



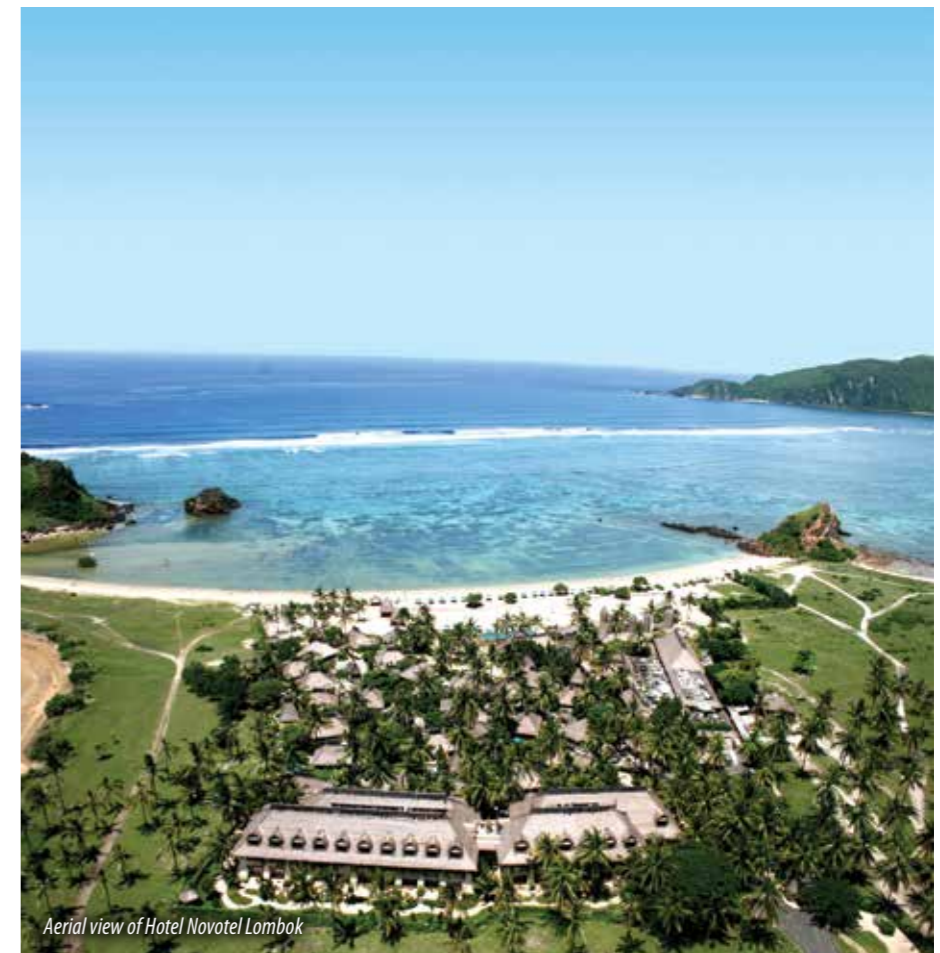
Devdan

### WHAT ELSE IS NEW TO BALI?

Just down the road from Nusa Dua Theatre, BIMC Hospital opened mid 2012. With a dedicated CosMedic Centre, BIMC caters to a growing medical tourism trend where travellers combine medical procedures with their holiday. Internationally managed BIMC offers dental care and dialysis treatment as well as surgical and non-surgical cosmetic procedures. Teaming up with nearby Courtyard by Marriot, the hotel assists with aftercare, co-ordinating visits by BIMC Hospital nurses. Additionally, the entire hotel and grounds are wheelchair friendly.

### ISLAND INFRASTRUCTURE

Anyone who has visited Bali in the past year would have noticed 'under construction' signs seemingly everywhere. Many building sites are nearing completion with a plethora of hotel openings. Anantara Uluwatu Resort, Samsara Inn Kuta, The Mulia Nusa Dua and Stones Resort Legian have all recently opened. Mantra Nusa Dua with a swanky fitness club, indoor/outdoor pool, with a swanky spa and wellness facility opens Dec 2012. Le Meridien Bali Jimbaran with its 1300sq metre lagoon pool, yoga studio and separate kid's pool opens Jan 2013. Nusa Dua's Samabe Resort & Villas (five star luxury, all inclusive) opens March 2013. Starwood



Aerial view of Hotel Novotel Lombok

## I've been to Bali too

Most of us have. FIONA HARPER explores how Bali is constantly coming up with new reasons to return over and over.

**I CONFESS THAT** I wasn't thrilled at receiving an invitation to attend Bali's Nusa Dua Theatre for a performance of *Devdan - Treasures of the Archipelago*. Having visited Bali so many times I've actually lost count, I had seen my share of cultural performances that mostly left me slightly underwhelmed. The extraordinary Devdan performance

however had me absolutely enthralled. Tightly choreographed dance that blends traditional with modern, even a touch of hip hop and emotive sultry aerial dances absolutely steal the show. Woven through a narrative that has two children on a journey of discovery, the audience is transported across Indonesia, dropping into Bali, Sumatra, Java Borneo

and Papua in a dramatic fusion of street entertainment, traditional dance and circus arts. A sort of Cirque du Soleil meets Indonesia, if you like.

The performance is typical of Bali's tourism industry that is constantly re-inventing itself in order to keep travellers coming back, particularly those regulars from Australia and New Zealand.

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Bali Intl Airport check in counters

are opening Sheraton Kuta Resort and The Westin Ubud in early 2013, and the Regent Bali is an all-suite Sanur beachfront hotel opening March 2013. Showing enormous investor confidence, Best Western has plans to open 25 new hotels across Indonesia in the next three years.

The under construction signs will likely remain in place at Ngurah Rai International Airport for a little longer, creating a somewhat chaotic welcome to Bali. Pegged to open in time for the Miss World 2013 Pageant events in September, closely followed by the APEC Summit in October, a transit hotel and shopping complex will form part of the new fully air-conditioned international terminal. Improved road access and automatic baggage handling

#### New Hotels: Recent Openings (late 2012)

Anantara Uluwatu Resort  
Samsara Inn Kuta  
The Mulia Nusa Dua  
Stones Resort Legian

#### New Hotels: Opening Soon

Mantra Nusa Dua – Dec 2012  
Sheraton Bali Kuta Resort – Dec 2012  
Le Meridien Bali Jimbaran – Jan 2013  
Samabe Resort & Villas Nusa Dua – March 2013  
The Westin Ubud – March 2013  
Regent Bali Sanur – March 2013

systems are also included in the expansion project. Tiresome immigration queues and long waits for baggage upon arrival should hopefully become a thing of the past.

Garuda Indonesia adopted a winning strategy to avoid arrival blues early in 2012 with onboard visa processing on Sydney to Denpasar flights. In announcing a codeshare

agreement with Etihad Airways, Garuda says they will expand this service to all Australian Bali-bound flights following the trial's success.

#### WORK IT

Holiday workshops seem to be popping up all over the place with Casa Luna Cooking School in Ubud, seducing aspiring cooks



Novotel Lombok pool villa

since the late 1980's, leading the way. Those heady floral aromas that seem to permeate the air can be bottled by visitors attending perfume-making workshops. At Ayana Resort's L'Atelier Parfums & Creations studio, the only one of its kind in Indonesia, guests create their own unique blend using traditional French processes and utilising raw materials matched to individual personalities. The Ubud Writers & Readers Festival is celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2013 which should amount to a literary feast taking over the streets of Ubud from 2 - 6 October.

#### ISLAND TIME

A mere 20 minutes by air from Bali lies the island of Lombok with its swanky new Lombok Praya International Airport, which opened last year. On the south coast farmers herd their cattle through village streets of Kuta which is dotted with a handful of simple cafes and losmens on the beach run by entrepreneurial locals offering transport to nearby surf breaks. Designed around a traditional Sasak village, the beachfront Novotel Lombok sits at one end of Kuta. A sort of 'Sasak culture meets the Flintstones', distinctive architecture incorporates soaring roofs made of thatched grass, weathered timbers, natural stones so that it's difficult to distinguish where the resort ends and the beach begins.

Also on the south coast of Lombok is the brand new Jeeva Beloma Beach Camp, a Robinson Crusoe type experience with elegant benefits. Strong on environmental credentials, a holistic approach utilises local fishermen and farmers to supply fresh produce, while guests bed down in timber camp houses perched above the sandy beach overlooking Alas Strait.

Visit Indonesia Tourism Office has identified 16 priority destinations to be developed in coming years with Lombok and Bali's northern and southern coast's to feature. With the backing of a well-funded marketing campaign in 2013, local tourism operators are rolling out the welcome mat for travellers looking for Indonesian adventures beyond traditionally popular Balinese centres.

Those of us who grew up with 80's music will recall boppy Redgum's anthem-like I've been to Bali Too. Given Bali's appealing culture, entertainment, proximity and downright affordability, gather a group of friends together and it's a fair bet the majority have indeed been to Bali. With Bali tourism operators continuing to offer enticing reasons to return, our prolonged love affair with our Indonesian neighbour looks likely to continue.

*Fiona Harper was a guest of Nusa Dua Theatre Bali.*

#### MORE INFO

Devdan – Treasures of the Archipelago [www.devdanshow.com](http://www.devdanshow.com)

BIMC Hospital [www.bimcbali.com](http://www.bimcbali.com)

Anantara Uluwatu Resort & Spa [www.bali-uluwatu.anantara.com](http://www.bali-uluwatu.anantara.com)

Samsara Inn Kuta [www.samsarainn.com](http://www.samsarainn.com)

The Mulia Nusa Dua [www.themulia.com](http://www.themulia.com)

Stones Resort Legian [www.marriott.com.au](http://www.marriott.com.au)

Mantra Nusa Dua [www.mantra.com.au](http://www.mantra.com.au)

Le Meridien Jimbaran Bay [www.starwoodhotels.com](http://www.starwoodhotels.com)

Samabe Resort & Villas Nusa Dua [www.samabe.com](http://www.samabe.com)

Sheraton Kuta Resort [www.starwoodhotels.com](http://www.starwoodhotels.com)

The Westin Ubud [www.starwoodhotels.com](http://www.starwoodhotels.com)

Regent Bali [www.regenthotels.com](http://www.regenthotels.com)

Best Western [www.bestwestern.com](http://www.bestwestern.com)

Garuda Indonesia [www.garuda-indonesia.com](http://www.garuda-indonesia.com)

Casa Luna Cooking School [www.casalunabali.com](http://www.casalunabali.com)

AYANA Resort & Spa [www.ayanaresort.com](http://www.ayanaresort.com)

Ubud Writers and Readers Festival [www.ubudwritersfestival.com](http://www.ubudwritersfestival.com)

Novotel Lombok [www.novotel.com](http://www.novotel.com)

Jeeva Beloaam Beach Camp [www.secret-retreats.com](http://www.secret-retreats.com)



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