

STAR TURN

Mandapa, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, in Ubud. Opposite: Da Maria.

BALI'S NEW WAVE

The restaurant and hotel scene on Australia's favourite holiday island has never been more exciting and Australian chefs, owners and restaurateurs are leading the charge, writes *Samantha Coomber*.

PHOTOGRAPHY PRUE RUSCOE





“I’ve been to Bali, too” the shirts used to say. Today it might as well be “My other restaurant is in Bali”. Australian restaurateurs are turning out on the island in force – not for the quick buck, but for the long haul.

“I love Bali, but especially now that the restaurant and entertainment scene is becoming increasingly sophisticated,” says Maurice Terzini, who opened his first overseas venture in the Balinese hotspot of Petitenget in November. The force behind Bondi’s Icebergs Dining Room & Bar and Da Orazio Pizza & Porchetta and The Dolphin in Surry Hills is the latest in a conga line of Australian chefs and restaurateurs dreaming big in Bali. Frank Camorra opened MoVida Bali last year, Melbourne chef Geoff Lindsay opened Saigon Street in 2015, and before that came Robert Marchetti (Double-Six hotel), Will Meyrick (Sarong, Mama San) and Adrian Reed (Motel Mexicola).

“Coming here in the 1980s, Bali was essentially a party island, but it’s now evolved as a serious culinary destination,” says Terzini, “and I’m ready to be part of that growth.”

Also in Petitenget, the Balinese outpost of MoVida occupies the lobby of Katamama, a landmark boutique hotel opened last year in the wildly popular Potato Head Beach Club complex. “We’re actively avoiding the Bali clichés,” says Ronald Akili, the 35-year-old co-founder and CEO of Jakarta-based PTT Family, which owns hotels, restaurants and Potato Head properties in Hong Kong, Singapore, Jakarta and Bali. “We’re looking at representing a modern Indonesian style that my generation can identify with through

design, art, cultural practices, food.” The group’s new restaurant, Kaum Bali, which studiously looks to indigenous recipes and produce from across the vast Indonesian archipelago, marks another new direction in Bali hospitality. It’s in our guide to some of the best new eating, drinking and lodging experiences on the island.

EAT

DA MARIA

Da Maria’s cool blue-and-white palette and geometric styling was inspired by 1960s courtyard restaurants on the Amalfi Coast and the work of legendary Italian designer Giò Ponti. It’s Maurice Terzini’s vision of a modern Italian osteria-pizzeria-bar in a tropical setting, designed by Carl Pickering, of Rome-based Lazzarini Pickering Architects. Three tiled fountains sit beneath chandeliers and a ceiling – dubbed “Bali’s Sistine Chapel” by Pickering – hand-painted with Ponti-inspired motifs and studded with skylights. The modern regional-Italian menu focuses on simple, classic flavours and locally sourced produce. “Flavours my parents would recognise, but food they wouldn’t cook,” says Terzini: expect porchetta, wood-grilled seafood and Neapolitan-inspired pizze made with dough fermented for 24 hours and baked in lava-stone ovens. Open for dinner nightly and brunch Sunday, its gears change after 10pm to late-night drinking, pizza and dancing, with DJs spinning “house music for holiday people”, and the busy front bar mixing house-made spirits and Campari-based blends. *Open daily 5pm-2am, brunch Sunday 11am-3pm. 170 Jalan Petitenget, Petitenget, +62 822 3773 3099, damariabali.com*

KAUM BALI

The menu is part culinary treasure hunt, part delicious ethnographic research project drawing on recipes and cooking techniques from some of Indonesia’s 600-plus ethnic groups. Kaum’s brand director Lisa Virgiano and chef Antoine Audran have worked closely with remote communities and small-scale farmers for the past four years to ensure the ingredients are as authentic as the recipes; an Acehese dish such as gulai udang Aceh, for instance, has prawn, okra and plantain cooked in a sauce based on fresh curry leaves grown in the remote western province. Kaum, meaning “tribe” in Bahasa Indonesian, opened in October on the first floor of Potato Head Beach Club. Expect communal dining and big flavours: the likes of a traditional central Javanese coconut-based soup called bobor daun kelor, studded with snake gourd and moringa leaves and served in a whole coconut, say, and an array of fresh regional sambals – we particularly like the version originating in Kalimantan that’s made from roasted black kluwak nuts and mixed-chilli relish. *Open daily noon-4pm and 5pm-midnight. Potato Head Beach Club, 51b Jalan Petitenget, Seminyak, +62 361 300 7990, kaum.com*

SUNDAYS BEACH CLUB

Set on an idyllic private beach at the base of 150-metre cliffs near The Ungasan Clifftop Resort, the former Finns Beach Club has a new name and new tree house-style bales for oceanfront massages. But otherwise Sundays retains the laid-back vibe that has made this five-year-old venue so popular. A day pass includes the use of towels, WiFi, bean bags, sunbeds, water-sport gear and a food and drink credit. The revamped all-day menu covers well-made Asian

staples (nasi goreng, tom yum), considered comfort food (beef rendang calzone, barramundi tacos) and cocktails and wine served in a Robinson Crusoe-style bar and restaurant. Stay for dinner under the stars and to toast s’mores around the bonfire. *Open daily 9am-10pm; day passes \$30 adults, \$5 children three to 11, free under three. Jalan Pantai Selatan Gau, Ungasan, +62 811 833 1320, sundaysbeachclub.com*

JUNGLE FISH

Imagine a beach club without a beach and minus the ocean. High above Ubud’s Osh River, in the boutique Chapung Se Bali Resort & Spa, is Jungle Fish, aka the “No-Beach Beach Club”. It has a split-level restaurant and bar, and an adjoining infinity pool and deck populated by cabanas and hanging daybeds, surrounded by jungle and with the requisite breezy, relaxed vibe of a beach club. The all-day menu lists modern pan-Asian and Mediterranean dishes based on produce from the hotel’s organic gardens, such as Greek lamb wraps, Thai fish burgers and pandan crème brûlée. Linger over long breakfasts, lunches and spa treatments by day, and evening poolside snacks. Or head upstairs to refined Di Abing for an Asian-Med dinner on a candlelit veranda. *Open daily 7.30am-10pm; day passes from \$10 adults, \$5 children six to 12, free under six. Chapung Se Bali Resort & Spa, Jalan Raya Sebal, Keliki, Ubud, +62 361 898 9104, junglefisnbali.com*

SAIGON STREET

Bali’s best Vietnamese is served in this fun dining room with lime-green wood panelling, exposed>

NEW MOVES

Above from left: Sydney restaurateur Maurice Terzini at his new Da Maria in Bali’s Petitenget; Sundays Beach Club.

LIFE’S A BEACH

Clockwise, from left: Da Maria; Sundays Beach Club; Da Maria’s bomboloni, and Antica Margherita pizza.



“In the 1980s, Bali was essentially a party island, but it has now evolved as a serious *culinary destination*.”

brickwork and old-Saigon bamboo birdcages overhead. Opened by Melbourne chef Geoff Lindsay in 2015, Saigon Street has a menu resembling that of its Melbourne sister restaurant, Dandelion, delivering classic regional Vietnamese dishes with twists based on kitchen smarts and local ingredients. Staples such as pho with rare beef sirloin and braised brisket, and bun cha pork patties barbecued on a street-front grill will keep trad fans happy. But it's the Viet-Bali hybrids that stand out: a snack of blue swimmer crabmeat with shredded fresh coconut, chilli and kaffir lime, and tiger prawns rolled in young green rice and deep-fried, served with chilli and lime nuoc cham. Drinks mixed at the long bar lean towards contemporary cocktails blended with seasonal fruits and a Vietnamese twist. The Vietopolitan, for instance, sees triple sec and vodka mixed with fresh dragonfruit juice, and garnished with a cocktail stick of dragonfruit balls on top. *Open daily 11am-1am. 77X Jalan Petitenget, Petitenget, +62 361 897 4007, saigonstreetbali.com*

TAPA POTENTIAL
MoVida Bali in the lobby of Katamama.

MOVIDA BALI

The first international outpost of Frank Camorra's popular Iberian franchise follows the Spanish-style, produce-driven approach of its Melbourne siblings with delicious local adaptations. There's plenty of quality tinned seafood and jamón from Spain, but the crowd-pleasers come from the Josper charcoal oven: a slow-cooked Javanese suckling lamb shoulder, a simple Sumatran-style chicken with a Catalán grilled vegetable salad, and asparagus from Mangu in northern Bali served with romesco. Tapas are a highlight: a custard of sea urchin, migas, seaweed and fish roe served in an eggshell, and Cantabrian anchovy with smoked tomato sorbet atop a paper-thin croûton. In the busy lobby of Katamama (see page 133), MoVida shares the hotel's modern-meets-traditional look, with bare hand-pressed bricks, woven rattan ceiling and mid-century-inspired teak furniture. *Open daily 7am-midnight. Katamama, 51b Jalan Petitenget, Seminyak, +62 361 302 9940, movida.com.au, katamama.com*

JI AT BALE SUTRA

Tugu Bali is no ordinary hotel, and its blazingly red Bale Sutra room housing a reconstructed 300-year-old Chinese temple is no ordinary setting for a hotel restaurant. The boutique museum-hotel fronting Canggu Beach celebrates Balinese and Javanese art and cultural traditions, and its restaurant extends that mission geographically. The place is packed with antiquities and art from Japan, China and Bali – Qing Dynasty paintings, an 18th-century statue of a Balinese goddess of mercy – and the food, too, makes a virtue of East Asian cultural fusion. Prawns cooked with yuzu butter over a charcoal grill are served with wasabi mayonnaise, while chilled soba in a citrus broth is studded with rich salmon belly smoked over rice husks. Sidle up to the kabuki-themed front bar for a flight of sake or cocktails based on local produce (tamarind juice, honey, coconut milk), house-infused spirits and Asian influences seen in the likes of a Kaiso, with seaweed-infused shochu, agave syrup, fresh ginger, grapefruit and lime juice. *Open daily 5pm-midnight. Hotel Tugu Bali, Jalan Pantai Batu Bolong, Canggu, +62 361 473 1701, jiatbalesutra.com*

BLANCO PAR MANDIF

This cutting-edge addition to Ubud's gathering gastronomic heft is the brainchild of Papuan-born chef-restaurateur Mandif M Warokka, best known for his fine-diner Teatro Gastroteque in Seminyak. Opened in June 2015, Blanco is a small glass-encased space seating only eight diners per sitting, the chef's tasting table facing a state-of-the-art open kitchen. Mandif presents a very personal interpretation of Indonesian fine-dining in delicious tasting menus (seven, nine or 13 courses) with quirky platings and carefully considered drinks pairings. Dishes such as

“paddy field escargot” recall the fresh snails that Mandif plucked and ate as a child from rice fields, here minced with herbs and edible flowers. Mie goreng cakalang, a homage to his mother's cooking and the traditional noodle dish, comes as housemade egg noodles and smoked skipjack with a smoked tuna broth poured at the table. *Open Mon-Sat lunch noon-4pm and dinner 6pm and 9pm (bookings essential). Museum Blanco Ubud, Jalan Raya Tjampuhan, Ubud, +62 361 479 2284, blancoparmandif.com*

THE SAYAN HOUSE

Head here for the setting – a Bali-meets-plantation-style mansion with views across rainforest and the Ayung River gorge – and for masterfully executed nikkei cuisine, the first of its kind in Bali. Executive chef Yuki Tagami fuses Japanese, Peruvian and Brazilian influences in the likes of salmon sashimi with sesame dressing, beets, endives, edamame, radish and coriander, and pork ribs with chipotle barbecue sauce on rice flavoured with Japanese yukari shiso. Their Japanese whiskies, best enjoyed at the open-air bar, are among the finest on the island. *Open daily noon-3pm and 5pm-10pm. 70 Jalan Raya Sayan, Sayan, Ubud, +62 361 479 2592, thesayanhouse.com*

ROCK BAR

One of Bali's most photographed bars just got bigger, with deck space now accommodating about 750 people and an open-air dining terrace extending the appeal of sundowners at the base of a cliff face surrounded by ocean. The Med menu favours Greek flavours and focuses on locally sourced seafood – seared lobster with orzo in a rich tomato, ouzo and chilli sauce, for instance, king prawn saganaki, and stuffed and grilled sardines. Team sensational sunset views with cocktails such as Rock My World, kaffir lime leaves spicing the mix of Grand Marnier, vodka, pineapple, lemon and orange, and upbeat sounds from international DJs working an upper VIP deck. *Open daily 4pm-1am (Fri-Sat until 2am). Ayana Resort, Jalan Karang Mas Sejahtera, Jimbaran, +62 361 702 222, yanaresort.com/rockbarbali*

DRINK

AKADEMI

This bar in the lobby of Katamama is a terrazzo bench flanked by 10 stone stools and fitted with twin cocktail-making stations where patrons can mix their own or watch and chat with bartenders as they shake and stir. It's the brainchild of former London barman Dre Masso, a font of knowledge about the use of >

BALI BITES

Clockwise, from below: the pool at Hotel Tugu Bali; Blanco par Mandif's Asinan Jakarta – seasonal fruits and vegetables with rojak sauce, gamishu and spinach crackers and (left) its dining room; Ji at Bale Sutra.





Balinese and archipelago-sourced produce and araks. He's happy to explain the background to his signature cocktails, each based on in-house infusions and indigenous ingredients, and served in artisanal drinking vessels. A case in point is his Roasted Pineapple Mojito, comprising light rum, coconut-flower nectar, pineapple arak, citrus, mint and charred pineapple, seasoned with salt and black pepper and served in a long ceramic beaker. *Open daily 10am-1am. Katamama, 51b Jalan Petitenget, Seminyak, +62 361 302 9999, katamama.com*

AZUL BEACH CLUB

It was only a matter of time before Bali acquired a tiki bar. Azul Beach Club now has the perfect spot to house the island's largest rum collection: a three-storey thatched bamboo pavilion fronting Legian Beach. Helmut Roessler, formerly of Luna2 hotel in Seminyak, applies distinctively Balinese flavours to his rum-based cocktails, drawn from infusions such as rum spiced with cinnamon, vanilla, star anise and black pepper. On his menu are personal interpretations of a Mai Tai, with fresh pineapple and apricot juice, and Mojitos made with Bali's Nusa Cana rum and fresh coconut water. More exotic signatures include Tiki Puka Puka, with white rum, fresh tamarillo cordial, and orange and pineapple juices in an elaborate glass decorated with fresh flowers. *Open daily 7am-late. 2 Jalan Padma, Legian, +62 361 765 759, azulbali.com*

FINNS BEACH CLUB

Relocated from Uluwatu to Canggu's Berawa Beach in June, Finns Beach Club is as laid-back, fun and affordable as ever. And bigger. A bamboo, cathedral-like pavilion houses an all-day (and night) restaurant with a casual menu of healthy breakfasts, wood-fired



pizze and poolside snacks. Out the front, nearest Berawa's crashing waves, is the Surf Bar and beside it an infinity pool and swim-up bar, surrounded by daybeds and bean bags for hire. Peak hour is around sunset, when DJs pick up the tempo (also piped into underwater speakers) and crowds arrive for fruity cocktails and jugs of Pimm's Punch, and an evening menu of antipasti and pasta in the restaurant. Stay to watch night surfing out the front. *Open daily 7am-midnight. Jalan Pantai Berawa, Berawa Beach, Canggu, +62 361 844 6327, finnsbeachclub.com*

DOUBLE-SIX ROOFTOP

Up on the fifth floor of Double-Six Luxury Hotel Seminyak, this is the neighbourhood's highest perch for drinks with views and certainly the biggest – at 1,700 square metres, it's said to be one of Asia's largest rooftop bars. Beyond the entrance, flanked by freshwater garfish circling in tanks, is a huge teak deck with a central bar and a fire-pit grill. Unlike the site's wild predecessor, the now defunct Double-Six Club, this upscale hotel bar is a laid-back, mostly sunset-oriented hang-out with a (relatively) early closing time. Asian-inspired tapas by the hotel's creative food director, Australian Robert Marchetti, suit Indonesian-inspired cocktails such as The Last Markisa, with vodka, vanilla and sparkling wine, shaken with passionfruit sorbet and fresh lime juice. *Open daily 3pm-11pm. Double-Six Luxury Hotel, 66 Double Six Beach, Seminyak, +62 361 734 300, doublesixrooftop.com*

BEACH BAR

It's not much more than a deck in the dunes fronting Alila Seminyak, and it's this simplicity and proximity to Petitenget's pounding surf that accounts for the popularity of the hotel's bar. A breezy soundtrack is the background to the sound of waves crashing

and cocktails shaken. Find a bean bag and the drinks list, which includes 19 reinventions of classic cocktails based on tropical ingredients and house-made syrups, including a chilli-laced Spicy Cha Margarita. The adjoining pool makes for fun day-time chilling, but by sunset the Beach Bar's deck is packed for sunset views and, later, nightcaps by torchlight. *Open daily 11am-11pm. Alila Seminyak, 39 Jalan Taman Ganesha, Petitenget, +62 361 302 1888, alilahotels.com*

STAY

THE UNGASAN CLIFFTOP RESORT

Known until recently as Semara Luxury Villa Resort, this high-luxe property has a new name and direction under its Australian co-owner, Steve Cain. Among its new projects is a two-year collaboration with James Viles, chef-owner of Biota in the New South Wales Southern Highlands, who will be developing menus and training staff. A favourite for celebrity weddings, the resort's location is spectacular, its seven mansion-sized villas strung along the Uluwatu clifftops on the Bukit Peninsula. Each villa has five bedrooms and chic living spaces for groups of up to 10, while couples can spread out in super-sized one-bedroom suites, with access to butlers, drivers, a rebranded spa, helipad, tennis courts, gym and a central infinity pool. Descend via an inclinator to the white-sand Sundays Beach Club (formerly Finns Beach Club) for kayaking and snorkelling and all-day dining. *Rooms from \$896. Jalan Pantai Selatan Gau, Ungasan, +62 811 942 1110, theungasan.com*

MANDAPA, A RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE

The terraced jungle setting on the Ayung River gorge in Ubud is dramatic and the refinements five-star, but what really sets this sanctuary apart is its embodiment of traditional Balinese culture, seen in everything from its holistic wellness programs to the temples preserved in its grounds. In fact, the hotel is designed to resemble a Balinese village with a working rice farm at its heart in which guests can reap and sow. Each of the 25 palatial pool villas and 35 suites, many positioned on the riverfront, are filled with hand-woven textiles and murals by local artists, and are tended by a patih, traditionally the personal assistant to Balinese royalty. *Rooms from \$937. Jalan Kedewatan, Ubud, +62 361 479 2777, mandapareserve.com*

KATAMAMA

Not far from the swim-up bar at Potato Head Beach Club is Katamama, a 58-suite hotel that takes its design cues from Indonesia's rich artistic heritage and artisan traditions. Tiles were handmade in Java, an indigo workshop near Ubud produced the textiles, and the hotel is constructed from 1.5 million red



HIGH IDEALS

Clockwise from top left: the Mandapa's pool restaurant; Ungasan Clifftop Resort (and below); a Mandapa pool villa and (left) its Library lounge.

GETTING THERE
Garuda, Qantas, Jetstar,
Tigerair, Virgin Australia
and Air Asia fly direct to
Denpasar from select
Australian capitals.

bricks handmade by a local family-owned company. These artisanal textures are teamed with original mid-century furniture and Indonesian contemporary art from the private collection of one of the hotel's owners, PTT Family CEO Ronald Akili. Suites are large, many with private pools and terraces or inner courtyards, and are equipped with "personal bar stations". The lobby is dominated by the twin drawcards of Akademi bar and MoVida Bali and, for more diversions, hotel guests have priority access to Potato Head Beach Club. *Rooms from \$437. 51b Jalan Petitenget, Seminyak, +62 361 302 9999, katamama.com*

SUITE DEALS

From left (below): drinks are served at Sundays Beach Club; Katamama's rooftop suite (and right); pool at Katamama. Opposite: Sundays Beach Club.

AWARTA NUSA DUA LUXURY VILLAS & SPA

In the resort-dominated enclave of Nusa Dua in Bali's south-east, the family-owned, boutique-sized Awarta is distinguished by its focus on Indonesian-Chinese Peranakan heritage and style. In a lush garden compound are 14 one-, two- and three-bedroom villas filled with Peranakan-style teak and rosewood furnishings and Chinese lacquered artworks, and a spa featuring Peranakan therapies. All villas have big pools fed by faux waterfalls, and marble-tiled bathrooms with outdoor bath pavilions. Guests are treated to a butler service, access to a private beach club, late-evening checkouts and a footbath during check-in. Dining is in Awarta's refined Chinese restaurant or from its all-day diner, The Long Table. *Rooms from \$619. Jalan Kawasan, Nusa Dua Resort, ITDC Complex Lot NW 2 & 3 Nusa Dua, +62 361 773 300, awartaresorts.com*

ALILA SEMINYAK

As stylish as the Alila is, all eyes are on the ocean and Petitenget Beach just beyond its oversized lobby. Ocean views and breezes are maximised in all its minimalist public spaces as well as in many of its 240 sunny rooms and suites in eight styles to suit party people, couples and families. They range from studios in a singles-friendly wing closest to busy Petitenget Street to Deluxe Ocean Suites right on the beach and a three-bedroom penthouse with butler and rooftop pool. A restaurant and adjoining beach bar open onto decks flanking a series of infinity pools close to the pounding surf. *Rooms from \$357. 39 Jalan Taman Ganesha, Petitenget, +62 361 302 1888, alilahotels.com*

THE EDGE

A wet-floor spa, four opulent pool villas and a vertiginous position on a cliff edge at Uluwatu are the main features of life on The Edge. The biggest of the villas, aptly named The View, spans a palatial 3,500 square metres with five bedrooms, two pools and a cinema. Another four villas will open by June, as well as a cliff-front bar and restaurant featuring guest chefs, a dramatic glass-bottom pool, and a club with two bowling alleys, tennis court and private bar and lounge for in-house guests only. *Rooms from \$2,119. Jalan Pura Goa Lempeh, Pecatu, +62 361 847 0700, mesahotelsandresorts.com*



"Sundays Beach Club retains the *laid-back vibe* that's made this five-year-old venue so popular."