

The lighter and darker sides of Bali, Asia's fashionable playground

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ASPECTS OF ELEGANCE.

SEMARA ULUWATU

SUSAN HU HEADS TO THE SEASIDE FOR SOME PAMPERING AT A RESORT THAT HAS BECOME LEGENDARY FOR ITS DIVERSITY AND BEAUTY.

IT takes a lot to impress seasoned villa veterans, particularly on an island where villas are as ubiquitous as palm trees and cookie-cutter designs and decor are reproduced *en masse*.

It's not easy to find that perfect combination of architectural refinement, stunning location, peace, privacy, world-class facilities and superior service. Yet Semara Luxury Villa Resort manages to tick all those boxes and offers world-weary travellers unique, flexible and tailored holiday experiences to boot.

With magnificent panoramic ocean views and seven distinctive five-bedroom villas perched on the edge of a cliff and surrounded by lush tropical gardens, Semara Luxury Villa Resort is very much a discerning traveller's dream. Each villa was designed by a different owner, which means they all have their own unique features and ambiance. From the family-friendly Villa Ambar to the wedding-ready Villa Tamarama, party central Villa Santai Sorga, and the peaceful sanctuary of Villa Pawana, there is a villa to suit every taste here.

Spread out along 30-metres of cliff frontage, the sheer size of each property means that there is always space to roam and you are never far from a private corner where you can indulge in a bit of serenity and seclusion. In addition, many of the villas feature multiple levels and suites with private plunge pools, creating the effect of a mini-villa within a villa. This makes the resort the perfect location for families, large groups and special occasions like corporate events, weddings, birthdays and anniversaries.

However, despite the ample proportions, the villas are also ideal for couples and even single travellers. During the low season, Semara offers a special deal where guests can book single rooms within the larger villas of Villa Chintamani and Villa Nora. More often than not, groups who book a single suite will find that they share the common areas with only one other guest or couple. In addition, guests who are seeking only two or three bedrooms can book an entire villa at a special rate (depending on availability) and Semara will simply close off the extra rooms.

Whether you are an extended family, group of friends, a couple or a party of one, Semara tailors the experience to your personal preferences and pampers you plenty. Guests who stay in the suites and villas are treated to charming touches like welcome fruit baskets, daily gourmet breakfasts, complimentary spa sampler packages and complimentary Semara gift packs with aloe vera body and face products. Each villa has its own dedicated butler, and depending upon the package chosen, guests can also have their own personal chef on call or personal drivers for day trips and nights on the town.

In fact, the team at Semara takes pride in going above and beyond to try to create the most memorable experience for each guest. General Manager Janick Couturier says, "We always try to have an open dialogue with our clients before they book so that we can work out exactly what they want and need. We will go over things like group size, events and expectations so that we can find the best fit for each person."

For example, the Semara team may recommend open and airy Villa Ambar for families, as it features interconnecting bedrooms, an optional safety gate for the infinity pool, and a massive entertainment room with long sofas and kid-sized beanbag chairs. For those planning celebrations, Villa Santai Sorga is an ideal choice for its sleek bar with a personal bartender available on request, roomy relaxation lounges and spacious separate bedrooms. Guests arranging corporate escapes and retreats may want to consider booking Villa Nora and Chintamani as they can accommodate up to 20 people and are connected via a garden path.

Much like the villas themselves, the facilities at Semara Luxury Villa Resort are equally diverse. The elegant Selatan Restaurant sits on top of a cliff overlooking the ocean and a deep gorge, and makes for a chic spot to indulge in leisurely lunches and romantic dinners. Next door is the gorgeous spa, also overlooking the ocean and gorge, and a lengthy infinity pool where you can spend the afternoon sunbathing, swimming and soaking up the scenery. For those seeking more active pursuits, there are also tennis courts and a state-of-the-art gym with glass walls offering panoramic views of the sea.

Then, of course, there is the famous Finn's Beach Club. Reached by a purpose-built inclinuator that makes its way down the side of a steep cliff dripping in verdant vegetation, Finn's Beach Club sits on its own private stretch of sand. Guests can opt to relax in the breezy thatched-roof restaurant, enjoy soothing treatments in the open-air massage pavilion or recline on the huge beanbags resting on the sand. It's all too easy to while away the hours here snorkelling and swimming in the crystal clear water, dining on divine pizzas, pastas and grilled seafood, and enjoying sundowner cocktails amidst invigorating ocean breezes.

Definitely not your run-of-the-mill villa experience, Semara Luxury Villa Resort manages to exceed the expectations of even the most cautious travellers. From the exclusive haven of your own private villa to the gourmet dining options, world-class fitness facilities and stunning seaside ambiance of Finn's, this is boutique luxury living at its very finest. 

www.semarauluwatu.com