; Fun in the sun for kids; Relaxing massage with spiritual background.



BALI'S TOP 10 BEST POOLS

Sun, fun and a dip in the pool — a recipe for success in any paradise — are dished up in high style at Bali's best resorts and villas. From the exotic aquatic experience to the intimate immersion in restful waters, here are Bali Style's top picks for the coolest in pools.

Words **Bali Style Editorial Team**

ALILA UBUD

The swimming pool at the Alila Ubud was an easy choice. Iconic and bold in its design, it appears to float above the picturesque Ayung river valley like a giant pane of glass. A spray of tuberose on a raised platform at one end provides a dramatic visual anchor — flanked assymmetrically on one side by elegant recliners that scream out — “lie down here, drink in the view and a cocktail”. A+ for stylish elegance.

www.alilabotels.com/ubud



2

HARD ROCK HOTEL

They like to party hard at the Hard Rock Hotel, and the pool is party central, dude! Bali's biggest free form swimming pool has its own sand island where bronzed rockers party and play volleyball. There are also 22 poolside cabanas and swim-up Shack bar (of course) – the “Chill Out Pool” is the *ying* to the main pool's *yang* 10 out of 10 for Kuta-style rockin' awesomeness!

www.hardrockhotels.com/bali



BANYAN TREE

The pool at the Banyan Tree Ungasan has an epic grandeur and elegance that make it truly memorable. With glorious and panoramic views of the Indian ocean from its cliff-top location near the sacred Uluwatu temple, the pool maximises its ‘wow’ factor with an elegant curved edge, sumptuous four-poster day-bed and a splash of operatic drama with free-standing stone columns crowned with iron braziers.

www.banyantree.com/en/bali_ungasan



ST. REGIS SALTWATER LAGOON

Making it onto our exclusive Top 5 Resorts list, the salt water swimming lagoon at St. Regis caught our eye. The Swimmable Lagoon features two thatched gazebos with whirlpools and a splashing water fountain feature at one end. In the middle of the lagoon, the wooden deck is a favorite place for sunning. For drinks, guests may rest submerged in the water while a waiter serves the best of the island's cocktails and fresh juices. Tropical gardens, tall palm trees, swimmable lagoon = enchanting.

www.alilahotels.com/ubud

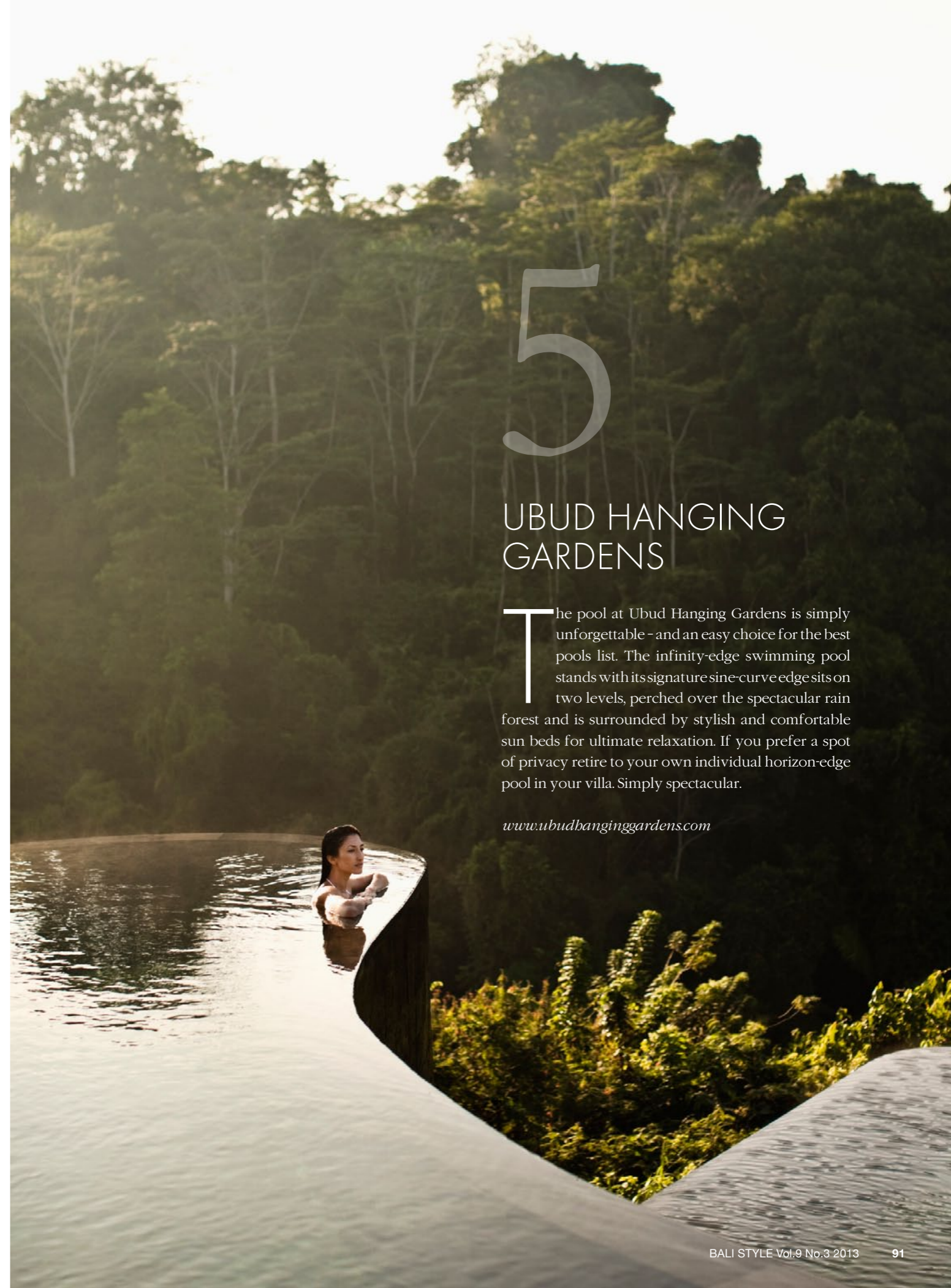


5

UBUD HANGING GARDENS

The pool at Ubud Hanging Gardens is simply unforgettable - and an easy choice for the best pools list. The infinity-edge swimming pool stands with its signature sine-curve edge sits on two levels, perched over the spectacular rain forest and is surrounded by stylish and comfortable sun beds for ultimate relaxation. If you prefer a spot of privacy retire to your own individual horizon-edge pool in your villa. Simply spectacular.

www.ubudhanginggardens.com





BAMBU INDAH

You could almost be forgiven for not noticing that the pool at Bambu Indah, is in fact, a pool. Such is the organic natural setting of this boutique eco-luxe resort, that the swimming pool looks uncannily like a natural stream. Unchlorinated, the pool consists of natural, fresh flowing river water, and one end is a billabong-style water hole, complete with rope from which guests are encouraged to do 'bombs' into the water. Just like the creek we used to swim in as kids!

www.bambuindah.com

7

PAN PACIFIC

Situated on four different levels, and complete with water slide, the pool at the Pan Pacific is a favourite for kids and 'big kids' alike. Rounding out a resort that tops the list for recreational family fun, this pool will have your inner-child champing at the bit – I mean, come on - it's got a water slide!

www.panpacific.com/bali



FOUR SEASONS SAYAN

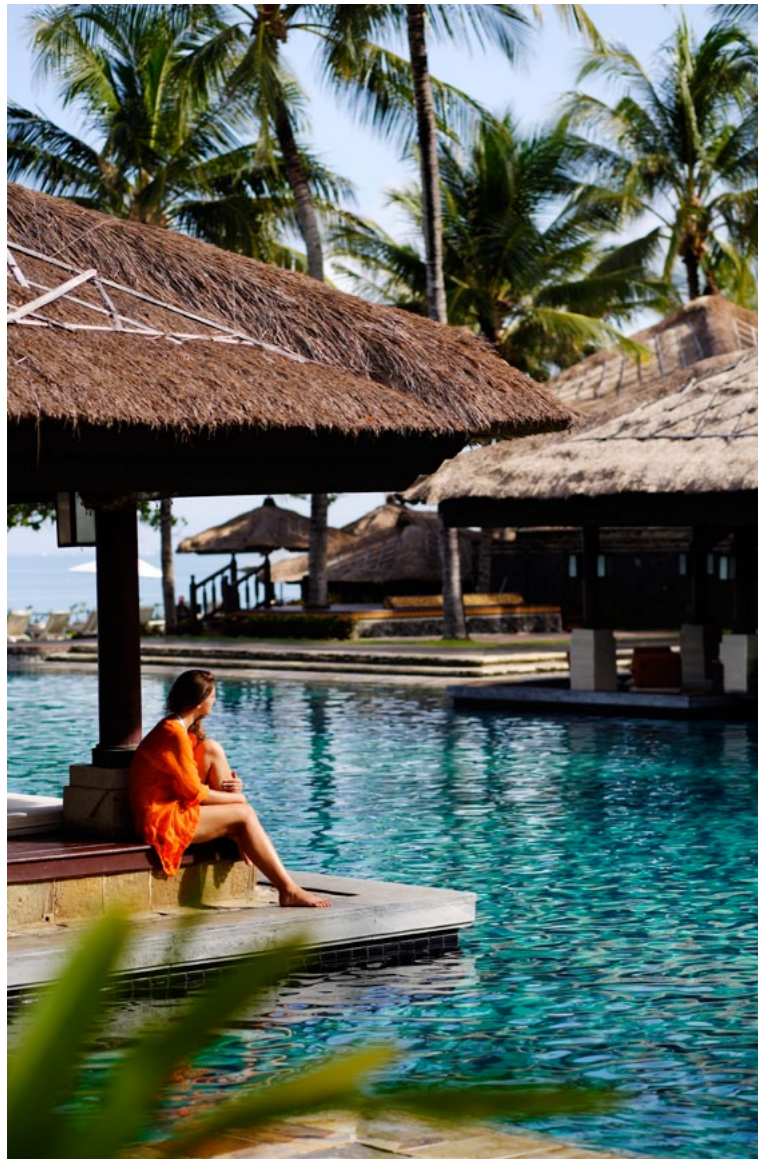
The location of the swimming pool at the Four Seasons Sayan makes it truly memorable, as it is situated directly next to the Ayung River. As you lazily paddle or sip a cocktail, groups of raucous whitewater rafters occasionally slip by in a mini-riot of colour and excitement – then life returns to placid normal in one of the area's most architecturally stunning resorts.

www.fourseasons.com/sayan

INTERCONTINENTAL

The Intercontinental hotel at Jimbaran has some of the most scenic and rambling Balinese gardens on the island. And the use of water features is a central element of that scenic success. Intercon's swimming pool is the classic hotel swimming pool – elegant and expansive with swim-up bars, swaying palm trees and daybeds this is the setting for an unforgettable Bali holiday.

bali.intercontinental.com



ALILA ULUWATU

In some ways, we end up where we began...at the Alila. Once again, this boutique brand made a bold architectural statement with this pool that has made it on to dozens of Best and Hottest lists the world over. Perhaps the infinity-edge to end all infinity edges, this pool, with its adjacent cafe jutting out into open air, is a stand-out, both literally and figuratively.

www.alilabotels.com/uluwatu

10

PARTING SHOT

style and sustainability

Photography by Bambu Indah Resort

Bambu Indah Resort by designer John Hardy in Syan, near Ubud — stylish design and organic sustainability.