

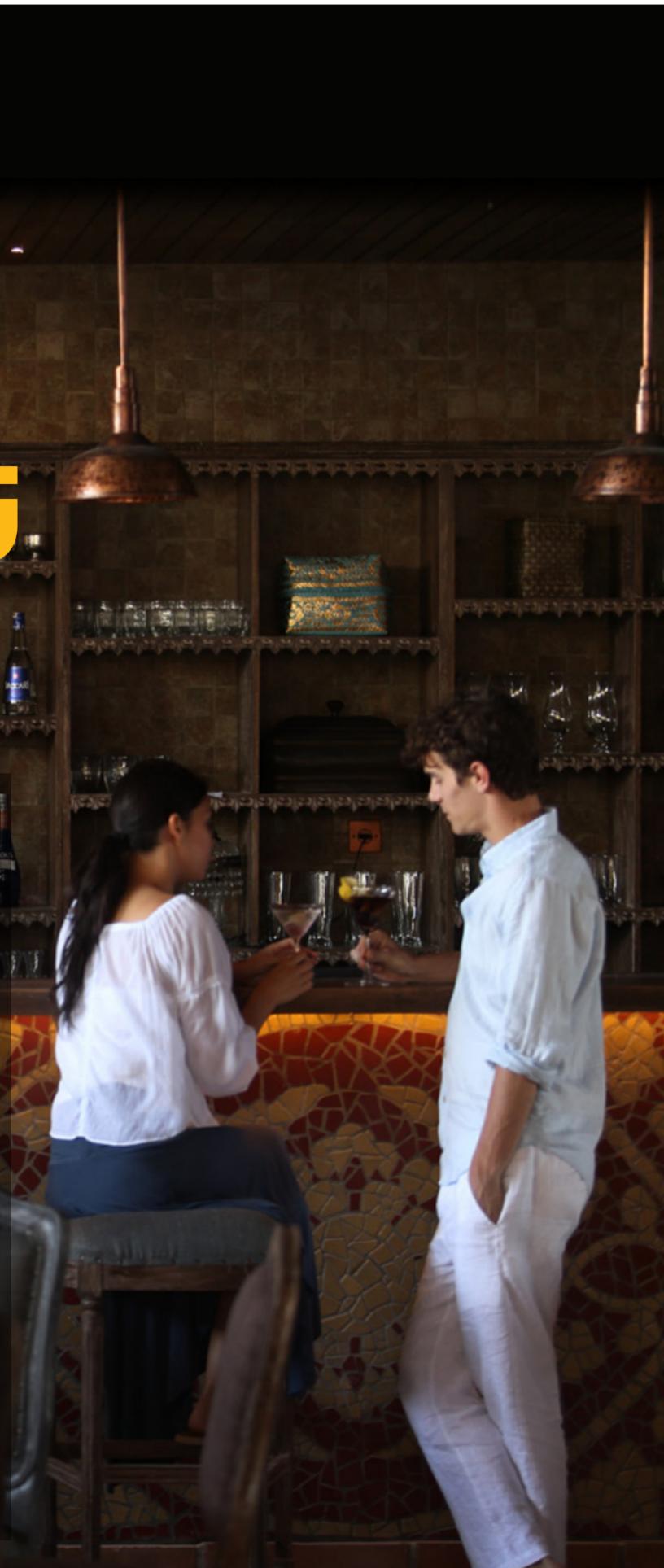
A Royal Night Out

If you're looking for an innovative take on 'date night' this Friday, flee the traffic of 'Eat Street' down south and head up to the rice paddies of Petani Restaurant at Alaya Ubud.

By Stacy James

Following the resounding success of their boutique villa compound in the heart of Kuta, the forward thinking owners of Villa de daun have brought a touch of luxury and sophistication to the bohemian chic Jalan Hanoman in Ubud. Despite opening to the public just a few months ago, the new Alaya Ubud has already been nominated for this year's World Luxury Hotel Awards and is consistently experiencing occupancy level of over 90% for the 60-room hotel.

Enjoying the best of both worlds, a lively sidewalk scene on one side and lush rice paddies on the other, Alaya is conceptualized by three of Asia's hottest commercial designers including Grounds Kent Architects; landscape extraordinaire Made Wijaya and sultry interiors guru Zohra Boukhari. The perfect spot to catch up with your beloved after a busy week, book a cosy table for two at Alaya's signature Petani Restaurant.



Petani's Coffee Bar



Nasi Raja



Petani Restaurant Interior

Overlooking Ubud's quintessential rice paddies, relax with an Alaya Sling, a heavenly concoction of gin, lychee liqueur, cherry brandy, DOM, basil, ginger and pineapple juice, a chilled glass of Duval Leroy Vintage Champagne or a Strawberry Blush mocktail mixed with strawberry, mango, spiced syrup and coconut cream.

Behind the scenes, the former personal chef of Ubud's royal family prepares Indonesian and International delights for you to savour. Specializing in long lost recipes that Petani's culinary team is discovering across the archipelago one dish at a time, get your authentic Indonesian fix with Executive Chef Siharta's Nasi Raja, a rijstaffel-style aristocratic dish served during ceremonies. Regally presented on a colourfully hand-painted dulang, an elevated wooden plate that resembles a small fanciful table, several succulent tastes of Indonesia's unique cuisine offer the perfect opportunity for sharing *à deux*. Feather light tempura prawns, ikan satay, vegetable lawar, melt-in-your-mouth babi, prawn crackers, three types of sambal including everyone's favourite sambal matah, and shredded smoked chicken dance around a pyramid shaped cone of nasi bira – a special Balinese rice reserved for ceremonial occasions.

An evening at Petani can be as subdued or as lively depending on your mood. Every Tuesday, violinist Helga Sedli performs up close and personal, creating a palpable

electricity in the island's mystical cultural centre. The 120-seat dining room offers a new and exciting venue for private events with Boukhari's eclectic mix of the avant-garde and a nod to yesteryear: velvet upholstered sofas, antique cooking accessories, hand-decorated Balinese ceremonial baskets, framed batik textiles and modern concrete walls adorned with woven rice farmer hats create an inviting and invigorating ambience.

Petani's coffee bar boasts a special 70th edition La Marzocco four groups FB/70 espresso machine, often referred to as the Rolls Royce of coffee machines. Featuring fresh beans sourced from Toraja, West Java, Papua, and Singaraja, enjoy a leisurely coffee after dinner as Ubud's dynamic scene passes right before your eyes. Take a much-deserved mini-holiday as Petani's ginger cappuccino, crème brûlée café, iced Java chip or black forest latte transport you to another time and place.

And if date night isn't enough, book a half-day getaway at Dala Spa, offering one of the island's most unique spa experiences. Not only will you indulge in a lavish spa treatment in one of six sumptuous double treatment suites, you will also be introduced and guided to making your own spa products utilizing the bounty of Bali's natural ingredients including candlenut, cinnamon and turmeric. www.alayaubud.com