



AMPERSAND'S TRAVELS..

Top 10 Luxury Lombok

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Ampersand has recently returned from a research tour of [Lombok](#) & the [Gili Islands](#) and have one thing to say: GO NOW! Lombok is like [Bali](#) was 25 years ago: wonderfully relaxed and ravishingly beautiful. Now is the 'sweet spot' in the luxury tourism cycle of the island – the perfect moment in time to visit. Luxury has arrived (more of that below) but authenticity remains and, crucially, it does not yet feel spoilt and overrun if you choose your spot wisely.

We highly recommend visiting the Gili Islands – as often as you can – but do not stay here. There are currently no hotels on the Gili Islands we would recommend to an Ampersand client; some are billed as ‘luxury’ but they are not. Far better to stay somewhere fantastic on Lombok and take a 10 minute private speed boat to the Gili Islands for day trips. Enjoy world-class scuba diving and snorkelling, stop for lunch at a local eatery or enjoy a private picnic, then return to the lap of luxury on Lombok!

Lombok ticks all the boxes for a charming and rustic beach break, but you can forget what you remember from your backpacking days – she now rivals Bali for first-class style and service. Luxurious options are popping up in the northwest, specifically in Malimbu and the Sira Peninsula, which has a remarkably innocent and untrampled vibe. You have white sandy beaches, cows strolling idly through coconut groves, sweet local villages with mosques humming with the call to prayer. You’ve got sunset views over Mount Agung in Bali, sunrise views of Lombok’s own volcano, Mount Rinjani, and the Gili Islands within grasping distance.

There is also something very exciting happening at the exact opposite end of Lombok island: an incredible new eco retreat on the remote south-eastern peninsula set on one of the most beautiful beaches we’ve ever seen...



Here are Ampersand's Top 10 Luxury Lombok properties:

1. Ibiza-chic with an Asian twist... **Lombok Lodge** [9 room hotel]
2. Ampersand's favourite family villa... **Sira Beach House** [6 bedroom villa]
3. Eco-retreat in the unspoilt southeast... **Jeeva Beloam Beach Camp** [11 room resort]
4. Cliffside James Bond villa... **Malimbu Cliff Villa** [4 bedroom villa]
5. Ethnic boho-boutique... **Hotel Tugu Lombok** [18 room resort]
6. Homely tropical paradise... **The Anandita** [4 bedroom villa]
7. Austin Powers, eat your heart out!... **Villa Sapi** [5 bedroom villa]
8. Charming (& affordable) all-rounder... **Jeeva Klui** [35 room resort]
9. The perfect wedding venue... **Sepoi Sepoi** [5 bedroom villa]
10. Classic Oberoi: service, style, space (& no surprises!)... **The Oberoi Lombok**[50 rooms, 32 villas]

THE ANANDITA LOMBOK

The Anandita is the embodiment of "tropical paradise". It is a fantastic four bedroom villa shrouded in luscious gardens and colourful flowers – frangipani, bougainvillea and towering palm trees – backing on to a white sand beach with sunset views of Mount Agung in Bali. The villa has a stunning curvy swimming pool with several shaded alcoves to lie in and read your book. The pool links straight into a cool living room with a pool table, funky lights and oversized Asian furniture. The dining room is a breezy pavilion decorated with statues, which looks out over the gardens and the lily pond. There is also a beachside balé for sunbathing, cocktails or candlelit beach BBQs.

The Anandita feels very much like a home away from home and staff are exceedingly warm and friendly; Gusti, the villa manager, is a ray of sunshine. He can take guests snorkelling and kayaking offshore from the villa or cycling through nearby local villages and fishing markets. If required, he can also accompany guests to the Gili Islands, or arrange for a private boat to take them snorkelling, diving and fishing at Gili Meno with a beach picnic on Gili Air, just 5 minutes away by speed boat. The property is situated right next door to Hosaido golf course.

"To my mind, the greatest reward and luxury of travel is to be able to experience everyday things as if for the first time, to be in a position in which almost nothing is so familiar it is taken for granted." - Bill Bryson

MALIMBU CLIFF VILLA

LOMBOK

This luxury four-bedroom villa is a fantastic choice for those who want total seclusion, utterly sublime views and chic, contemporary interiors. The villa is fully staffed with a villa manager, chef, butler and several housekeepers to look after you throughout your stay. Hugging a grassy hillside above Lombok's dramatic, virtually untouched western coastline, Malimbu Cliff Villa has an 18-metre infinity pool that appears to drop straight into the ocean, a terrace to watch the sun set each evening, a master bedroom with its own pool balcony, seaview bathtubs and vibrant pieces of art scattered throughout the house.

Arranged over three levels, every room in this villa makes the most of the ocean views. Guests enter the villa at the uppermost level where there is a lobby, the huge master suite and one of the three guest bedrooms. Cream terrazzo stairs leads down to the ground floor, where two guest bedrooms are situated on either side of an open-plan living, dining and kitchen area that overlooks the swimming pool and terrace. On the villa's lower level, accessed via a spiral staircase, is a children's playroom – which is bound to excite them! It's all very James Bondesque.

As the villa is located at the top of the cliff, there is no direct beach access, but there are several nice beaches within a few minutes drive (the villa rate includes a car with driver) and the world-class dive sites of the Gili islands are just 15 minutes away by boat.

"Travel, in the younger sort, is part of education; in the elder, a part of experience."
- Francis Bacon

VILLA SAPI

LOMBOK

Austin Powers, eat your heart out! The five-bedroom Villa Sapi is a masterpiece of design backed by white sand Sira Beach with its sensational sunset views. Prestigious neighbours in the area include the Lombok Golf Kosaido Country Club, Hotel Tugu and The Oberoi, and it is located just 10 minutes from the Gili Islands by speed boat. The villa is filled with conceptual artwork, funky furniture and curved structures which feel very 60s. The villa has three swimming pools plus a children's pool, a stand-alone two-bedroom guesthouse and a tennis court.

Canadian architect David Lombardi's concept of 'Function over Form' leaves Villa Sapi's guests with a sense of surprise at every twist and turn: there is a grass-roofed building that

houses the main kitchen, a futuristic home theatre and a white sculpture in the coconut grove garden which, in huge black letters, suggests that we should 'Stop Making Sense.' A team of staff is on hand at Villa Sapi to provide gourmet cuisine and attentive service (the villa's manager, chef and head butler were all previously employed by The Oberoi Hotel Group, which says it all). A wide range of activities are available to villa guests, including golf, snorkelling, diving, waterfall hikes and mountain trekking, cooking classes, cycling and day trips to the nearby Gili Islands.

"Like all great travellers, I have seen more than I remember, and remember more than I have seen." - Benjamin Disraeli