

ECO Lodges

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Five artful bungalows perch on a ridge 700 metres up the slopes of extinct volcano Mount Batukaru with sweeping rainforest views to the distant ocean. Natural ponds, waterfalls and spring-fed pools are part of Saribuana Eco Lodge, Bali's longest running eco lodge.

Owners Norm and Linda van Hoff started here in 1991, and soon after began creating a sustainable resort where visitors could engage with nature and Balinese culture. They believe that an eco lodge "is so much more than a room. It seeks to integrate with the natural, built and social environments."

Their low-impact bungalows are built with natural materials, blending seamlessly with the natural contours of the land. Large verandas and windows allow mountain air and natural light to flow in, fresh water comes from a natural spring, and wastewater filters into permaculture gardens that provide fresh organic ingredients for the restaurant.

It's hard to swing a yoga mat in Bali without coming across a resort or hotel that claims to be 'eco' or some variation of that theme. While some simply use the term to cash in on the 'green' trend, some actually live up to their promises. This issue we look at four resorts that have truly earned their eco titles.

Saribuana Eco Lodge



Community is key. The resort hires only local staff and consults with village leaders about all of their endeavours. Thanks to collaborations between Saribuana Eco Lodge and the local community, the Batukaru rainforest (which is the largest remaining wet rainforest on Bali) is now a protected 'no take' zone where hunting, harvesting, and cutting down trees is forbidden.

The amiable staff here take pride in showing off their organic gardens and food forests, taking guests on treks through the rainforest and up Mount Batukaru. Be sure to inquire about their tree-planting program where you can offset your carbon footprint by purchasing seedlings from local farmers and planting them to create



Bali Eco Stay

In 2010, while John and Cath Blundstone were camping with their young son in Australia, they met Norm and Linda of Sarinbuana Eco Lodge, who convinced them to visit them in Bali. Looking for another direction in life, they became so inspired by Sarinbuana's impressive eco efforts that they decided to create their concept just 20 minutes down the mountain.

Eight discreet bungalows overlook working padi fields, organic gardens and a 12-metre waterfall cascading into the forest below. Each one-of-a-kind bungalow was built using local labour and natural materials. Electricity comes mainly from the hydro system, and wastewater is recycled into the permaculture gardens.

The resort is managed by husband and wife team Agung and Mini, who also own the land. Staff come from nearby Kanciana Village. They support local artisans by purchasing locally and in addition, all profits are reinvested locally.

Bali Eco Stay encourages guests to explore the natural surroundings and join in the colourful religious ceremonies that take place in the village. They also offer cooking classes where you can learn to make the delicious organic dishes served at the resort, as well as wood carving classes, mountain bike tours and sunrise treks up Mount Batukaru.

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food and habitat for wildlife in the area.

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Bloo Lagoon

Bloo Lagoon Village is like no other. Designed by architects Tony Gwilliam and Marita Vidal, the resort features 25 eco-friendly, open-plan villas set atop a cliff high above the ocean in Padang Bai, as well as an open-air yoga deck, and an edge cliff with a spiral staircase winding down to a spa and a contemporary art gallery featuring rotating Indonesian artists.

The resort was designed to be a living, evolving space where guests, staff and homeowners can live in harmony. Their motto, 'Bloo is the New Green', refers to their efforts to respect the land ecosystem above and the ocean ecosystem below.

Other environmentally conscious efforts include LED lights throughout the resort, minimal pavement to encourage rainwater to soak directly into the earth and drain into the storage ponds, the addition of water gallons and glasses in each of the rooms to eradicate the need for plastic water bottles, and organic gardens that take up nearly a third of the land and produce fruits, vegetables and herbs for the restaurant.

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Balila Beach Resort

Halfway between Amed and Tulamben, Balila Beach Resort this oasis of tranquility overlooks a curved black sand beach on one side and the massive cone of Mount Agung looming on the horizon. Owner Birci and her Balinese husband Made researched sustainable building method to make a truly eco resort. A series of rooms and private suites are made with local stone, earth bricks, and wooden beams from Neem trees, all natural materials. Rainwater catchment tanks, solar heaters, wastewater filtration systems, and a vortex to energise the swimming pool are all interesting eco features.

Gorgeous bathrooms are decked out with colourful tiles from local artisans and organic bath products from local producer Sensatia Botanicals. The cosy restaurant serves up dishes made with ingredients from the organic permaculture garden like tomatoes, papayas and leafy greens. The sea salt comes from producers nearby, the fish from local fisherman. You won't see a drop of palm oil here, only healthy coconut oil. It's all good and the sunsets are to die for.

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