

Later we visited Begawan Biji, a restaurant in the centre of a regenerative farm and paddies growing heritage mansur rice, in the village of Melinggih Kelod. The menu is an ode to Balinese culinary tradition. The interiors were lovely, but nothing detracted from the feast in front of us — in particular the succulent short-rib beef (mains from £10.50; begawanbiji.com).



Taro is one of Bali's oldest villages

ALAMY

The next day I moved from nature to nurture and set out on the 40-minute drive to the town of Tampaksiring, eight miles northeast of Ubud, and the 17th-century *Pura* (temple) Mengening for an ancient *melukat* water purification ceremony (£74pp; arrange through the hotel concierge). Following a blessing, participants move through a succession of bracingly fresh natural pools fed by springs, offering prayers at each stage. The idea is that negative energy, or emotional baggage, is washed away and you emerge anew.

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I wish I could say that this happened to me, but the fact is, I didn't make it as far as the pool. There's a caveat at the entrance to Bali's temples that says women on their period cannot take part under Hindu customs. People emerged in varying states of emotion; some smiling, others sobbing, a few silent and contemplative. Sitting alone in one of Dad's old sarongs, watching the process unfurl by the temple, was profound in its own right.