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A RESTORATIVE RETREAT ALONG BALI'S SOUTHERN COAST

Beyond the tourist hotspots, a more soulful, intimate experience of the Indonesian island awaits travellers.

WORDS CHARLENE CHAN **PHOTOS** CHARLENE CHAN, REGENT BALI CANGGU, SEGNO BALI, THE MULIA, BUMBU BALI RESTAURANT & COOKING SCHOOL, HEINZ VON HOLZEN, GLOW CONTENTS

Canggu has arrived at what some believe to be a tipping point in recent years. Its infrastructure, originally designed to support a more agrarian community, feels strained at times, while a boom in tourist numbers has chipped away at the area's genteel charm. I

myself have been drawn to the quieter, more traditional town of Ubud on my last few visits to Bali, but today, I've made the journey to Canggu to see if I can rediscover its former allure. My explorations will also take me to Nusa Dua and Uluwatu, where I plan to spend a few days enjoying the island's beautiful southern coast.

Regent Bali Canggu sits right by the ocean's edge, and is dotted with pockets of lush greenery.



THE SOUL OF A COMMUNITY

My first stop takes me to Regent Bali Canggu, the all-suites and villas resort which opened its doors in 2025 to reveal some of the island's most coveted real estate. The property is infused with the understated elegance and timeless luxury that is signature to the Regent brand, and a natural colour palette, batik and Balinese imagery, and intricate craftsmanship combine to imbue it with a deep sense of

place. Spearheaded by interior design firm Hirsch Bedner Associates (HBA), these design choices honour Indonesia's diversity, while reflecting the unique beauty of Bali.

As compelling as the resort is on the surface, I get the sense that something deeper lies at its heart: a mission to celebrate and uplift the people and businesses around them. It is this feeling — of community and warm, genuine regard for their neighbours

— that comes to define my stay here over the next few days.

(Clockwise from top) The elegant Regent Club offers all-day gourmet dining and an elevated check-in experience; natural materials and intricate craftsmanship imbue the resort with a quiet sense of luxury; bathrooms are equipped with teak tubs carved with intricate motifs by local artisans.



My first hint at this neighbourly spirit lies in the very structure of the resort. Soon after I'm dropped off at the arrival porch, I pass through a walkway that I'm told runs *under* the main street — a feature that preserves most of the existing landscape, yet weaves the property quite literally into the locality. Guests enjoy direct access to the beach, which, on the weekend, transforms into a vibrant gathering spot for the wider district. Back in my suite, elaborate woodwork produced by local artisans adorns the doors and the ornate teak tub in the bathroom; their work also appears in the form of screens placed throughout the resort. Christin Castillo, principal at HBA Jakarta and Bali, shares that these were a result of meaningful partnerships with the community: "We collaborated with local artisans to reproduce classic batik stamps, transforming them into intricate screens that frame and enhance the breathtaking vistas of the surrounding landscape."

Smaller, more intimate interactions with the resort team conspire to create an elevated, yet convivial experience. On my second morning at the property, I amble over to breakfast at Taru, the all-day Indonesian restaurant, to find that a member of staff has already put a serving of beef satay on the grill, having noted my disappointment at missing out on the dish the day before. Neighbourhood recommendations flow freely: During my stay, I am introduced to Gigi Susu, a stylish café and bakery with a second-floor terrace overlooking the main street; Segno, a speakeasy bar led by master mixologist Yutaka Nakashima; and Our Projects, a local fragrance and skincare label hosting perfume masterclasses. It feels as though I've been welcomed not just into a resort, but a closely-knit community.

(Clockwise from top left) A cocktail at Segno makes for a delightful postprandial tippie; a selection of tapas at Sazón; craft a custom fragrance of your own at Our Projects, a local fragrance label with multiple stores and stockists around the island.



WELL NOURISHED

No retreat is complete without a massage or two, and at the on-site spa — the world's first Regent-branded spa — I set my sights on the Massage Revolution, a therapeutic experience that takes place on a bed of quartz sand. The warm sand cocoons the body to encourage deep relaxation, while my therapist employs firm strokes to release the knots in my shoulders that have set in while in transit. I step back out into the late afternoon sunshine feeling utterly reenergised.

Other forms of nourishment abound. One evening, I head to Sazón, a Spanish neighbourhood tapas bar led by Michelin-starred chef Andrew Walsh. While the

restaurant is part of the resort's stable of dining venues, it opens out onto the main road, bringing the energy of Barcelona's streets to the heart of Canggu. The highlight here is no doubt the grilled seafood paella; perfectly seasoned, it marries the sweetness of fresh prawns and scallops with umami-laden squid ink rice for a soul-satisfying bite. This is complemented by the Lemon Basil Drop, an easy, fresh cocktail crafted from gin, clarified lemon, orange liqueur, basil oil, and bianco vermouth, and followed by a sangria ice cream, which is served with olive oil jelly.

On my last night in Canggu, I make my way to Cure Bali, a modern European concept situated by the beach. Also headed

by chef Walsh, the menu draws from his Irish heritage and his travels across Asia, and is a masterful showcase of technique, paired to great effect with the abundant produce of Indonesia. It makes for a wonderful conclusion to my time here, and I take a few moments after dinner to savour the sea breeze, delighted to have discovered a different side of Canggu.

(Clockwise from top left) Chef Andrew Walsh at work at Sazón; a bamboo-lined path leads guests to the spa at Regent Bali Canggu; the resort's one-bedroom suite is spacious and breezy, perfect for a relaxing getaway; the outdoor dining area at Taru overlooks the main pool.