

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

the yak

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INDULGE

Katie Truman lurches into luxurious living at Villa Windu Asri and B Villas.

VILLA WINDU ASRI

OPENED in July 2014, magnificent new kid on the block, Villa Windu Asri brings a distinctively new style and concept to Bali villa living. Promoted as "Raffles Style" luxury, Villa Windu Asri is a palatial six-bedroom residence – part of an exclusive two-villa garden enclave, secluded in the sleepy depths of Petitenget's Complex Villa Lumbung, gated estate.

This impressive all-white residence sets the scene, entered via an inner courtyard, dominated by a beaten-copper fountain, leading on to a formal reception area. Windu Asri then wows with classic colonial-era design and ambiance, evoking a bygone Far East, with Raffles-style architectural grandeur and decorative detail. Four separate wings framing a rectangular pool conjure colonial splendour with imposing white stone colonnades and balconies and verandas furnished with potted palms and white cane lounge chairs.

Residential interiors are beautifully turned out with recurring turquoise soft furnishings and warm nut-brown woods, polished marble floors and art deco lighting. The Australian owners have meticulously sourced artefacts and art pieces to further reinforce the nostalgia – like the omnipresent blue and white ceramic urns, and vintage cruise liner posters and travellers' trunks. Fast-forward to the 21st century with latest technology installed throughout, including Sonos sound system, 60-inch LED TV screen in the Media Room, gleaming steel kitchen and well-equipped gym.

Asri's 600-square metre property, full facilities and six-bedroom suites make for a fabulous island retreat accommodating 12 guests; extended families and groups of friends can take over the entire residence for themselves, at an exclusive-use villa rate from USD1,195. The "comfort and ambiance of a private home with luxury boutique hotel service" concept comes packaged with a dedicated team, including manager, butlers, chef and security guard.

All six suites – four in the residence main wing – are similar in size and offer the same high standards; luxuriously appointed but homely with thick pile rugs, heavy drapes and four-poster beds. Bathrooms are elegant with stained glass windows, art deco mirrors and vintage-style Kohler fixtures, including a claw-foot bathtub. The cute poolside wing, housing two interconnecting suites with open-air bathrooms, offers extra privacy and informality, especially for young families. Asri provides ample space for individuals seeking seclusion; running alongside the 13-metre pool and broad sundeck, a chic pavilion divided into built-in daybeds and elevated cushioned sofas.

Evenings, Asri comes into its own, with the white buildings illuminated by coach





lanterns and the pool a deep shade of lapis lazuli. Even if you're lured out to the neighbourhood's world-class restaurants, be sure to congregate for pre-dinner cocktails in the Outdoor Living Pavilion. Surveying the pool, the villa's sumptuous social hub is simultaneously open-air informal and utter refinement; high ceilinged with striking art works, eclectic *objets* and a lounge corner of sofas, ottomans and plantation chairs. Adjacent, the immaculately polished dining table is matched in length by a spectacular art deco lantern. Cocktails are concocted by butlers at the built-in bar (mango daiquiri, recommended) accompanied by tapas . . . smoking jackets optional. Chef Anik's culinary prowess however may entice you to occasionally dine in-house; extensive villa menus include shared group dining covering anything from Italian, Indian and Balinese feasts to seafood barbecues. Next morning, return for endearingly formal full-on breakfasts, included in room rates.

Windu Asri is essentially a holiday bolt hole where friends and family can chill out together in privacy and luscious space. It's also family-friendly, providing everything from trusted baby sitters and removable pool fence to WiFi-enacted baby monitors. This lavish beauty also makes the ultimate in one-upmanship for anniversaries, birthdays, wedding parties and formal small-scale events (sit-down dinners accommodate 24 guests).

If your group is too large for Windu Asri, book the sister property, Villa Windu Sari, next door (accessed by an interconnecting garden door) combining to house 20 guests. Windu Sari offers the same villa set-up, but with four-bedrooms and traditionally constructed in teakwood for a contrasting rustic experience. Currently undergoing a facelift after seven years, Windu Sari re-launches this April.

www.winduvillas.com