

Post



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# Just a short day - March 19, 2023

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## ***SUMMARY***

The main take-away from today is that while the Balinese Hindus are lovely people, they worship an un-godly number Gods, countless Goddesses, and innumerable good and evil spirits. They have practitioners of Black Magic and are incredibly superstitious! (But lovely!) Our 1:00 start time afforded us the chance to sleep in, spend time at the pool, and find a crêpe resto for lunch. In the swampy afternoon heat we visited two very pretty temples and hit numerous traffic snags behind large group of locals in full Balinese regalia marching their local God "dolls" (our guide's word, not mine) to the sea or lake for blessings. This is all in preparation for the New Year which begins on March 22nd. - Karen

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### ***DETAIL***

[Holy Cannoli, is our trip almost over? OK, no, but we did depart from Austin on February 25th and we're approaching the 20th of March. We've been here a while, eh? We haven't done the math but we're guessing our trip is maybe like 25% or 33% over. We do not even want to know. Having a great time. Will just shut up and type.]

If one were on a guided tour, as we are, and one could pick the ideal time for the tour to start on a given day, might that time be 1:00 pm? Based on today, I think we'd both say "Yes!" We are having just a half day of our touring stuff today.

We sleep in late, which is always good for a cold, and have a late breakfast.

Afterwards we change and head to the pool. It's like paradise. Of course we're looking for nothing but shade. Color us pasty white!

We're currently in Ubud, a city name in which both U's are pronounced the same. Julia Roberts, she of the attractive and big mouth, did a movie here: Eat, Pray, Love. Well, one third of that movie, in any case: the "Love" third. She wasn't in this hotel, but was maybe on the other side of the main drag, towards the monkey sanctuary. We asked our driver whether she saw the filming. She said she hadn't but that apparently the film production company had dropped some money to buy the whole town for a period of time for the filming. Based on what we've experienced, it probably wasn't all that much (but it is beautiful here).

For lunch we're just going to walk to a local place. We look up what's available and we spy a French Crêpe place. You had us at French Crêpe place. We've also looked up how many French restaurants there are in the city in Cambodia where we're going (and Vietnam) and man, we can't wait.

The place we're going today is named "The Spell Crêpe", a name which makes no sense to us. It's on a side street, thank god, so it's calm and quiet. There's seating on the first and second floors, and I do mean floors. We were sitting on the floor. There's nothing like going from standing to sitting on a small pillow on the floor to remind you of your age. The server, like all the servers here, is as helpful and charming as she could be. The two of us split one of their Prix Fixe lunch menus, with a Crêpe Complet (with Paris ham and French cheese) and a sweet crêpe for dessert and a beverage. Everything is divine.

We briskly walk the fair distance back to our hotel and are picked up precisely at one. We're seeing two temples today, yay [insert sarcasm here]. Truth be told, one of them is on the water, on the Indian Ocean, so we are actually excited about that one.

Our drive is repeatedly interrupted by entire villages of well dressed people headed to some water, with their local god in tow and offerings balanced on their heads. This gives us time to understand (a little) better what's going on. This coming Wednesday is the 'Day Of Silence' where everyone (and we do mean everyone) in the city will fast and not leave their homes. You can, but only if you want to get arrested. Prior to that it's essential to clean your god (well, to have him cleansed by holy water) and give an offering. What we're seeing today is that last part.

We've been in Bali now for a week and one thing we know is that in front of each store, regardless of size, is a small (4" x 4") short banana leaf "basket" with a few flowers, some grass, maybe a biscuit, and possibly some burning incense. These are offerings. This is a daily thing. Our guide, Rina, does this every day. She makes 25 per day. Except today. She made 100 (that is, some extras for the festival and tomorrow's offerings, since we're headed out of town for a day). To say we have a good idea of how the Hindu religion works would be, well, a bold face lie.

At the first Temple I tie my own sarong today. Mistake, I should have had someone else do it. We walk (well, I hobble) around a temple built in 1,634. It's still very much in use regularly today. We walk through the first part (Birth) and the second (Life), but we can never go into the third part (After-life). That is, we can't go in there unless we're A) Hindu and B) Worshipping.

The second temple is built on a spit of rock out in the ocean. You can walk to it (if you're Hindu and worshipping). We go as far as we can. There's a second temple out over the water, on a point with waves crashing all around. It is moving. (Well IT'S not moving but we're moved).

Dinner's at Soul Bites, which was great and which (like everywhere here) has the sweetest and most earnest young wait staff. We see tech nomads, probably from the Silicon Valley, on their Apple MacBooks programming. We feel like we're at home for a short while.

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## Photos



Karen enjoying pool time in paradise (no sun, please!)



Finally able to lower ourselves to the floor to eat



The crêpe made it all worthwhile!



On our way to the temple, a place of worship, there were all these pesky worshipers in our way!!



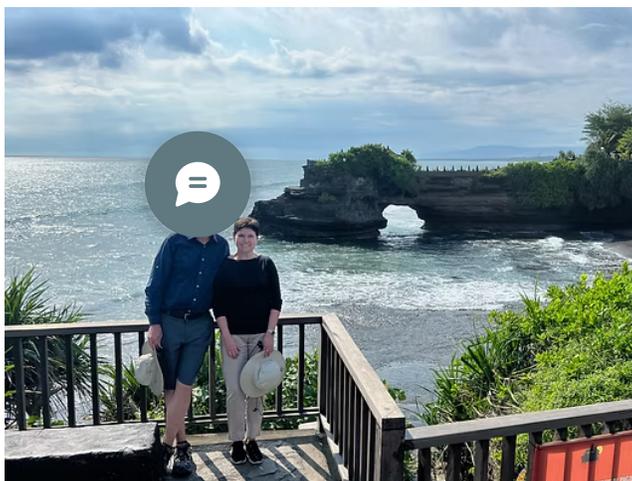
The third part (afterlife) of our first temple.



Part of the second part (life) of the temple with a common local activity (cock fighting).



A very cool temple on a very hot day. The tide is out now. The hole will be 1/2 that size in ? six hours.



Karen and myself in front of same said temple



So many offerings at the temple. Including cash money!! (well 1,000 Rupiah notes... US\$0.0065)



Another cool temple, complete with crashing waves

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