

CREAMMAGAZINE.COM – Selong Selo

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A COOL BLEND OF CONTEMPORARY & RETRO CULTURE

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Selong Selo Resort + Residences boast equal parts luxe + culture

By creammagazine, November 17, 2019



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I've lost count of how many times I've visited Indonesia. There've been at least a dozen trips to the familiar Bali quarts: Seminyak, Legian, Nusa Dua, Kuta. Two visits to beautiful off-the-beaten-track Ubud. A memorable stay in Tanah Lot with its vibrant temples and glorious sunsets. But [Lombok](#) I'd not been to until recently.

A friend said if I'm to do Lombok I should stay somewhere with magnificent mountain views, surrounded by stunning greenery, and close to interesting wildlife. Selong Selo fits the bill perfectly.

Nestled high up on the hills, you're immediately taken in by Selong Selo's awe-inspiring views of vivid blue sea and twisting mountain roads that segment the greenest of green rice paddies. The best view is from your private infinity pool which sticks to a constant, comfortable temperature and is about the third of the

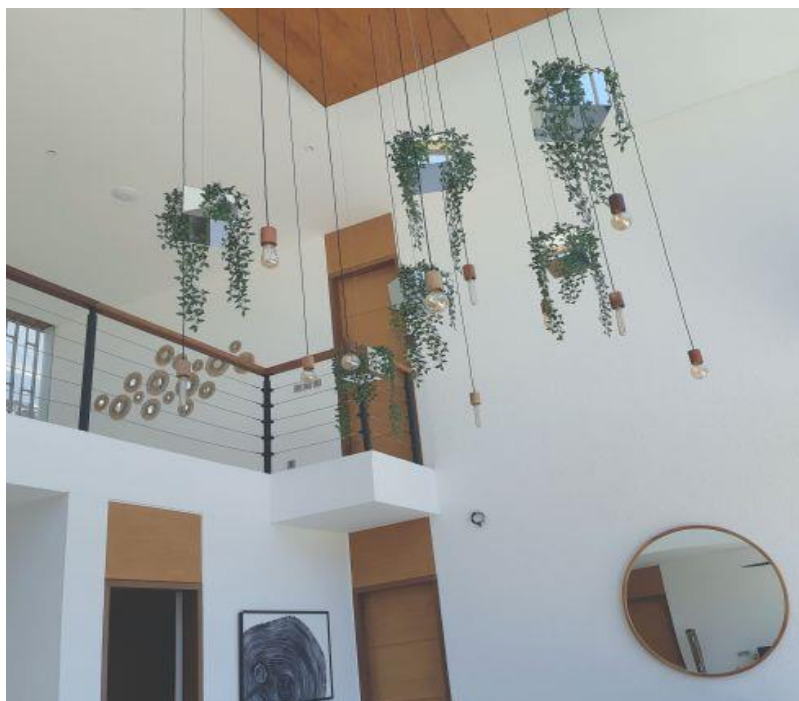
size of a lap pool. Great for keeping up my exercise while on holiday. If sipping mocktails and cocktails in between occasional freestyle can be considered exercise.



Speaking of great size, though, the villas at Selong Selo are absolutely *huge*. My travelling partner Ben and I actually found our villa too big for two, often having to shout twice as loud to be heard from one room to another. Spoilt, to say the least.



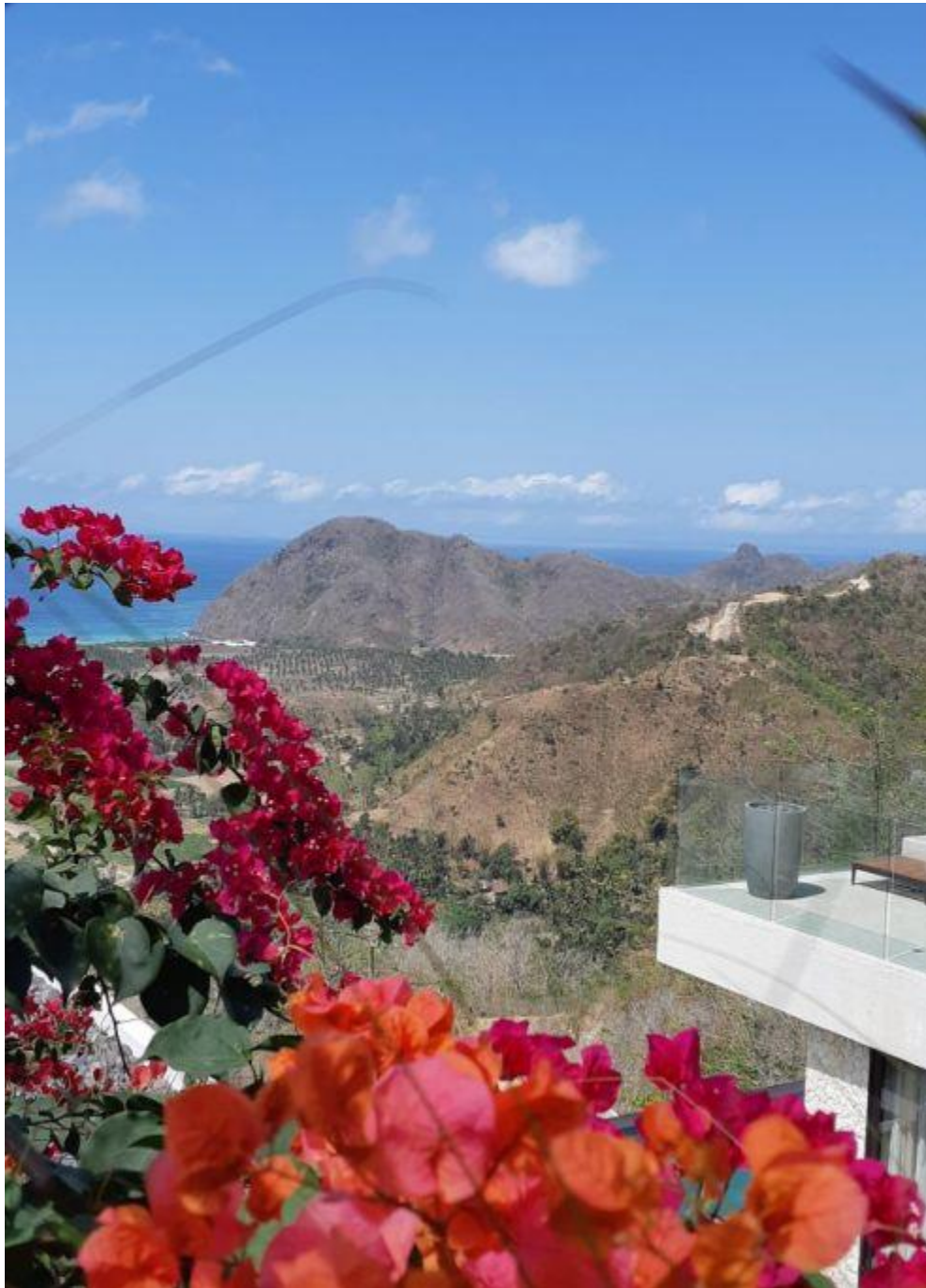
A giant cream staircase connects the mezzanine to the main ground floor, with pot plants, gold-gilded mirrors and traditional *objet d'art* dotting the walls. There's even a hanging garden above the main dining area that adds colour to the proceedings.



While the living spaces are expansive, the bedrooms themselves aren't very big and, while fitted with well-sized wardrobes and a generous *en suite* for toilet and shower, the rooms could have been where wiser space was allocated... especially given the majestic views from them.



And I'm talking *truly* majestic. The views of mountains and forests and monkeys in trees are picture perfect and you suddenly feel grounded as you soak in the beauty of it all.



So far as mod cons go, there's everything you'll need to still feel one with society on your magical getaway. A flatscreen TV with USB input, a mobile phone with a 'digital butler' at your fingertips, and superfast Wi-Fi.



The team at Selong Selo possess a wealth of knowledge about the area and its surrounds, and will recommend activities to get your adrenaline going.

For some, Lombok is all about the beach, with surfing and paddleboarding two of the more popular sports along extensive Selong Belanak Beach.



A complimentary beach shuttle will take you there, and a beach trip is highly recommended. While enjoying a sunset, you might even get to see a Procession of the Cows before your very eyes.



There are also options of a visit to Benang Stokel waterfall, or a fishing trip by the river, while Gili Islands to the north of Lombok, known for their crystal clear waters and vivid corals, are the perfect destination for a snorkelling adventure.



While on the coast, there's at least half a dozen other things to do: like taking a trek through a herb garden where old rickety boats have been upcycled into bright garden beds.



Then there's the bat cave tour!



I'd never thought I'd actually get to see the inside of a bat cave, and the one we visited looked something out of a Hollywood set: dark, dingy and dusty. Delve deeper into the cave and the numbers of bats flying overhead double, then triple, and before you know it you're surrounded by black clouds of the excitable little critters.

My partner Ben went to the end of the cave but once I started feeling bugs crawling up my legs... I. Was. Out. Of. There.



If getting to know the local culture is more your thing, you can ask your driver to take you a weaving warehouse where you'll get to see local women working hard at handcrafting stunning traditional costume.



Most people of Lombok wear custom 'sasak' clothes every day, hence the workers at the weaving warehouses are kept very busy.

As well as sarong-like garments, the workers create 'sapuks' or 'crowns' for the men, which are worn as a symbol of respect for God and helps keep the wearer's mind from dirty and unkind thoughts. Ask nicely and you might even get to wear one of these beautiful traditional creations.



A visit to a local village was also high on our cultural agenda. Here we got to witness live action cock-fights, and purchase handcrafted knick-knacks like cigarette holders made from buffalo tusk or brightly coloured beaded bracelets. They certainly make for great gifts back home.



We were also invited into a typical family home where up to 25 people might stay of a night, and whose interior is just as decorated as we have in our own living room and bedrooms.



While in town, you might want to check out one of the few boutique cafes or restaurants. We went to the kookily titled El Bazar and enjoyed Blue Zul smoothies made from blue spirulina, bee pollen, granola, banana and raspberries.



The food at El Bazar proved just as colourful: green cauliflower served with turmeric-infused tempeh, roasted pumpkin and eggplant, confit of octopus, and vegetarian kebabs, to name but a few of the bright dishes. Sure, it was all more of a Moroccan flavour but it goes to show the people of Lombok are happy to embrace multiculturalism as the region grows.



On the subject of exciting cuisine, back at Selong Selo, the chefs are kept busy all day concocting some of the most delicious local dishes you'll get to sample. Breakfast alone is a brilliantly prepared affair with traditional Indonesian and western fare both on the menu.



For dinner, the variety is just as broad, including Nasi Balap Nasi Goreng and delicious Ayam Taliwang (generously marinated chicken).

I must admit, at night we found the service a lot slower than during the day. At one point we asked for a hummus dip to share while our mains were being prepared and were told it would take half an hour for this to arrive at our table. Half an hour for hummus? Hmmm. That said, once the dishes did arrive, they proved to be some of the best fusion cuisine I've tasted in South East Asia.

As for my friend Ben, he opted for more Western dishes and even he said the chicken burger he'd ordered was one of the best he's ever had. Worth the wait, then.



If you prefer to dine in your villa, there are plentiful menu options via room service, and each villa has a fully equipped kitchen for you to stir up your own favourite dishes. Concierge services can help with provisioning, with fresh produce and groceries delivered to your doorstep.

We never got to try the spa facilities at Selong Selo as sadly we only spent three nights at the resort, but we did manage to fit a whole lot into that time, especially when you consider all the activities done outside of the resort.

In short, Selong Selo is a slice of paradise in a part of Lombok few people have had the pleasure of discovering. Make Selong Belanak Beach a fresh destination the next time you venture to Indonesia. And be sure to put Selong Selo Resort high on your check-list for places to stay.

Antonino Tati

Visit the Selong Selo Resorts & Residences Lombok website www.selongselo.com for information and enquiries. Last minute bookings can receive up to 15% discount when checking in before 17 December, 2019. Also visit www.elitehavens.com.

Air Asia now flies direct Perth to Lombok four days a week. For full details visit www.airasia.com.

Photography by Antonino Tati.

Link : <https://creammagazine.com/2019/11/17/so-long-as-youre-wanting-equal-parts-luxe-and-culture-consider-selong-selo-resort-a-must-stay-in-lombok/>