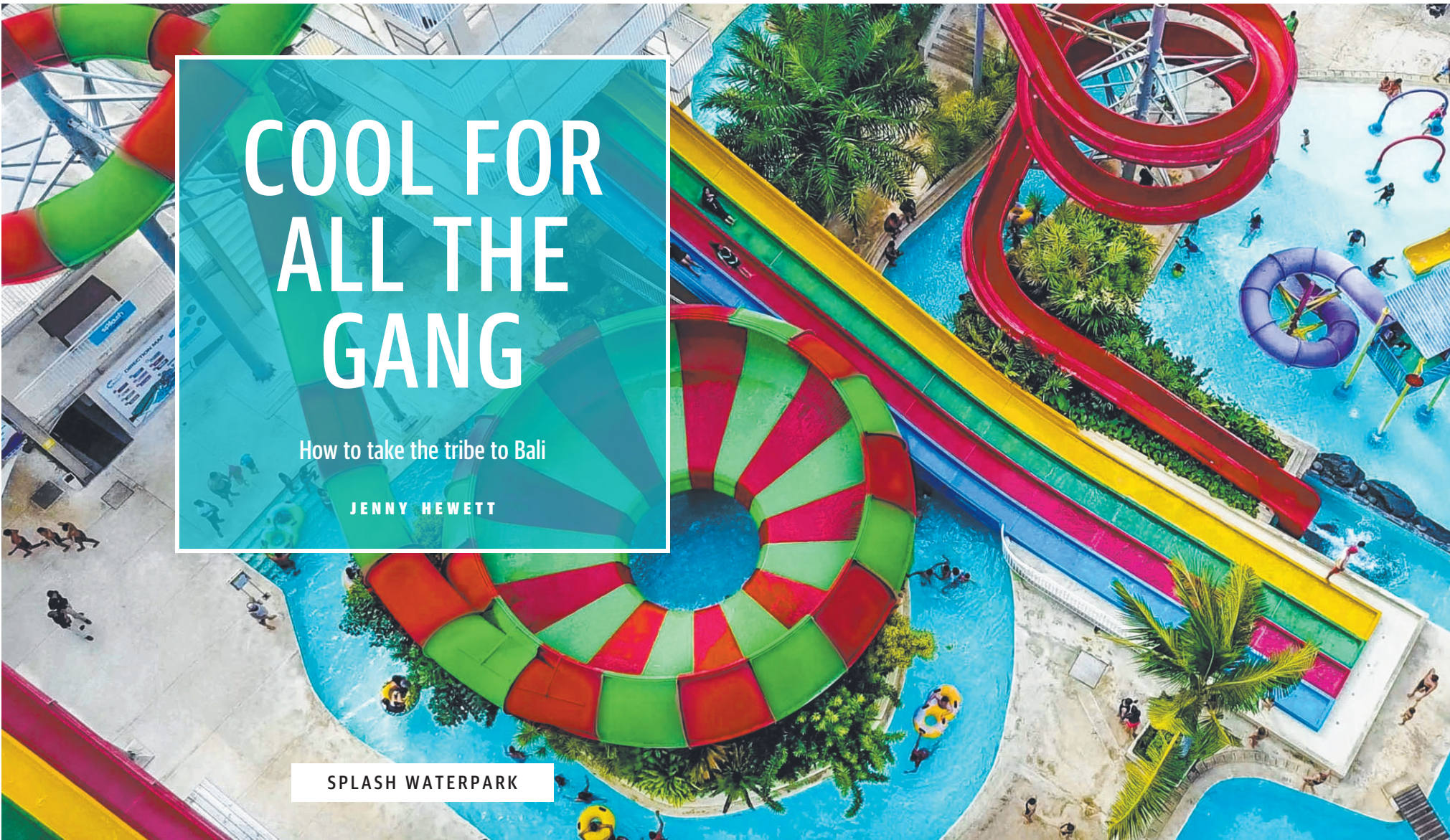


FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ♦ BALI FOR FAMILIES



Not all island destinations appeal to families just as much as they do to backpackers and honeymooners. But Bali is the ultimate all-rounder. With its kid-friendly resorts and beaches, affordable eats and adventure-loving landscape, the Indonesian island offers an enticing escape that should probably come with its own disclaimer.

Why? Because it's guaranteed your kids will make you promise to take them back. Here's what you need to know before taking your tribe to Bali.

WHAT ARE THE BEST AREAS FOR FAMILIES?

Some neighbourhoods in Bali cater to families more than others, but it's really a matter of preference. Things to consider before booking are how much you'll be doing and whether you want to get around on foot or in a car. Most areas are within an hour to two hours of each other, depending on traffic. Here are some guidelines.

JIMBARAN

A short drive from the airport, this low-key fishing village is ideal for families with tots who want to chill by the beach without travelling far. A handful of luxe resorts hug the calm bay, but more affordable villa stays are also an option. The Bukit Peninsula, with its family-friendly Balangan Beach, is a 25-minute drive away.

NUSA DUA

Flop-and-drop resorts with everything from kids' clubs to waterslides ensure you won't want to leave this upscale beachside area in Bali's south. If pool time, room service and waterfront sunsets are high on your agenda, you'll have no regrets tucking your tribe into bed here.

SEMINYAK

Better known for shopping, beach clubs, nightlife and quality eats, this buzzy hub doesn't immediately stand

out as a place for families. But intergenerational holidaymakers are well catered to in Seminyak, with an enormous range of private villas offering plenty of space to stay and play, as well as babysitting services.

UBUD

Beyond being Bali's cultural and creative heart, Ubud is a natural wonderland, with everything from whitewater rafting to quad-biking and rice paddie treks on offer for energetic families. More cultivated kids will appreciate the water temples and galleries, while the Sacred Monkey Forest is universally loved.

NUSA LEMBONGAN

Bali's southeastern islands are ideal for adventurous clans. With affordable beachfront accommodation, a slow, rustic vibe and snorkelling, surfing, diving and island hopping all on offer, there's little chance of hearing "I'm bored".

CANGGU

This hip surfing community beyond Seminyak appeals to both teens and little kids, with beach play, surfing, a waterpark, markets and plenty of kid-

FOR KIDS THAT GO GAGA FOR CUTE, CUDDLY THINGS, BUNNIES HOP AROUND THE TABLES

friendly cafes. It's not as easy to get around on foot and taxis are hard to come by, so budget for a private driver.

ULUWATU

The Bukit Peninsula isn't for most families, but for teens who love the water, it's heaven on earth. Smaller waves and surf schools can be found at Bingin Beach (note that it's accessed via hundreds of stairs) while Uluwatu is home to the Pura Luhur temple and nightly Kecak fire dance.

SANUR

With its clean, white sand and gentle shores, this peaceful beach town on

Bali's southeast welcomes families who want to escape crowds. There's a range of more affordable stays and a handful of luxury resorts.

WHAT ABOUT ACCOMMODATION?

Your accommodation dollars stretch much further in Bali and there's a huge range of hotels, resorts and homestays to suit all budgets. At the more reasonable end of the scale, Booking.com is a good way to find highly rated and locally owned three- and four-star stays, which typically include breakfast, Wi-Fi, a pool and pleasant service.

At the luxe end, palatial resorts in Nusa Dua, Jimbaran, Seminyak and Sanur are renowned for their kids' clubs, where little ones can dabble in sea turtle preservation programs and Lego-building. A number also offer complimentary access and free meals. Prices at top tier resorts are steeper than elsewhere, and that's before taxes.

Most of Bali's self-contained villas come with a kitchen, pool and full-time staff, and offer space, privacy and a home away from home. Check out Airbnb for the most popular "superhost" properties in Bali and

refine your search to include villa size, location and family amenities such as high chairs and cribs. Alternatively, find villas to rent on sites such as villaconcierge.com or ministryofvillas.com.

Safety tip: Be aware most villa pools in Bali are not fenced. If travelling with tots, contact Bali Villa Pool Fence (balipoolfence.com), which can assess and erect a makeshift fence at your accommodation before you arrive. Despite this precaution, it's recommended to watch your kids around the pool at all times.

HOW DO WE GET AROUND?

If you have a young family, private local transport is the best way to make day trips. Balinese driver Jana Kusuma is friendly, professional and reliable, and has experience touring with families. He charges from \$50 for a full day. Book him via bali-tourdriver.com.

To hire car seats and boosters for babies, check out balibabyhire.com.

BEST KIDS' EATS?

Most international dining venues in Bali have kids' menus, but there are plenty of spots that go above and beyond. In Canggu, kids eat free at the tapas-themed La Finca, while all-day Aussie-owned Milk & Madu Cafe in Berawa offers arts and crafts every day, 7am to 3pm, and monthly themed parties with prizes for best dressed.

Nearby, The Joglo restaurant has a large playground and runs weekly activity classes for kids, including cooking workshops.

For kids that go gaga for cute, cuddly things, both the Indonesian-themed Dandelion Cafe in Canggu and Maha Restaurant in Ubud have resident bunnies hopping around the tables.

For gore-loving teens and tweens, the horror-themed Frankenstein's Laboratory in Seminyak puts on a fun night of unexpected frights, spooky entertainment and special effects make-up.



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Splash Waterpark at Finns Recreation Club, Canggu, has six waterslides; there's fun galore for tots, including the Sacred Monkey Forest, Ubud; and kids' club at The Westin Resort, Nusa Dua.

PICTURES: FINNS BALI, ISTOCK, STARWOOD



PLAY TIME



MONKEY FOREST

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

THINGS TO DO

BEST FOR ... TOTS

Beach and pool play are plentiful in Bali, but always be mindful of rubbish on public beaches and if you're swimming, stick to the calmer shores of Jimbaran Bay, Sanur and Nusa Dua. For something a little more stimulating, tots can enjoy an educational play date at The Gardens Early Learning Centre in Canggu, which welcomes children from 18 months old for music and sensory classes, when accompanied by a carer. Meanwhile, the Bali Safari & Marine Park has more than 100 species to spot with your mini-mes, including lions, hippos, elephants and Komodo dragons. As well as offering both night and day safaris in a 4x4, the park also has lodge accommodation for families to observe the animals up close overnight.

BEST FOR ... YOUNG KIDS

Voted the best waterpark in Asia for 2018 by travellers on TripAdvisor, Waterbom Bali has spills and thrills for all types of families. The 3.8ha park caters to most levels, from the more mellow lazy river and kids' fun park area to adrenaline-filled slides such as the Pipeline and Twin Racer. Entry is about \$150 for a family of four with kids under 11. On a smaller scale, Splash Waterpark Bali at Finns Recreation Club in Canggu has six different waterslides and offers Super Fun Day passes for a family of four from

about \$176. This includes one-hour access to Bounce Bali trampoline park and Strike Ten Pin Bowling, also on-site, plus entrance to Finn's Beach Club. Pampering is a daily ritual for most Bali holidaymakers and there are a handful of salons encouraging self care for little ones, too. Glo Day Spa has salons in Seminyak, Canggu and Sanur and provides hair-braiding and nail treatments for kids 12 and under.

BEST FOR ... TEENS

From whitewater rafting in Bali's sacred Ayung River to horseriding on the black-sand Echo Beach, active teens will have more than enough to fill their days in Bali. Kuda P Stables outside of Canggu offers peaceful rice paddy, beach and village horserides for children of all levels. For sun, surf and sand-loving teens, Rip Curl School of Surf hosts teens for surfing and stand-up lessons in both Legian and Sanur. They also have little ripper programs for kids under 13. In Ubud, Bali Quad Discovery Tours offers four-wheeling adventures across five types of terrain, including jungle, rice paddies, muddy tracks and villages, and children can ride as passengers. If brainteasers are more your family vibe, the new Totem Room Escape Bali in Seminyak has six different challenge rooms with themes like Mission Impossible and Jungle Book.



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