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World's Best Trip: Bali, Indonesia



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How to take a World's Best trip to Bali, Indonesia.

The Trip

Bali's mystic charms are timeless, but now the island's resorts are making cultural relevance a priority, promising unique entrée into local art and architecture, cuisine, and traditional medicine. The trend of conveying "Bali-ness" arguably started at **Amandari**, which opened in 1989 and still has some of the island's best cultural programs. The highlight is the cooking class: it begins with a trip to a nearby market and culminates in a seven-course feast overlooking the Ayung River Gorge. Guests at the **Four Seasons Resort Bali at Sayan**, in Ubud, can spend the day with local farmers, learning about the island's ingenious subak irrigation system. On the southwestern coast, set between green rice fields and a black-sand beach, is **Alila Villas Soori**. Its proximity to **Tanah Lot Temple**—Bali's most dramatic religious site, poised on a rocky headland that becomes an island at high tide—means guests can get there before the crowds. The three resorts run by the Komaneka group—whose owners also founded Ubud's **Neka Art Museum**—showcase eclectic contemporary Balinese art; the latest and most lavish, **Komaneka at Bisma**, is a veritable gallery unto itself.

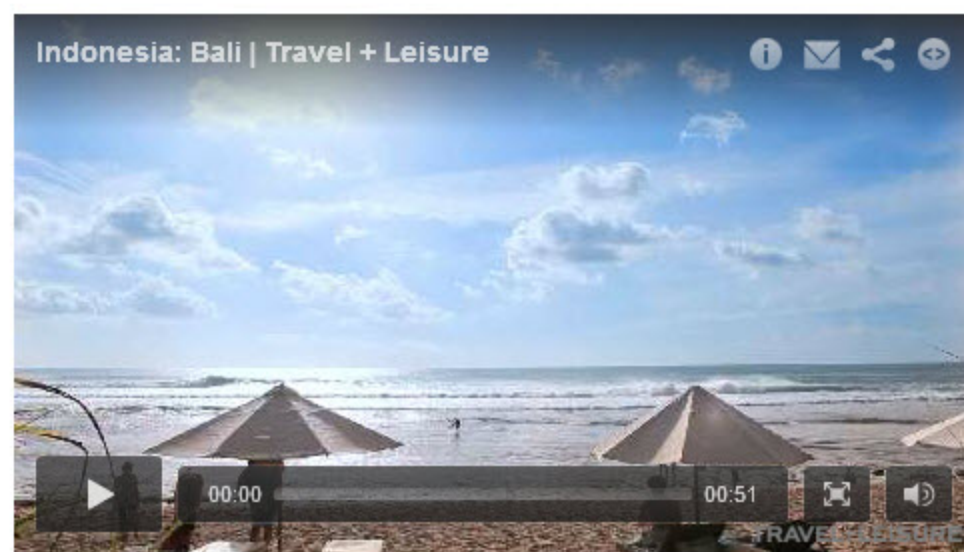
Bali Affordable Tip: Even on an island where humble rural lanes lead to luxurious, \$600-a-night resorts, there are wallet-friendly options. Try **Desa Seni**, a village-style resort of thatched-roof villas in the southern part of the island. *13 Jalan Subak Sari, Pantai Berawa, Canggu; 62-361/844-6392; doubles from \$185.*

Bali: World's Best Scorecard

No. 2 island overall
 No. 1 island in Asia

Hotel

Amandari 89.87



Alila Villas Soori Banjar Dukuh, Desa Kelating, Kerambitan, Tabanan; 62-361/894-6388; alilahotels.com; doubles from \$810.

Amandari Kedewatan, Ubud; 800/477-9180; amanresorts.com; doubles from \$850.

Four Seasons Resort Bali at Sayan Ubud; 800/332-3442 or 62-361/977-577; fourseasons.com; doubles from \$460.

Komaneka at Bisma Jalan Bisma, Ubud; 62-361/971-933; komaneka.com; doubles from \$505.

Neka Art Museum Raya Campuhan St., Kedewatan, Ubud; 62-361/975-074; museumneka.com.

Tanah Lot Temple Kediri, Tabanan; 62-361/880-361; tanahlot.net.

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