

10 reasons Canggu is Bali's new epicentre of cool

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It's a little pocket of quiet and cool that's been dubbed the 'Bondi of Bali' but you'll need to get in quick. Check out 10 reasons why Canggu is Bali's new hip epicentre.

1. TEMPLE OF ENTHUSIASM

It's an Italian restaurant. A cocktail bar. A surfboard shaper and shop. A hip urban haberdashery. A barbershop. A motorcycle workshop and showroom. A film production company. A skate bowl. An outdoor event space with live music on Sundays.

The Temple of Enthusiasm is all these things and more – a centre of creativity and design credited with triggering the gentrification of Canggu. “It was a bit of a risky move when we opened here five years ago. There was nothing but rice fields,” general manager Arthur Perrin says. “But then a lot of expats moved here and started building villas, and all these bars and cafes popped up. Now Canggu is pumping.”

deuscustoms.com/flagships/temple-of-enthusiasm



Deus' Temple of Enthusiasm in Canggu. Picture: Deus ex Machina.

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2. NATASHA GAN

The Temple of Enthusiasm may have kicked off Canggu's gentrification, yet the flame is now being carried by local entrepreneurs such as Natasha Gan.

A fashion designer from Sydney whose eponymous range of womenswear, activewear and kidswear hangs in more than 80 boutiques around Australia, Gan, who's now based in Bali, also has four of her own boutiques in her adopted island home: two in Seminyak, one in Nusa Dua and a new store that opened in August on Jalan (street) Batu Bolong.

"There's so much happening in Canggu right now, so many hot young people from all over the world," Gan says. "It's the Bondi Beach of Bali."

www.natashagan.com.au



The cool Canggu street scene. Picture: Ian Neubauer

3. THE CANGGU CLUB

Imagine a country club with a pool, tennis courts, a spa, a gym, bar and restaurant that puts on awesome Sunday roasts. Now imagine a sports centre with ovals, a trampoline park, tenpin bowling, ice-cream van and a water park. Now imagine all these facilities rolled into one – or see it in real time at the The Cangu Club.

“Sports fields are uncommon in Bali so people on holidays love letting their kids run around and play,” says CEO Kelly Sturgeon from Melbourne. “But the real attraction is the water park. We have trained lifeguards and the floor plan was designed to give maximum visibility from anywhere in the park. That’s one of the comments we get from parents ... they can relax knowing their kids are OK.”

canguclub.com



The awesome Cangu Club. Picture: Ian Neubauer

4. VILLA CANGGU

Hidden behind towering whitewashed walls in a quiet little dead-end street 100m from the beach is Villa Canggu – Bali’s ultimate party pad.

The complex has three swimming pools, indoor and outdoor dining areas, six master bedrooms with soaring ceilings, eye-catching metallic sculptures, thought-provoking paintings, a state-of-the-art surround-sound system guests can control via their smartphones plus a small army of staff: drivers, chefs, maids, babysitters and masseuses. Villa Canggu is available in two, four and six-bedroom configurations with low-season rates starting from \$360 a night, includes family passes to the Canggu Club.

elitehavens.com



The seriously hip Villa Canggu. Picture: Ian Neubauer

5. SILICON BALI

After making his fortune in software, Perth whiz-kid Michael Craig moved to Bali to surf, party and eat coconuts. When that got boring he opened Dojo Bali, a co-working space in Canggu where locals, expatriates and tourists alike drop in to use office facilities for only \$12 a day.

In addition to high-speed Wi-Fi, Skype booths and meeting rooms, Dojo Bali – aka Silicon Bali – has a swimming pool, sundeck, showers and smoothie bar.

“This place is full of techies and coders but you’d never guess it because most of them are barefoot in board shorts,” Craig says.

dojobali.org

6. THE SHADY SHACK BALI

Bali’s health-food movement was born in the hills of Ubud but it’s come of age in Canggu, where offerings include Avocado Cafe, the organic eatery of Motion Fitness boot camp, and Green Garden Cafe, Bali’s home of raw lasagne. Yet the undisputed “it” place for healthy eaters in Canggu is The Shady Shack, a vegetarian cafe set in a rustic plantation house and courtyard shaded by mango trees with rice-field views.

“Vegetarian restaurants have taken off in Canggu because the people who come here are into healthy pursuits like surfing and yoga,” says chef Justin Masters from Perth. Masters’ speciality is veggie bowls – deep wholesome dishes packed with Indian, Mediterranean and Japanese flavours.

facebook.com/theshadyshackbali

7. THE PRACTICE

Set in a village-like environment with bamboo walls, little gardens and pathways and dreamy rice-field views, The Practice is more than just another yoga studio. It’s a university of yoga. There are classes for beginners, yoga master classes, yoga teaching workshops and yoga dance lessons led by an eclectic group of Australian yogis and visiting yoga gurus from the four corners of the world. “I don’t care about your hollow-back handstand. I don’t care about how many followers you have on your Instagram account,” says co-founder Octavio Salvado of Melbourne. “All I care about is yoga.”

thepracticebali.com

8. BATU BOLONG BEACH

Canggu has 8km of coastline, including legendary surf spot Echo Beach immortalised in the 1979 hit song of the same name by Martha and the Muffins. Today, the action is centred 500m to the south of Echo at Batu Bolong Beach. More than just another tourist hot spot, Batu Bolong Beach is a thriving multi-use, multicultural zone where wiry old fishermen scavenge shellfish in rock pools, Hindu worshippers in white robes leave offerings at temples and Aussie and Balinese children run into the surf forging friendships and memories to last a lifetime.

9. HOTEL TUGU

Set between two Hindu temples on Batu Bolong Beach where a 500-year-old stone bowl priests used to sprinkle holy water over sick villagers was discovered by archeologists, Tugu is part-boutique hotel, part-museum housing Indonesia's largest private collection of fine art and antiquities.

The lobby is crowned by an epic statue of the garuda, a humanoid bird from Hindu mythology. The signature Japanese-fusion restaurant, Ji, is set in a 310-year-old Chinese temple from Java that was dismantled, shipped and reassembled in Bali, while the ancient stone bowl sits in a glass display box at reception.

The hotel has only 21 suites, set in traditional wooden stilt houses, and two villas made entirely of coral.

Private, lavish and romantic, the rooms are set in a lush water garden exploding with beautifully curated details cut straight from a fairytale: winding stone pathways, lily ponds crisscrossed with footbridges, moss-covered statues and shrines, little waterfalls, pools and shaded pavilions.

tuguhotels.com

Part-museum, part-hotel - Hotel Tugu. Picture: Ian Neubauer

10. FINNS BEACH CLUB

Assuming pole position on Berawa Beach on Canggu's southern flank, Finns is Bali's hottest new sunset spot. There's a cacophony of chill-out zones: a sprawling deck with beanbags, umbrellas and double daybeds, an open-air bamboo dining area on the second floor and clever circular west-facing pool with a sunken bar.

Entry is free and non-discriminatory: from hipsters drowning in tattoos, to parents with toddlers, to leather-skinned grey nomads, everybody's welcome at Finns.

finnsbeachclub.com



Finns Beach Club is the place for sunset watchers.

<http://www.escape.com.au/world/asia/10-reasons-canggu-is-balis-new-epicentre-of-cool/news-story/00d76cc0a4255ed08b9f98db7754b324>