

# HOT PROPERTY - PURI BAWANA

Vol. 8 2008 - Typically Tropical in Canggu



**CASE STUDY THREE**

## Typically Tropical In Canggu

BY KIRUS JOHNSTON PHOTOS BY LUCKY PHOTOGRAPHY

DESPITE BALI'S RISING STATUS AS THE RIVIERA OF THE PACIFIC IS THAT A MAUGHTY SNEAKER I HEAR FROM PHUKET? THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF SPRAWLING PALATIAL PROPERTIES TRULY DESERVING OF THE 'VILLA' MONIKER AND AVAILABLE FOR RENT IS NOT ALL THAT HIGH.

There are the kinds of residence that can work as privileged retreats for large groups and as venues for large-scale functions like weddings. A brand new villa in Canggu now adds itself to this rare set, earning accolades that will sustain it as well as a refreshing reputation for its surroundings.

Designed by Australian architect Guy Morgan for a second-generation re-patriate family based in Hong Kong, Villa Puri Bawana is located on the classic Balinese garden compound arrangement, spilling with pleasing symmetry down a valley gradient towards a small beach, with a series of stepped rice paddies dominating the view to the north and west. Morgan has taken full advantage of the topography to create a gradually unfolding experience that begins with the property's large garden compound. "This is a public space that gives sense of what's to come," says Morgan. "Guests can be dropped off here, their eyes are drawn to a play of reds over the wall. It's here they get their first sense of the property."

The owner purchased unique Balinese doors which Morgan and his team built around, passing through this design to the next entrance, guests are greeted by another traditional Balinese element – the Aling Aling, a screening screen with a bamboo motif – blocks through which one can see the smaller glimpses of the possessions of buildings beyond. "I love this feature – it adds a feeling of mystery as well as providing privacy to those inside," remarks Morgan.

Like the Aling Aling and Puri Bawana at last month's event, with its two-story flanking a central garden topped by a high vaulted ceiling, which quite deliberately recalls the classic of Balinese traditional community gathering houses. With the door size of the property (30 are with a further 20 are based to the north that is currently being maintained as rice fields) Morgan had to be mindful of accessibility. "I felt there had to be a high of superior of spaces so I kept all of the first bedrooms on one side and being closer to entertainment areas on the other side, with the swimming pool as a central reception area."

Walk to the edge of this site tomorrow and there is yet another revelation in the past appears. Fringed by a strip of matured trees that runs through into the field, an half-acre garden has been the second valley rising beyond it.

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One issue that contemporary architects have faced in adopting the Balinese architectural style is the need to provide all weather access. Covered walkways between buildings provided an obvious solution, but for Morgan the aesthetic cost is not worth paying. "They remind me of hospitals or educational facilities," he says. Instead, the housing was approached via a minimalist covered walkways which will soon be spilling frequent crevices and views. "Okay, there are perhaps a few sections where you actually meet the elements, but there are always umbrellas." A layered and pleasing accent is the use of checked black and white tiles to the walkways – "It adds a touch of the colonial style you find in old buildings in Singapore, which I love."

The efficacy of this method of along which that roofed buildings desire to work from the spaces in between them as the structure themselves. The owners employed the services of Equatorial Design for the garden spaces – a mix of water features (ponds can also), landscaped elements, lawns and private gardens within the bedroom compounds. Outside, these are used in natural settings between living spaces, reducing the need to keep everything enclosed to maintain privacy – stacks of palm and other tropical flora provide a natural barrier. Additional steel screens by One World (inspired by ceramic artist Philip Lakson and Graham Oldford) complete the picture of a steady hand designed for the tropics.

The bedrooms themselves all include king size beds, with in wardrobes, internal showers and most on high, balconies that are suitable enough to obtain. All of these include open spaces that encourage you to linger, whether a walled garden or its own rare timber deck and a hot pool. The only second floor bedroom has its own lounge hole garden. "I love the idea of the bedrooms being a social, interactive space. When someone's having a bath, you have a rapid audience, it's a great time to talk. And it's also great for building romance," says Morgan with a regular smile.

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# Typically Tropical in Canggu

By Rufus Johnston | Photos by Lucky 8 Photography

*Despite Bali's burgeoning status as the riviera of the Pacific (is that a haughty snicker I hear from Phuket?) the actual number of sprawling, palatial properties truly deserving of the 'villa' moniker and available for rent is not all that high.*

These are the kinds of residences that can work as privileged retreats for large groups and as venues for large-scale functions like weddings. A brand new villa in Canggu now adds itself to

this rare set, marrying aesthetic flair with utilitarian savvy and refreshing reverence for its surroundings.

Designed by Australian architect Guy Morgan for a second generation ex-patriot family based in Hong Kong, Villa Puri Bawana elaborates on the classical Balinese garden compound arrangement, spilling with pleasing symmetry down a valley gradient towards a small brook with a sweep of stepped rice paddies dominating the view to the north and west. Morgan has taken full advantage of this topography to create a gradually unfolding experience that begins with the property's large garden courtyard. "This is a public space that gives hints of what's to come," says Morgan. "Guests can be dropped off here, their eyes are drawn to a play of roofs over the wall, it's here they get their first sense of the property."

The owners purchased antique Balinese doors which Morgan and his team built around; passing through this deceptively discreet entrance, guests are greeted by another traditional element – the Aling Aling, a screening monolith inscribed with a bamboo motif – chinks through which you catch the smallest glimpses of the procession of buildings beyond it. "I love this feature – it adds a feeling of mystery as well as providing privacy to those inside," remarks Morgan.

Skirt the Aling Aling and Puri Bawana at last reveals itself, with its two wings flanking a central pavilion topped by high vaulted ceiling, which quite deliberately recalls the classical Balinese Wantilan (community gathering house). With the sheer size of the property (50 are with a further 20 are leased to the south that is currently being maintained as rice field) Morgan had to be mindful of accessibility. "I felt there had to be a logical sequence of spaces so I kept all of the five bedrooms on one side and living/dining/entertainment areas on the other side, with the wantilan acting as a central reception area."

Walk to the edge of this airy structure and there is yet another revelation as the pool appears. Fringed by a strip of manicured lawn that turns abruptly into rice field, its half-moon profiles echoes the terraced valley rising beyond it.

One issue that contemporary architects have faced in adapting the Balinese architectural style is the need to provide all weather access. Covered walkways between buildings provided an obvious solution, but for Morgan the aesthetic cost is not worth paying. "They remind me of hospitals or educational facilities," he says. Instead, the two wings are approached via colonnades covered with pergolas which will soon be spilling fragrant creepers and vines. "Okay, there are perhaps a few sections where you actually meet the elements, but there are always umbrellas!" A fanciful and pleasing accent is the use of checked black and white tiles in these walkways – "It adds a touch of the colonial style you find in old buildings in Singapore, which I love."

The efficacy of this medley of alang alang thatch-roofed buildings derives as much from the spaces in between them as the structures themselves. The owners employed the services of Equatorial Designs for the garden spaces – a mix of water features (ponds and cascades), landscaped elements, lawns, and private gardens within the bedroom compounds. Outside, these are used as natural screens between living spaces, reducing the need to keep everything enclosed to maintain privacy – stands of palm and other tropical flora replaces austere walls. Additional tiled mosaics by One World (founded by ceramic artists Philip Lakeman and Graham Oldroyd) complete the picture of a stately home designed for the tropics.

The bedrooms themselves all include king size island beds, walk in wardrobes, internal shower units, and most strikingly, bathrooms that are veritable temples to ablution. All of these include open spaces that encourage you to linger, whether a walled garden or in one case timber decking and lotus pond. The only second floor bedroom has its own lounging bale pavilion. "I love the idea of the bathroom being a social, interactive space. When someone's having a bath, you have a captive audience, it's a great time to talk. And it's also great for kindling romance," says Morgan with a roguish smile.

Cempaka Interiors were responsible for interiors – a rich mix of custom furnishings, including a purpose built unit for the audio-visual system in the entertainment/lounge compound, wallpaper backdrops above beds, modular lounges with multi-hued upholstery and a color palette for the walls that runs from duck egg blues to sunny yellows. The effect is refreshingly non-generic yet not overstated. A stand-out feature is the circular stained glass window, which gives a kaleidoscopic effect to the view beyond it. Whilst the other bedrooms feature tile floors, the master suite is clad in ironwood, jutting out towards the little brook that trickles along the valley floor.

The dining pavilion sits at the same level as the wantilan, atop the entertainment room, once again protruding eastward. A vast slab of reclaimed teak wood acts as the dining table, whilst a low boundary wall provides seating, as well as framing wonderful views. A neat little addition that was requested by the owner is a children room, featuring bunk beds and its own en-suite shower room that deliberately evokes a nightclub bathroom, complete with mirrored surfaces. "It means you can put all the kids together in an enclosed space that's just perfect for pillow fights!" says Morgan.

The villa's mechanical and engineering elements are as impressive as its aesthetics, both for their ecological qualities and for the thinking that has gone into service issue. There is a sewage treatment system that diverts biological waste into a special garden plot instead of sending it straight into the leech field. The hydraulics unit is of the highest quality, installed by a company out of Perth, whilst a generator provides complete electrical back up in the event of power cuts. Staff quarters are spacious and each compound includes its own discrete staff access. Ironwood comes from plantations as opposed to natural forests, whilst much of the rice field that existed here before has been preserved and continues to be farmed by the original owner.

Villa Puri Bawana exemplifies high design done responsibly, achieving a careful parity with its surrounds. Expect its imminent appearance on rental market, with resultant waves ... just as soon as its owners can tear themselves from it.

Tenure: Freehold

Plot Size: 50 are plus additional 20 are

Completed: January 2008

Architect: Guy Morgan Architects

Interiors : Cempaka Interiors

Landscaping: Equatorial Design