

Post



Scott Farnsworth

Mar 17, 2023 · 4 min read

Drinking cat-poop coffee - March 18, 2023

Updated: Mar 20, 2023

SUMMARY

Eleven hours of cold-fighting sleep but the cold is still winning. Happily we had arranged a late start and were able to sleep in. The first stop on our day trip from Ubud was the Elephant Cave and its accompanying temple. Next was a beautiful waterfall with WAY too many stairs. Also visited a civet cat poop coffee plantation and tried 16 kinds of coffee and tea. The evening was spent at a Balinese family's farm getting a cooking lesson from Mom, Dad, son and son's girlfriend. They were delightful and we had a great time with delicious food. (I had to tell the Food Safety girl inside me to chill and go with the flow!) - Karen

DETAIL

On a prior day our guide Rina asked how much we're able to say in Indonesian. Not much. She tried to teach us a few words. This morning, on the way to breakfast, we passed many hotel staff and to each I said "Good Morning". They said something else back that sounded very different. At breakfast I double checked and I had been saying "Very good!". Whoops.

After breakfast Benny drives us all to the Elephant Cave. On the way Rina shares some food gifts she's secured for us: local breakfast wraps and fruit. The breakfast wraps are something cooked surrounded by rice flour mixture, wrapped in a banana leaf and steamed to cook it all. The insides of ours were a bit of cooked pumpkin and some banana. We'd had this in Thailand and liked it in both countries. The fruit is Rambutan, aka hairy fruit, snake fruit, and mangosteen. They aren't easy to get into (we need help) but they are good!

The Elephant Cave is, well, a cave, with an elephant in it (or at least a carved elephant, or two). They're carved from rock and are maybe three feet tall, each. They're seated like a happy buddha statue, or a one year old. There's an accompanying story about some lady or goddess who lost her child and wanted him back. Only way that could happen (as we all know) is if it comes back in the form of an elephant. Problem solved. There is also some old fountains, a nature walk and a small waterfall.

Stop two is a much bigger waterfall. The enterprising owners set up all kinds of Instagram-ready photo stations. There's a nest big enough for a human, and a big woven heart big enough for a couple. In the background is the surprisingly tall waterfall. It's constantly delivering an ungodly amount of water per second. You CAN get into the water, but only to a certain point. They have a big wire rope with flotation balls to mark the limit. It would appear that if you did get under the falls, you aren't coming out again.

Our third stop of the day is one we've been looking forward to for a long time. This is where cats (well, civet cats) in the dark of night eat coffee beans and later poop them out. Humans then collect the cat scat and (oh god please) clean and roast and grind it. And then other humans pay big bucks to buy it.

Walking into the tasting room we see coffee growing. We can see ripe and unripe beans. Apparently the civet cats only eat the ripest beans, according to the company's marketing department. We see a tame civet cat that Karen pets, seemingly in the wrong direction until corrected. She didn't get bit. There are two other untamed civet cats who looked vicious, even though they are asleep (being nocturnal animals).

For our tasting we get two main coffees, the cat-poop-coffee (Kopi Lowak) and the same types of beans, from the same bushes, but which has not gone through a mammal's digestive tract. We also get 15 or so other flavored coffees and teas. Some of the more interesting ones were lemongrass, ginger, mangosteen, and avocado. The cat-poop coffee was fine.

On the way in they had shown us not only coffee beans, but a few other of the plants they had growing there, that made it into their coffees and teas. The list of plants was so long and interesting I wrote them down: banana, vanilla, ginger, and turmeric, clove, lemon grass, passion fruit, papaya, ginseng, guava, cacao, rose apple, cinnamon, mango, betel nut, starfruit, mangosteen, durian, rambutan, dragon fruit, lime, mandarin, and a kiwi-like fruit, kadong-dong. One sees fruit on trees all over Bali, it's amazing.

We stop in to a batik and weaving factory. It's not really a factory, there are a couple of women there applying the wax to the fabric. The patterns were intricate and detailed. The end result was beautiful, but given how much more travel we have before we're home, we didn't buy anything.

Somewhere in all of that we stopped for a delicious lunch that we paid for (but man things are inexpensive here). And then the highlight of a full day was going to a Balinese cooking class. Again, just the two of us. Thankfully they let Rina hang out with us, too. Karen cooked a lot. I did some chopping. We made satay chicken and sauce, soup, chicken steamed in banana leaf, and pork with vegetables. The family couldn't have been nicer or more cute. The main 'actors' were the couple's son and his 26 year-old fiancee. I not sure I learned anything but it was fun and delicious.

Photos



Another temple, another skirt for Scott



Sorry about your baby... here's a small elephant. (Am I over-paraphrasing the story?)



A really powerful waterfall we visited



Karen petting the civet cat (correctly)



Karen tasting the Kopi Lowak (cat-poop coffee). Me? The more normal stuff.



Rubutan - Hairy Fruit (very tasty)



So much rice everywhere here



New year's celebration is in a few days.
The temple gods must be taken out for
cleaning (purification).

FARNSNIENTE



Outdoor-ish cooking class kitchen



Me saying "You want me to dice that??"



Karen less than thrilled with the color of her (thankfully) gloved hand



The very tasty end result

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

Subscribe Form

Email Address

Submit



©2023 by FarnsNiente. Proudly created with Wix.com