



NEWSLETTER



Christmas Edition 2015

Amed, Bali



A BALINESE CHRISTMAS STORY FOR CHILDREN: HOW A DOLPHIN SAVED A FISHERMAN

Told by an old fisherman to children who will spend their holiday in Villa Bukit Segara, Bali.

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Soon you will go there for holiday. There is always
sun. The sky is blue and the people are happy.

...



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Far away there is a beautiful island, named Bali. Soon you will go there for holiday. There is always sun. The sky is blue and the people are happy.

Some people work on the land to grow rice but many are fishermen. They get up early because the time that the sun rises is the best for fishing. They will come back in the morning, their wives are already waiting for them on the beach. They bring baskets to take the fish to the market. Then the fisherman and his wife will go home. The wife will give a massage to her husband, because the work of the fisherman is hard and gives pain in his back. Then they will sleep because they wake up very early. They have a baby, the baby sleeps between Pappa and Mamma....therefore babies in Bali don't cry. See how they sleep together, not in a bed but on the floor, a happy family.

But one a day Ilu, a fisherman's wife was waiting on the beach for her husband, Putu..but he didn't come back from the sea. There had been a storm. So, what could have happened? Friends of Putu went back to the sea to search until dark but they could not find him. The next day they went again, but nowhere they saw Putu or his boat. Putu's wife Ilu was day and night waiting on the beach and crying and praying to the gods: please give me back my Putu, I miss him so much.

After some days the fishermen said to Ilu, better you go home because your Putu will not come back, we think he died on the sea, let's have a ceremony and pray for his soul. But Ilu stayed on the

beach, day and night and promised the gods to hold Putu in her arms and carry him home if he would come back.

Putu was not dead, he was floating on the sea, far from the beach, holding a bamboo of his boat in his arms. In the storm his boat was broke in pieces, so just some pieces of bamboo were left. He was hungry and thirsty but how he could go back? He did not see any land...he was praying...please god, bring me back to Ilu, I love her so much..

Suddenly, he heard the sound of dolphins (he knew that sound because dolphins were often nearby his boat when he was fishing). They were trying to get the same fish as he. So sometimes he was angry at them and threw stones to them, but now he was glad to hear them.

Dolphins are clever animals, just as clever as dogs and they like to play. Now they started to play with the bamboo and the fisherman on it, and pushed it in the direction of the beach. After some time the fisherman saw the coast and finally he was thrown on the beach. The dolphins left...laughing!

It was already night when Ilu found her husband, she did what she promised the gods. She took him in her arms and walked like that home with him. He drank and ate and got a massage. Then, they were sleeping with the baby in between them, a happy family again. The next day there was a big ceremony to thank the gods.

ARE GUESTS HAPPY IN AMED?

YES, BUT THE FRENCH A BIT LESS



A little research with surprising outcomes. Like guests talk about their experiences with hotels, owners talk about experiences with guests. Many of them were complaining about the French guests. They were supposed to be less happy (some say even unfriendly and arrogant).

We analysed the ratings of guests on Tripadvisor (TA). It's public information so we mention names and facts. Is it true that French are less happy with their hotel, compared with guests from other countries?

We choose at random some hotels in the neighbourhood. They should have a substantial number of reviews of guests on TA of which a part was unhappy.

- We call a guest unhappy when he gives a rating of "poor" or "terrible."
- We call a guest happy when he gives a rating "excellent" or "very good."

We started with a relative big hotel (30 rooms), the Puri Wirata. Some figures.

- Of the 99 French guests 14 are unhappy, that is 14.1 %
- Of the 53 USA-guests 1 is unhappy, that is 1.8 %
- Of the 59 Australian guests also 1 is unhappy, that is 1.7%

At the happy-side we see this:
French 62%, USA 79%, Australians 82%.

Indeed the French guests are less happy in the same hotel, the same facilities, and the same sea. More Americans and Australians are happy. We could not believe the figures, so we looked at some other hotels.

Santai Hotel. They have 13 negative reviews. 9 are French, 1 is USA, and 1 is Australian. Overall the hotel has 30% guests from France. Indeed again, many French guests are unhappy.

Coral View Hotel. Reviews of French guests 58, of which unhappy 10% and happy 53%. Reviews of Australian guests 52, of which unhappy 2% and happy 83%. Compared with the Australians more French are not happy.

Many negative reviews of French guests show exclamation marks: I am angry!! We stopped our

research, the evidence is overwhelming.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. A VAST MAJORITY OF THE GUESTS IN THE ANALYSED HOTELS ARE HAPPY.
2. ALSO THE MAJORITY OF THE FRENCH GUEST ARE HAPPY.
3. COMPARED WITH OTHERS, THERE ARE MORE UNHAPPY FRENCH GUESTS.

We met some expat-French. Maybe they have a broader look? They say: it's just that we like to complain, it's in our culture but that does not mean we are not happy with the hotel involved. Probably we will go back and complain again it's such an excellent hotel to complain about!

Nevertheless, for hotel owners with French guests there is a challenge, how to make your French guests happy? Here are some suggestions:

- It is easy to conclude that (some) French are bores, but it does not help very much.
- Better, realise that some details are for French more important than for others.
- Salted or unsalted butter at breakfast. An Australian would not bother, for a French it can be a serious point. Take it seriously.
- French are less direct in mentioning their complaints or wishes. So ask them again and again if anything can be improved and ask them not to wait with mentioning until they leave or are at home...and write a negative review.
- Yes, the French can also do some things. Don't bother too much about details, communicate with others, even when they are not French.
- Don't take a French speaking Balinese driver he will bring you to the well-known spots and to restaurants where his commission is the highest. You can also trust not French speaking, local drivers and meet the real Bali. Open your mind to other cultures and languages, learn some English...or stay at home.

Happy Christmas,
Bon Noel.

Note:

Villa Bukit Segara could not participate in the research, the number of not happy French guests is-so far zero. Do they know how to make even unhappy guests happy?

MARE LIBERUM

~ THE SEA IS FREE FOR ALL ~
(BUT NOT IN BALI)

Some years ago a hotel with diving school in Amed bought a boat for trips. It was on a buoy before the hotel. It sunk within days. The owner brought it ashore but never used it again.

The local fishermen told him that making trips with tourists was their business.

Next to Villa Bukit Segara, you will see a boat hanging on the wall. It belongs to the neighbouring hotel. Some years ago, it was bought to take guests on tours. After warnings from the fishermen, it was never used.

So it was a special moment when the leaders of the fishermen and Villa Bukit Segara (Derk and Putu) shook hands and made an agreement. They agreed the following:

1. The Villa respects the traditional position of the fishermen and will not use its boat(s) to make trips with guests.
2. The Fishermen understand and accept that giving sailing lessons is an activity of the villa.
3. The villa and the fishermen will work together. The fishermen will help the boat(s) of the Villa on sea in the case of problems. Boats of the Villa may use the landing station of the fishermen and will get all support. Fishermen will join in sailing matches organized by the villa.
4. For this service and facilities the Villa will give a donation to the cooperation of the fishermen. The proposed amount was accepted.



Because of this agreement we started a good relationship with the fishermen. We became a member of their cooperation. We sponsored the Fishermen's Regatta and Derk did a match against the head of the fishermen...and lost.
(With pleasure he paid the bat.)

Villa Bukit Segara and the fishermen are the best friends. This is good to know when you are sailing with us on the Bali Sea.

Check out our website for more info about our advanced sailing program



FIRST DUTCH SAILING SCHOOL



FIRST STUDENTS AT SAILING SCHOOL RECEIVE DIPLOMA

Valerie (Belgium) and Kate (USA) received their sailing diploma on November 7th from Derk, instructor at the First Dutch Sailing School. Derk emphasized that they can sail now under easy conditions. More practice and training is necessary. Valerie and Kate hope to follow the advanced program next year.

From Valerie and Kate. "It was great fun to learn sailing and spectacular to sail alone. We want to learn how to sail even faster by using the genaker..also we have to practice landing .We can do that on a beach but entering a small harbour with hard wind is another story!"

Well Derk and Putu are sailing all their life but they also keep learning. Picture of Derk, Valerie, Kate at the presentation of their diploma.



DO YOU KNOW A GOOD RESTAURANT NEARBY?

Many guests ask at the reception of the Villa if we know a good restaurant nearby. They will also look at Tripadvisor or use the suggestions of others but the clever guests use other resources. How to advise? Tastes are different and people can think that we want to promote a friend or get commission.

Here is our solution. We ask our guests at check out to give a rating of our restaurant and some popular restaurants nearby. We just started, so the numbers are still small. These are the results.

Guest that stayed in Villa Bukit Segara. And had dinner in and outside						
SCORE						
NAME	BUKIT SEGARA	GUSTO	GRIYA	THE GRILL	SAILS	MIAM
GUESTS 1	10			9		7
GUESTS 2	10	9				
GUESTS 3	8			7		
GUESTS 4	9	8	9	8		
GUESTS 5	9	10	7			
GUESTS 6	9		6	6	5	8
GUESTS 7	9	7		7		
GUESTS 8	10		4			
GUESTS 9	10		7			
GUESTS 10	10		8		8	
AVERAGE	9.4	8.5	6.8	7.4	6.5	7.5

It's amazingly to see how different the outcomes are. Some restaurants get an 9 of one guest and a 6 of another. Indeed tastes are different (or maybe that evening there was another Chef in the kitchen).

The villa's restaurant is doing very well in this little survey, and we are proud of that.

The background is our philosophy. We don't want just to sell rooms, we want to offer people who are open to it, a great time. Good, fresh food and personal attention in the restaurant is part of that. And with a sea full of fish in the front and a garden full of vegetables in the back, it must be possible.

We might also mention our kitchen staff, especially Sery: **OUR CHEF SERY NOW FAMOUS IN AUSTRALIA!**

Recently a recipe of Sery was published in the biggest Australian newspaper, the Australian. Its about a Balinese sambal. John Lethlean, journalist (foodwriter) for that paper was impressed, and got the recipe and published it!

How to keep a talented Chef like Sery motivated when often we have just 1 or 2 tables for dinner? We made her a business partner and we are now open for selected outside guests (max 4 tables, first bookings are for the Villa's guests).

The profit of the external guests is for Sery. She will save the money to start on a day a restaurant that is 100% her own business, but she is happy with this start. Maybe you will remembrance eating the duck or grilled fish will make you want to support Sery, well an extra review on Tripadvisor will certainly help...

http://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurant_Review-g608478-d8799237-Reviews-Restaurant_Bukit_Segara-Amed_Abang_Bali.html

BALINESE CULTURE, WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Of our 13 staff members, we have now five Kadeks. We have Kadek one, Kadek tall, Kadek small, and Kadek new, then it seemed that the options ended. So when number five checked in, we made a rigorous decision; we called her Jessica. Every one liked the name... also the Kadek... excuse.. Jesika involved.

There was a little adjustment, her name was written as Jesika.

So, who is Jesika?

Jesika is our new trainee. She looks 16 but she is 18. The Villa already knew her, and some guests might have seen her already! (She was the beautiful girl dancing during the Balinese evening!). This coming year, she will finish her senior high school and she hopes than to become staff. When you see her you will recommend her strongly!

Jesika, young as she is, has a special life-story. She was born in Sulawesi, a far away island in Indonesia. Her mother could not take care of he, and another mother took over. This other mother just lost her baby and could not have her own child after that. This mother was the wife of a Balinese man who went to Sulawesi for a better future, his name is Ardana.

Ardana and his wife adopted the baby, and later went back to live in Bali, Amed.

Lucky Ardana is the leader of the Gamelan (Balinese orchestra)and his adopted daughter grew up to be a successful dancer. Together they performed in many evenings for tourists..

We hope you could follow this story with so many twists! One more, Ardana is our night service man, you would have met him in the villa.





SERIOUS FISHING

In our booklet "nice little trips" we offer two kinds of fishing trips.

One is at sunset, from 5pm to 6.30pm.

Enjoying the sunset, the sea with Mount Agung on the background, and a beer or glass of wine. In between, you can try to catch some mackerel, or leave that up to the accompanying fisherman. Incidentally you can even catch a barracuda (looks like a pike) from the coral.

But we offer also a trip that we call "serious fishing".

Your boat with fisherman will be waiting for you in front of the villa at 4.30 a.m. If it is still dark, our night serviceman will guide you to the beachside.

With enough wind he will sail! In about one hour you will reach the fishing spot on the sea when the sun is rising from behind the mountains of Lombok. A red ball rising, and nobody else there, just you, the fisherman and the sea..

We fish with handheld lines, just like the fishermen do. Rods would be very unpractical on a "jukung" with outriggers.

It's mahi-mahi time indeed! We got the first one (see the picture), about 3 kilo. What striking colours, golden sides, green, yellow, like a rainbow. We need the help of the fishermen to get him in the boat.

Our guest Tim (UK) and Derk caught that morning of Oktober 6 mahi mahi. One was lost because he was too big and broke the line. "A pity", said the fisherman. That one was more than 10 kilo.. that's 200.000 Rupiah..

The wind was good enough for sailing, so coming home at 8.30 am every one was already waiting.

The start of another perfect day with plenty of fresh fish!

Notes: We provide plastics because the speed of the boat in waves makes the crew wet. And gloves, because we don't yet have fishermen's hands! We offer the trip only when we know that there is a fair chance to catch mahi mahi, tuna or other big fish. The last three trips guests always caught fish, but there is no guarantee!

And if you caught nothing?

Remember, a bad fishing day is better than a good working day!



A SPECTACULAR WEEK FOR SAILORS (AND THEIR PARTNERS) AT VILLA BUKIT SEGARA

On 9, 10, 11 and 12 May –(Monday/Thursday) a week for just 6 sailors (and partners) is planned, using our 2 racing trimarans. It's not too much to call it a spectacular sailing week!

The week will include

- Sailing to the Gili's the small tropical paradise before the coast of Lombok. Stay there 1 night and sailing back (partners go there by fastboat from Amed).
- Sailing match against the best sailors under the 300 fishermen. The first price is a pig of 60 kilo. Don't underestimate them! They will place extra large sails on their boats and are excellent sailors.
- Match sailing and trips to unknown destinations in the area.
- Drinks and a party after the match.

The costs: You pay just the normal price per room and for food and drinks. The Villa does not charge for the use of the 2 sailing boats!

You can arrive and leave any day you want in the weekend before and after. Of course you can make a combination with another stay in Bali. There is a special program for partners who want to do something else: yoga, diving, snorkeling (or just relax).

We are looking for participants who enjoy life, like to meet new friends and come from different countries. Inform us as soon if you are interested, we like it to give you detailed information.

Leader of the sailing activities is Mark Thorborg (the Netherlands). Mark is head of the law department of a consultancy company. All his life, sailing is his passion. He owns an X-yacht 34 and a contender. He has been sailing on the North Sea, Australia and Italy. See also our new sailing video... https://youtu.be/P_hS-AQzvIU



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