

Post



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So green here on St. Paddy's Day. Coincidence?? - March 17, 2023

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SUMMARY

Beaches, beaches and sons of beaches!
Each more beautiful than the previous
one. Only one temple today and we
weren't allowed to go inside. Proper dress
required - Scott looked super-cute in his
sarong! Hot as hell and more humid than
Houston! - Karen

[Photos](#) | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Index](#)

DETAIL

My how time flies! It's already Saint Patrick's Day and it seems like only yesterday it was Talk Like A Pirate Day.

So far on our Asia trip we've been on a guided tour of Thailand. Today we leave our lovely hotel by the water and start our guided tour of Bali, Indonesia. We schlep our luggage and all to the lobby and check out. Soon we're meeting Rina (rhymes with Tina) our guide and Benny, our driver. We pile our luggage into the more reasonably sized van and head out.

The Balinese say that the island of Bali is shaped like a bird. To date we've been hanging out on the bird's kneecaps. Today we're going to check out it's feet, the southern coast of the island. Our first stop (or two) will be beaches. We were instructed to bring swim suits and towels. After a short drive we're at Pandawa Beach. The sun is brightly shining and there are puffy whites on the horizon. Karen's already in her swim suit but silly me has to change in a public bathroom. Eesh.

To save weight neither of us brought water shoes, so we hold hands and pick our way to the surf. The sand is soft enough but the patches of small shells and rocks remind us of what softies we are. In the water the sand turns to big flat rocks with algae. Thankfully it isn't slick. Eventually we're up to our necks and swimming in the Indian Ocean for the first times in our lives.

At our second stop we enjoy the antics of some local monkeys but don't go in the water (despite the better all-sand ingress into the ocean). Our third beach was Padang Padang. I guess it's so named because so many of the ladies there were wearing thongs that completely showed their Padang-Padangs. Just a guess.

Rina paid our entrance fee, which in US currency was probably \$1.30 each. The staircase down, we've been warned, goes through a 'cave' (really just a huge rock that extends up and over your head). Again the ingress to the water is easy and the two of us frolic in the water for quite a while. The water temperature was perfect, the sand underfoot lovely, and our hats shade our faces.

We're offered (and accept) a beer on the way back to the car. Rina insisted they buy since "they'll get a much better price". Interesting. Karen and I are splitting, so we get a large. It is indeed large.

Our next stop is at a temple, known for its views and monkeys. Apparently the monkey have learned if they steal something from a tourist, their handlers will give them a treat to get the something back. Being no fools, apparently, the monkeys are really good thieves. We watch our stuff very closely, but are amused to see a monkey with a recently acquired lady's shoe.

The temple, Pura Luhur Uluwatu, does have nice views, but there's stairs to climb to get to them. This would normally not a problem, but I am required to wear a dress. Well, a sarong, truth be told, but to a guy it's like walking in a tight fitting, floor length dress. Thank you, no.

Our next stop was also a beach, but alas it was down an interminable number of stairs. Once down half of them Karen cries 'uncle' as her cold was making her dizzy and short of energy. We opt to forego "Water Blow Cliff", sadly, and head straight to eat. We were supposed to have a sunset dinner "almost on the beach" but given our health situation we get there at 2:30, planning to eat a late lunch and head straight to our hotel.

Lunch is at The Cuisine Bali, a grilled seafood restaurant somewhat close to the water. We can see it, and the international airport, in the distance. We were at the back of the cavernous restaurant and at the front is a small army of guys prepping and grilling large quantities of all kinds of seafood on big fire-pits. Our dinner/lunch is grilled fish, crab, shrimp, squid, clams, etc. etc. It is all quite tasty (though we think the fish prides itself on its number of bones).

Alas our timing puts our drive to the hotel, in Ubud, close to rush hour going through the biggest city in Bali. Traffic in Bali consists of two parts: 1) Cars and Trucks and 2) motor bikes. The motor bikes seem to do what they can and please (though politely). The cars and trucks do what they have to to avoid killing too many motor bikers.

Intersections are round-about in the big city, and intersections with no signs or lights in the rest of the country. We'd let the opposing traffic go as long as our patience allows, then we go. Somehow it all works out.

Our hotel is lovely and sprawling. Our room's in the next zip code. We've been upgraded, which is nice, given that we're here for three nights. In our 'one big room' is a king sized bed, which we expect, and a huge bathtub, which we don't. The sleeping area, and shower, tub, and 'water closet' are all out in the open (save for some partially frosted glass for the toilet). Karen pulls a curtain that gives us a modicum of privacy in the bathroom part of our room.

We dine at a local place which has good food, cold beer, and respectable margaritas. It is Friday so dinner includes a show of two dancing Balinese ladies. We can now check that off our Asia Bingo card.

Photos



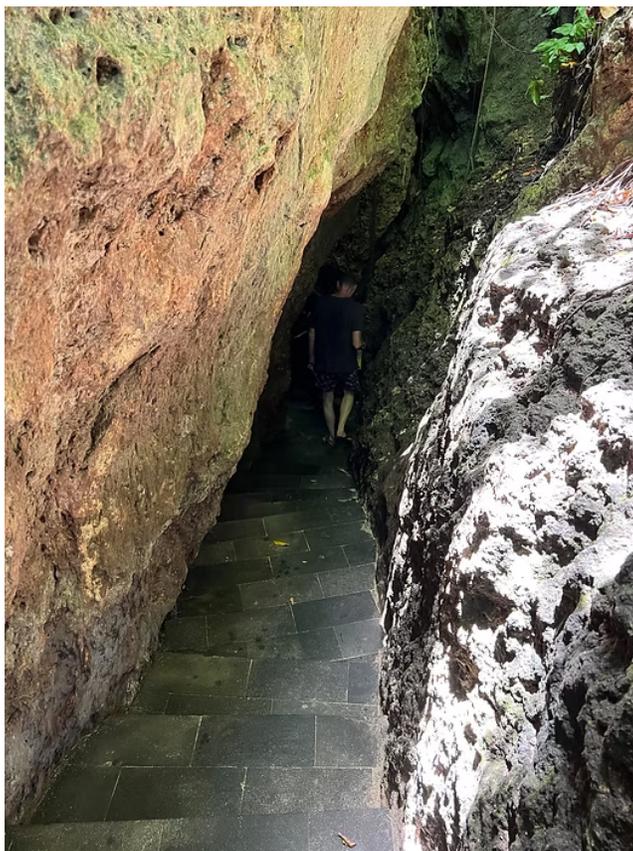
Our first time in the Indian Ocean. Woo
Whoo!



Our first monkey in Bali!



DANG, our second monkey in Bali.



The 'cave' you walk through down to Padang-
Padang beach



In the water (a bit, so far) on Padang-
Padang beach



FARNSNIENTE



Karen and our fun guide Rina.



So... first time in a dress?





Seems pretty blatant. Monkeys at a conference table discussing what they should steal next.



Our hotel room, and bathroom, all in one!



Dinner, beers, margaritas. Ahhh.

[Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Index](#)

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