



Grilled goods at Shelter Pererenan in Canggu.
Opposite: Inside an old fashioned.

OUR GUIDE TO

BALI'S BEST RESTAURANTS & BARS

As any frequent visitor will tell you, Bali is an island of culinary plenty. Its dining scene has positively exploded in the last decade and these days it's as much a destination for foodies as it is for surfers and yogis. From the most popular villages to 'hoods farther afield, we've curated the best of Bali's restaurants and bars, covering locavore fine diners, streetside warungs and the effortlessly cool dining rooms that feel as cosmopolitan as they do tropical.

By Kathryn Romeyn

GETTY IMAGES. OPPOSITE: COUTESY OF SHELTER

CANGGU

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, seemingly overnight, Canggu emerged as a haven for expat-friendly food concepts (many by expat chefs) and beachy bars—then neighbouring Pererenan just to the north took off, making the entire stretch of some 10 coastal kilometres a hotter-than-hot spot for dining and drinking.

Diversity is a hallmark in Canggu. With Balinese and Balinese Australian owners, **meimei** is a smoky, low-lit Southeast Asian barbecue joint that serves 15-hour beef short ribs with spiced caramel and green-anchovy sambal plus fish sauce wings and mixed mushroom larb alongside creative cocktail flights.

Down Batu Bolong, Irish-by-way-of-Singapore chef Andrew Walsh (whose Michelin-starred Cure is expected to debut an outpost here this December) and Spanish head chef Javier Vicente opened the Spanish tapas-slinging **Sazón** at Regent Bali Canggu, also with exceptional paellas and stunning, surprising desserts.

There's **Skool Kitchen** for “primitive cooking” on open flames in a modern context, and **Mosto**—from the team behind Indonesia's first pet nat, Lazarus Pulp—for natural wine and European neo-bistro cooking inspired by Sydney.

There's always something exciting happening at **Ghost Kitchen & Record Bar**, which serves rustic-elegant wood-fired fare inspired by Indonesia and nostalgia—think *babi guling* crumpet—in a setting with two distinctive bars and a heavy emphasis on good tunes, which emerge from the vinyl-focused DJ booth.

Bokashi is a feel-good Japanese-influenced sustainable grocer-turned-eco conscious restaurant doling out breakfast bento boxes as well as miso curry ramen with Balinese heritage pork and Tasmanian salmon sashimi in two locations: Berawa and Pererenan. Also in the latter, **Home by Chef Wayan** is an unassuming elevated warung for devouring unbelievably heartwarming Balinese and Indonesian dishes—don't miss the ayam srosop—by illustrious Nusa Penida native chef-owner Wayan Kresna Yasa and his team of passionate young cooks.

A couple hundred metres down the road, **Woods Pererenan** offers an airy, cosy glass-and-reclaimed timber space for scrumptious breakfasts, served till 5 p.m. plus Mediterranean-inflected savoury dishes for lunch and dinner.

The lush and atmospheric **Shelter Pererenan** is all about crave-worthy Middle Eastern and Mediterranean cuisine, cooked on a wood fire, while **Hippie Fish** also has a Mediterranean bent but with a super-fresh seafood focus, with the Indian Ocean in sight. French and Lebanese flavours inspire the menu at **Bar Vera** tucked inside Further Hotel, where travellers settle in for glasses or bottles of European wine.

Über-experimental cocktails are the focus at **The Shady Pig**, a moody libation lounge informed by a rebellious 1920s bootlegging family, and advance bookings—plus a key—are required at the intimate speakeasy **The Mailroom**, whose boozy, uniquely presented drinks are hidden along with the venue. An entirely different aesthetic is at play at **The Lawn Canggu**, a surfy, salty beach club with Aperol slushies and frozen mango margaritas that pair wonderfully with unobstructed sunsets.

DETAILS

meimei
meimeibali.com; mains
from Rp175,000

Sazón
sazonbali.com; mains
from Rp140,000

Skool Kitchen
skoolkitchen.co; mains
from Rp250,000

Mosto
mostobali.com; mains
from Rp100,000

Ghost Kitchen & Record Bar
ghostbali.com; mains
from Rp150,000

Bokashi
bokashibali.com;
mains from Rp60,000

Home by Chef Wayan
sbychefwayan.com;
meals from Rp60,000

Woods Pererenan
woodsballi.com; mains
from Rp85,000

Shelter Pererenan
shelterballi.com; mains
from Rp140,000

Hippie Fish
hippiefishballi.com;
mains from Rp140,000

Bar Vera
barverabali.com; mains
from Rp90,000

The Shady Pig
@theshadypig; drinks
from Rp140,00

The Mailroom
@themailrrombar; drinks
from Rp130,000

The Lawn Canggu
thelawncanggu.com;
drinks from Rp130,000

Opposite, clockwise from left: Staff at Mosto; wood-roasted moon scallops at Shelter; the namesake chef of Home by Chef Wayan; a tomato and pepper brine martini at meimei.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT OPPOSITE: COURTESY OF MOSTO; SHELTER; CHEF WAYAN; MEIMEI



Made Dhanu, chef-owner of FED.

FROM CENTER: COURTESY OF FED; GETTY IMAGES

SEMINYAK

BALI'S ORIGINAL see-and-be-seen seaside town of Seminyak is as popular as ever thanks in large part to a strong—and delicious—contingent of boîtes serving up exceptional Indonesian cuisine. There's the casual, no-frills **Warung Babi Guling Pak Malen**, famed for its authentic, succulent whole-roasted suckling pig served up on paper-lined plates. Then there's the chic **John Hardy The Long Table, The Kitchen & The Jamu Bar** nestled in an open-air space beneath the brand's fine jewellery boutique. Here, farm-to-table family-style feasts include Indo specialties such as crispy garlic-marinated *bebek nyuh kikir* with betel leaves and coconut floss and, to finish, *es campur* shaved tableside.

For authentic Indonesian, **Waroeng Bernadette** is renowned for melt-in-your-mouth beef *rendang*, then there's **Bambu**, with its elegant, glowy, after-dark atmosphere, which specialises in stylised preparations of authentic dishes from the diverse country.

Sophisticated **Merah Putih**'s vegetarian and vegan stands out in Seminyak in part for its nine-dish tasting menu. Sister restaurant **Sangsaka**, a bit more casual, is a wood-fired gem whose name translates loosely to “pride of the Indonesian flag.”

Meaning “tribe” or “clan” in Bahasa Indonesia, **Kaum** at Desa Potato Head is an artful ode to recipes derived from 600 of the archipelago's islands, and with Indonesian chef Kresna Yasa and chef Maxie now at the helm, the storytelling menu is being shaped by a desire to respect the past while pushing the food boldly into the future.

Potato Head, owned by Indonesian hospitality visionary Ronald Akili, is also home to two of the best bar scenes one can find in Seminyak: the O.G. **Potato Head Beach Club**, of course, which marks its 15th anniversary this year, and **Sunset Park** on the long rooftop of Potato Head Studios. Its sherbet-hued ocean views stretch as far as the eye can see, enhanced by the unmissable jackfruit-infused arak cocktail called Cloudscape, with *assam* vanilla tea and soursop foam, and salty local snacks and sates.

The two-floor **Mama San** supper club—inspired by 1920s Shanghai—draws from Balinese flavours but also embraces the broader region, with plenty of Chinese and Thai influences that make its food by peripatetic and prolific chef Will Meyrick consistently sought after for well over a decade.

For a taste of Aussie cafe culture, you can sip a flat white amid yeah-nahs at **Sisterfields**, and then travel to Mexico City for its iconic street food at one-of-a-kind bar and restaurant **Motel Mexicola**.

For mixology flair and finesse, then head to the second-floor speakeasy **District 1**, which proffers beautifully made aperitivo, custom creations and more in a date-worthy setting. Equal attention to detail is found in the cocktails at **FED**, hands down one of Seminyak's most exciting and also easygoing restaurants and lounges, where Balinese owner and chef Made Dhanu and his vibrant young team mashup references to Melbourne, Europe and Indonesia in exquisite, flavour-packed plates that are fine dining with a bit of a punk-rock twist.

DETAILS

Warung Babi Guling Pak Malen

@babi_guling_pak_malen; dishes from Rp40,000

John Hardy The Long Table, The Kitchen & The Jamu Bar

johnhardy.com; Rp495,000 per person for sharing menu

Waroeng Bernadette

@waroengbernadette; mains from Rp70,000

Bambu

bambubali.com; mains from Rp150,000

Merah Putih

merahputihbali.com; mains from Rp180,000

Sangsaka

sangsakabali.com; mains from Rp130,000

Kaum

kaum.com; meals from Rp70,000

Potato Head Beach Club

seminyak.potatohead.co; mains from Rp160,000

Sunset Park

seminyak.potatohead.co; cocktails from Rp160,000

Mama San

mamasanbali.com; dishes from Rp80,000

Sisterfields

sisterfieldsbali.com; dishes from Rp95,000

Motel Mexicola

motelmexicola.info; tacos from Rp60,000

District 1

@district1cocktailbar; drinks from Rp135,000

FED

fedbymade.com; mains from Rp130,000

UBUD

TRUE GOURMANDS can't resist a few days in Ubud, if only for the edible pleasures that await at the heart of the island, where chefs both international and Indonesian work magic. One example of the latter is at the award-winning sustainable restaurant **Locavore NXT**, which does hyper-local sourcing to create tasting menus delectably stacked with dishes that double as Indonesian explorations and experiments in fermentation.

Nusantara, by the same Indo-owned restaurant group, is a more casual ode to Indonesian home-cooking in the centre of Ubud, and **Hujan Locale** up the road does street food-inspired modern Indonesian fusion intended to be shared. At **Syrco BASÈ**, Michelin-decorated Dutch Indonesian chef Syrco Bakker follows an ethos of traceability, nature and transparency to concoct his conscious, seasonal menus that rely heavily on locally sourced botanicals.

As imaginative chefs go, there's no one like Wonka-worthy pastry specialist Will Goldfarb, whose **Room4Dessert** is an internationally acclaimed mecca for diners who thrive on a heady dose of surprise in their whimsical, irreverent 15-course tasting menus.

Travellers seeking a special night out will find it at the radiant fine-dining pioneer **Mozaic**, which serves artistic French cuisine with perfect execution, as well as **Kubu at Mandapa**, tucked into a woven cocoon for a zero-waste extravaganza of wonderfully unorthodox courses dreamed up by Balinese chef Eka Sunarya, using rare and undervalued ingredients sourced within 100 kilometres.

Just down the Ayung River, Four Seasons Resort Bali at Sayan's **Sokasi** chef's table dinner is a storytelling journey through Bali featuring seven tantalising traditional and even nearly forgotten ancestral recipes that are cooked in the outdoor kitchen under a sweeping bamboo roof, like soulful dinner theater.

North of Ubud proper, **Begawan Biji** offers an immersive and cultivated Pan-Asian dining experience on an actual regenerative farm that's well worth a stroll before or after tasting the carefully grown Balinese Mansur heritage rice fried with ginger flower and garlic along with the fresh catch with Andaliman chilli paste and star-fruit *sambal matah*.

Sunset is prime time at **Ambar**, an al fresco lounge for handcrafted libations nestled into dense jungle, while **Pinstripe Bar**, with a glamorous 1930s energy, feels like the place to be after dark, for elaborate, liberally spiced tipples named for prominent figures in Ubud's history. Likewise, a sense of place is firmly rooted in every evening spent at **Night Rooster**, Locavore's mysterious craft cocktail bar where an "alchemist" named Raka plays off Balinese folktales and the supernatural for wild and wildly yummy drinks made from elements that have no business tasting this good in a beverage.



Grilled king prawns with sambal at Nusantara. Below: Martini goodness.

DETAILS

Locavore NXT
locavorenxt.com; set menu from Rp1,950,000

Nustantara
locavorenxt.com; mains from Rp195,000

Hujan Locale
hujanlocale.com; mains from Rp125,000

Syrco BASÈ
syrcobase.com; mains from Rp395,000

Room4Dessert
room4dessert.com; set menu from Rp1,090,000

Mozaic
mozaic-bali.com; set menu from Rp1,100,000

Kubu at Mandapa
kubuatmandapa.com; set menu from Rp1,250,000

Sokasi
fourseasons.com; set menu from Rp2,332,475

Begawan Biji
begawanbiji.com; mains from Rp210,000

Ambar
ambarubudbar.com; cocktails from Rp185,000

Pinstripe Bar
pinstripebar.com; cocktails from Rp230,000

Nightrooster
locavorenxt.com; cocktails from Rp125,000

FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF NUSANTARA; GETTY IMAGES



FROM LEFT: COURTESY OF BARTOLO (2); YUKI ULUWATU; ARTISAN BALI



From left: Aperitivos at Bartolo; staff at Bartolo; skewers off the grill at Artisan.

ULUWATU

IN THE SURFER'S paradise of Uluwatu, gourmet options grow seemingly by the day, with highly conceptualised restaurants opening all the time, adding ever more compelling reasons to fight the traffic down to the southwestern tip of Bali's Bukit Peninsula.

Some of those include Canggu transplants **M. Mason Bar | Grill Uluwatu**—churning out fabulous wood-fired food in a stylish setting—and **YUKI Uluwatu**, which comes from the same local team as meimei and, in a beautifully lofty open-air pavilion, showcases a deep understanding and appreciation for Japanese technique and izakaya fare, from a divine wagyu beef sando to *kamameshi* clay pot rice.

Homegrown eateries are abundant in Uluwatu. There's **Artisan Bingin** and **Gooseberry** starting guests' days in spectacular fashion with their decadent breakfasts. Both are all-day favourites that get fancier into the evening, the former serving cheekily named mains such as Fish Don't Have Fingers and tasty tipples amid soaring ceilings, exposed concrete and emerald-toned original artworks, while the other sells lingerie and swimwear alongside its prime aged steaks and buttery escargot.

While there are veggie options, it's the flame-kissed meats—especially pedigreed cuts from Australia—that are the stars of **Papi Sapi**, a laid-back neighbourhood grill with impeccable sauces and sides.

The monochromatic **Kala** celebrates all things Greek and spotlights irresistible starters including feta tempura with lemon marmalade and caper meringue and grape leaf-wrapped *dolmadakia*. And **Bartolo** takes diners a bit west of Greece with its perfect marriage of French and Italian cooking, its hand-rolled picci pasta cacio e pepe and market fish cooked *en papillote* shining brightly alongside the bamboo-aged old fashioned.

Purely contemporary Italian artistry is on the table at **Il Ristorante – Niko Romito at Bvlgari Resort Bali**, a gastronomic destination for the foodiest of foodies,

featuring fine ingredients either flown in, grown organically locally or plucked from the resort garden. **Analog**—a '70s-styled listening bar and Scandi-meets-Indo cafe—is where surfers gather after riding waves to refuel healthfully and sip matcha.

At clifftop **Mana Uluwatu**, with captivating panoramas of the very best curling breaks, surf enthusiasts watch the swell over plates of tacos, pastas, ramen and fish, all uniquely prepared with a panoply of international spices. It's the upmarket spot for sipping well into the night, while the legendary **Single Fin** offers full-on party vibes with its fun cocktails and solid pub fare. And for all-day libations and sun there's **Sundays Beach Club** on a pristine beach with themed nights, tiki drinks and bold bites.

DETAILS

M. Mason Bar | Grill Uluwatu
masonbali.com; mains from Rp130,000

YUKI Uluwatu
yuki-bali.com; dishes from Rp65,000

Artisan Bingin
@artisan.bingin; dishes from Rp55,000

Gooseberry
gooseberry-restaurant.com; dishes from Rp90,000

Papi Sapi
papisabi.com; dishes from Rp60,000

Kala
kalauluwatu.com; dishes from Rp75,000

Bartolo
bartolobali.com; meals from Rp120,000

Il Ristorante – Niko Romito at Bvlgari Resort Bali
bulgarihotels.com; set menu from Rp2,900,000

Analog
analog-uluwatu.com; drinks from Rp40,000

Mana Uluwatu
@manauluwatu; dishes from Rp60,000

Single Fin
singlefinbali.com; cocktails from Rp130,000

Sundays Beach Club
sundaysbeachclub.com; cocktails from Rp185,000

ACROSS BALI

EVEN OUTSIDE THE island's usual foodie haunts, you're rewarded with incredible eats. In Denpasar, bookings are required to get in on beloved **Suksma BBQ + LOVE's** savoury smoked beef brisket, broccoli parm and occasional torch-burnt pork lasagna.

Another locally owned hidden barbecue gem, **Riung Rasa Indonesian Backyard BBQ** is tucked away on a back road in Jimbaran. This homey spot serves its own take on sticky ribs and brisket *nasi goreng*.

Most tourists never stumble upon **Dapur Bali Mula** in the far north village of Les, missing out on the owner-slash-chef-slash village Hindu priest's reservation-only Balinese cuisine, which is as genuine and fresh as it gets.

Hyperlocal dishes from Karangasem regency in the east of Bali are on the lontar palm-etched menu at **Bali Asli**, an eatery serving photogenic shareable *megibung* platters—complete with a volcanic cone-shaped tower of rice—which originated centuries ago in the region. In Jimbaran, at the Four Seasons, **Telu** is an entirely upcycled bar with its own arak cellar and herb garden where cocktails go the zero-waste route plus a step beyond, with a portion of the price benefiting a specific nonprofit effort on Bali.

For next-level dining experiences of the resort sort, chef Gaetan Biesuz's thoughtful cooking and edible storytelling through 80 percent archipelago-sourced produce at **Rumari** at Raffles Bali in Jimbaran is revelatory, while over in Nusa Dua at The Apurva Kempinski Bali, French import, Michelin-star chef Jean-Baptiste Natali weaves seafood-focused sorcery for **Koral**, the island's first and only underwater aquarium restaurant, as manta rays and tropical fish soar by. 🌐

DETAILS

Suksma BBQ + LOVE
@suksmabbqlove.bali;
dishes from Rp45,000

Riung Rasa Indonesian Backyard BBQ
@riungrasa; dishes from Rp35,000

Dapur Bali Mula
@dapurbalimula; price by donation

Bali Asli
baliasli.com.au; mains from Rp155,000

Telu
fourseasons.com;
cocktails from Rp195,000

Rumari
raffles.com;
set menu from Rp1,900,000

Koral
kempinski.com; set menu from Rp1,200,000



Clockwise from above: Chef Wayan of Kaum: cured fish with watermelon ponzu and wakame oil at Yuki Uluwatu; bubbles galore at Bar Vera; Pepes Mushrooms at Rumari.

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: COURTESY OF KAUM; YUKI ULUWATU; BAR VERA; RUMARI

