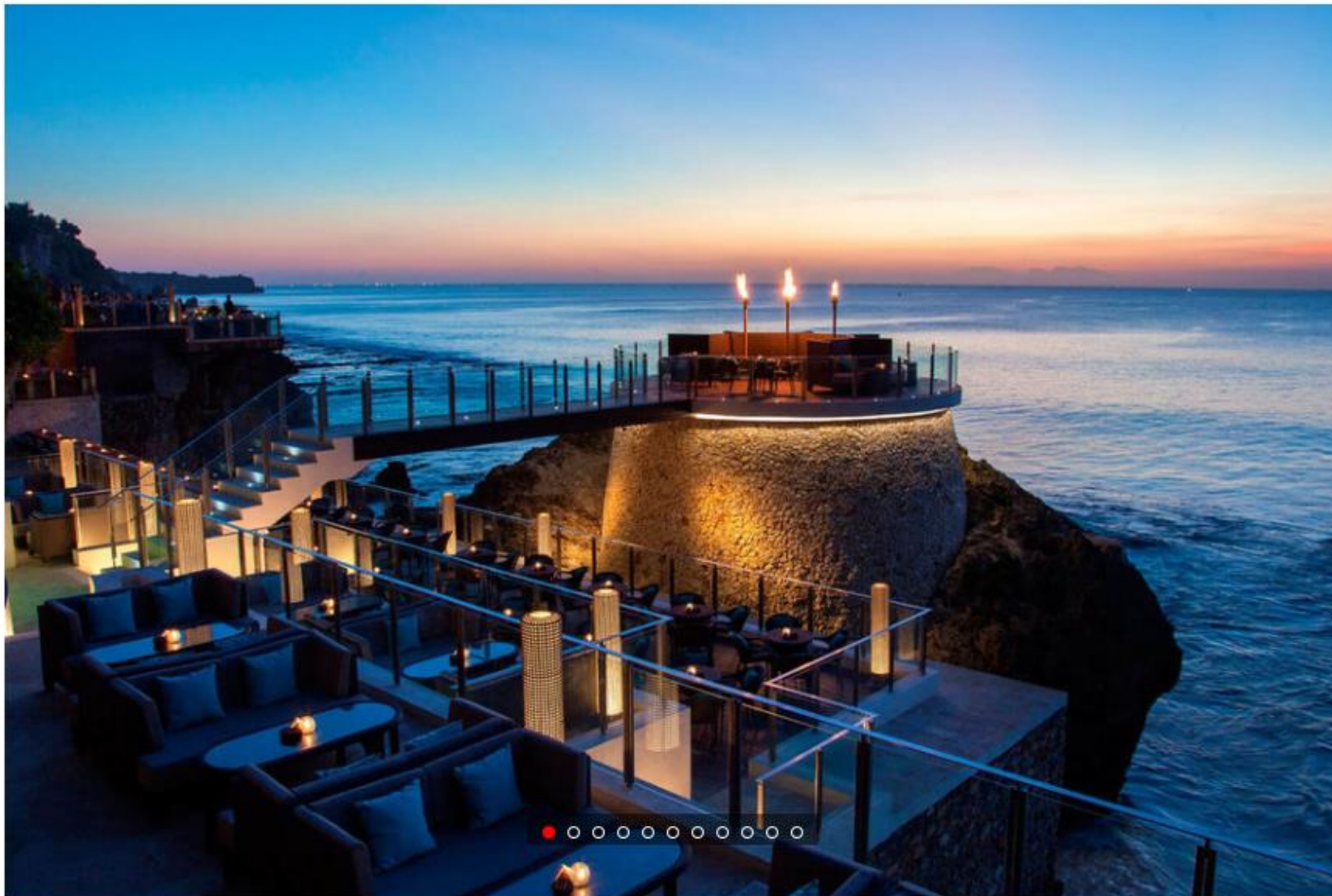


First-Timer's Guide to Bali

There's more to Bali than hedonistic bars and Bintang vests; Andrea Dixon discovers 10 ways to make the most of a trip to the Indonesian island.

Andrea Dixon. Published August 2016



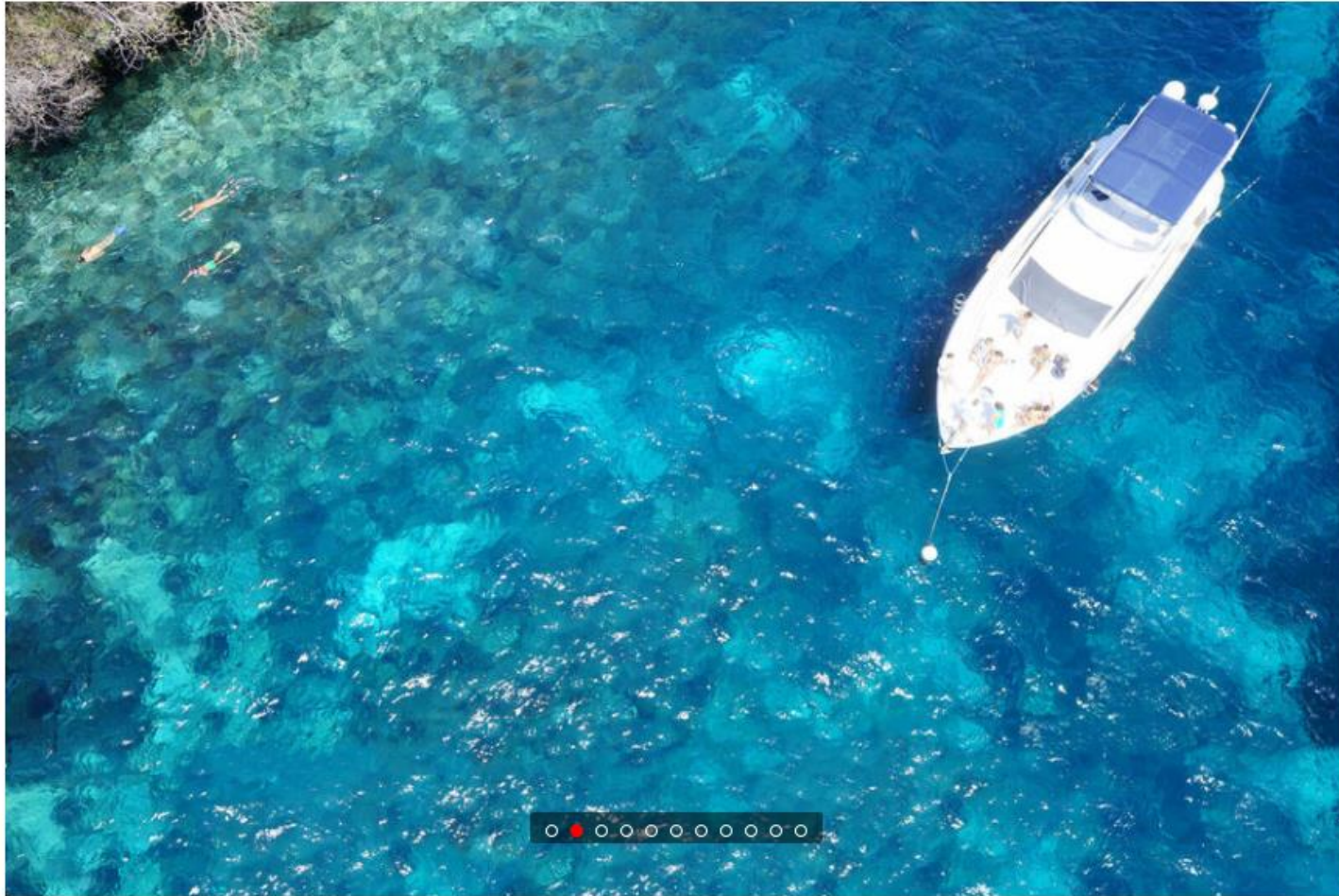
Savour a sundowner or two

Image 1 of 11

For serious cliff-top glamour, visit Ayana Resort's multi-platform bar located 14 metres above the roiling ocean. Stroll through a subterranean limestone grotto to a pathway that leads to a secret garden dramatically suspended over a sandy beach. Book the private jetty for a discreet dinner for two.



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Charter a luxury yacht

Image 2 of 11

Hop aboard the 17.5-metre Italian superyacht Burjuman and find a remote surf break that's yours for the day. Pulau Luxury Charters offers bespoke daytrips throughout the Lesser Sunda Islands or further afield. Tailor a trip for scuba diving, snorkelling, surfing or fishing – or enjoy a catered lunch and Champagne sunset in exclusive privacy.



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Indulge at a wellness retreat

Image 3 of 11

After a blissful massage and luxurious bath at Fivelements, take part in the ancient Agni Hotra fire ceremony to cast out negative thoughts and bad energy. A priest chants holy Sanskrit mantras, strikes a bell and guides devotees through meditation, prayers and offerings of eggs and holy water to a beautiful fire shrouded in flowers.



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Observe a Balinese dance at sunset

Image 4 of 11

Set on a cliff-top in southern Bali, The Istana is a cultural destination where traditional performances are staged on the lawn with a purple and pink sunset as the backdrop. This luxurious escape has a dining room perched on the cliff with unrivalled views of the glittering sea. Kids get their own wing.



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Fly over an active volcano

Image 5 of 11

For an unforgettable experience, fly over Bali's 28,500-year-old active volcano, Gunung Batur, and its stunning crater lake, Danau Batur, in a four-seat helicopter. Swoop over high ridges, spotting steam flowing out of vents and ancient lava flows. This memory-making flight with Bali Adventure Sky Tours, direct from Ubud, takes in the coast, agricultural villages and Bali's famous rice paddies.



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Make yourself at home in a bamboo palace

Image 6 of 11

Enter Sharma Springs through an enormous bamboo tube that leads to a six-level bamboo house tucked into a river valley with dreamy forest views. Marvel at how black-and-white Indonesian bamboo has been transformed into amazingly luxurious architecture that is family-friendly and functional. A sight to behold.



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Kick back and enjoy Bali's serene heart

Image 7 of 11

Exquisitely restored antique Indonesian houses are scattered throughout Permata Ayung, a vast estate near Ubud that has private rice terraces, a grand piano and underground tunnels. Dining by the river is as divine as having a massage in the lounge pod suspended over the water. Frangipanis scent the bedrooms and peacocks roam the gardens. It's little wonder that Donna Karan is a regular guest.



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Cycle into the past

Image 8 of 11

Witness the centuries-old traditional lifestyle of Balinese villages on a 26-kilometre cycle tour from Kintamani, at the foot of Gunung Batur, to Ubud. Led by Bali Adventure Tours, riders swing through verdant groves, Bali's famous rice fields and fruit farms and pass ancient temples. An expert guide offers insider knowledge about island life.



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The perfect pool in breathtaking mountains

Image 9 of 11

Inhale the exquisite mountain air from Padma Resort Ubud's outlandishly beautiful infinity pool. Walk through a glass-top tunnel to chill out on the decks that flank this cool pool (which, by the way, is heated when the elevated air becomes too fresh). The serene view has calming powers that feel almost sacred. Daytrippers are welcome.



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Attract good karma

Image 10 of 11

Karma Beach Club is located on a crescent of white sand lapped by the azure sea. The Ibiza-style tone is accentuated by the funky tunes emanating from decks manned by touring DJs. This “barefoot chic” destination has aquatic gear for the active, while cocktails and nibbles are delivered to the sun lounges for the indolent.



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