SMART MOVES

KATIE TRUMAN ABSORBS A TRIO OF BALI’S NEW BOUTIQUE RESORTS AND VILLAS...

VILLA KUBU AND VILLA LATALIANA

BACK in 1999, when — impossible to imagine now — Seminyak was still a rice-field domain, Australian Dee Mytton and architect Ross Franklin designed and created one lovely villa. Then another, and another. And over the course of 12 years, expanding to a total of 15 one, two and three-bedroom villas, resulting in Villa Kubu of today.

Unlike other villa complexes, each villa here is not only different, but reflects the island’s ever-changing tastes and trends — from traditional antique Balinese to lavish Mediterranean. Almost off-the-radar down a labyrinth of laneways, Villa Kubu provides a very private sanctuary far removed from, yet within instant access to, central Seminyak.

‘Kubu’ translates as ‘home from home’ and that’s exactly what you feel, holed-up at any of the 15 villas, an organic hotch-potch of private residences in a vast walled compound. No coincidence Kubu was built with long-term living in mind. Ensconced behind high limestone walls, utmost privacy is further upheld by a charming three-flag signal system for staff, stationed at each wooden entrance gate.

Beautifully tended gardens are Kubu’s defining factor: Ms Mytton spent years studying the island’s tropical vegetation — which shows. Each garden reflects the owner’s love of Balinese botanicals and displays a distinct Balinese style, with elements like lotus ponds, weathered statuettes and rock gardens, and mature palms and exotic blooms like ginger flowers. And of course, an ample-sized pool with thatched roof bale.

Hearty breakfasts cooked to order by personal butlers in fully-equipped kitchens, luxurious king-size beds with feather pillows, high threadcount sheets and comfy daybeds are just some of the home comforts provided. Kubu’s relaxed living style, with fabulous open-air dining and lounging areas, and in-room dining service, positively encourage private entertaining — villas also supply fully loaded iPods loaded, flat-screen TVs, DVD players and DVD library. Larger groups can book the palatial three-bedroom villas, or limited side-by-side villas. Committed to wellness and the environment, room service fare is sourced from Bali’s organic farms, while villas maintain all-natural cleaning products and recycle bin systems. While the private focus dictates no communal facilities per se, there is however Spa Venus, with its excellent detox programmes, holistic therapies and metaphysical treatments.

After deciding to create “something different on a grander scale,” Ms Mytton et al have totally surpassed themselves with their jaw-dropping Villa Lataliana, debuting August 2011. This exclusive two-bedroom and five bedroom villa is one of Seminyak’s shining new stars. Located in a quiet residential area, a hop, skip and jump from Seminyak Beach and Gado Gado restaurant, it’s a minor miracle they found any land left in Seminyak. With land so scarce, villas tend to come designed ‘stacked-up,’ yet boutique Villa Lataliana bucks the trend on a truly grandiose scale — an exceptional property decadently sprawled across a vast tree-studded plot.
Managed by Villa Kubu and sharing its concept, five-star standards and Spa Venus, Lataliana’s totally separate villas are a stylishly modern take on Balinese architecture. The magnificent five-bedroom villa features several pavilions encircling a large freeform pool — stunningly illuminated at nighttime. All five chic guestrooms — including a colonial-inspired Master Bedroom with private garden — are carefully spaced for optimum privacy.

Striking modern tropical architecture contrasts with some unique traditional features, such as antique water features and custom-made furnishings, recycled from the century-old timbers of an Indonesian schooner. Poolside wooden gazebos are in fact a vintage joglo and rustic, thatched goat pen! Things get up-to-date with dazzling chandeliers made from amber capiz seashells, funky feathered floor lamps, high-tech appliances and uber-stylish bathrooms leading out to sensuous outdoor rain showers.

The smaller-scale, yet no less intoxicating two-bedroom villa features contemporary architecture inspired by Indonesian vernacular design, including a lumbung-style dwelling, making a fun but luxurious hidey-hole for families. Again, this features a lovely pool and landscaped gardens. Villas can also be booked together — providing a palatial seven-bedroom option and given the five-bedroom villa’s lavish entertaining spaces, facilities (including a Yamaha electric piano) and swish catering kitchen, Lataliana is tailor-made for serious entertaining and outside events — anything from wedding receptions and dinner parties to product launches and fashion shows.

Villa Kubu and Spa Venus, Jalan Raya Seminyak.
Villa Lataliana, Jalan Camplung Tanduk, Seminyak.
Tel: 0361 738905

www.LatalianaVillas.com
www.VillaKubu.com