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design food architecture fashion art wine restaurants

lombokvilla

A TASTY SEA BREEZE...

TEXT AND IMAGES BY THOMAS JONES.

JUTTING OUT ON THE NORTHERN PART OF LOMBOK IS A SMALL PENINSULA SURROUNDED BY TURQUOISE WATERS AND SQUEAKY WHITE SAND. THIS IS SIRA BEACH AND THE HOME OF VILLA SEPOI SEPOI.

The villa was only completed in January of this year and takes its name from the gentle wind that comes in off the sea. Insaniam with Lombok, English couple, James and Katie Johnson, happened upon the land four years ago after a long love affair with Lombok. "We were already in love with the island after having visited family here many times," says Katie. "Our neighbour found the land for us and it was perfect, so we just had to have it."

"We planned to build five bedrooms but then just thought why not go for six," says Katie. "We have travelled with family and friends a lot and found in that a lot of smaller places you can't accommodate more than one family. We decided if we were going to do this we may as well make it big," she explains.

And big it is. Built on nearly a hectare of beachfront land it can cater for up to 12 - or more if you include the pullout beds in the kids' rooms. The entrance is through a large stone gateway into a walled courtyard, not unlike a Japanese castle. A smaller gate leads you into the villa's main area where the sight before you of the beautifully laid out villa with its massive expanse of lawn leading to the sparkling ocean beyond, will leave you breathless.

All the buildings and walls are constructed from locally quarried stone and needed in places to create a purely tropical, yet very ethnic atmosphere in the villa. Five of the bedrooms, the dining room, the fully enclosed air conditioned chill-out room, and the massive kitchen are organised in a horseshoe behind the central living pavilion, which has super comfortable sofas and houses a video projector and screen for mega movie nights.

From the main living pavilion, and running out in the direction of the beach, is a 20-metre-long pool flanked by umbels and mature coconut palms. A smaller relaxation garage sits at the head of the pool and stares down the expansive lawn to the sea. To the left of the pool is a cabana-style bar and to the right, the stand-alone Sepoi Sepoi Suite. Each of the bedrooms echoes a different theme. There is the red and

Above: Swaying coconut palms and thatched roof along the beach. The true essence of Lombok.

Left: The interior's were furnished by the villa owners and interior designers.

Villa Sepoi Sepoi
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black Chinese Room and the Oyster Room in blue, both facing out onto a sand covered 'beach' garden; the Frangipani Room in yellow with a golden view; the Hibiscus Room in orange also facing the garden; and the Sepoi Sepoi suite, a stand-alone bedroom situated in the garden with beautiful views directly down to the beach.

But the one to truly make your eyes water, and worth fighting over, is the Gold Room; the master suite that occupies the entire upper floor of the main sleeping pavilion. It is a true work of design genius that provides beauty and space, but also intimacy and a very grown up approach to life. It has a large bathroom overlooking a bamboo grove and coconut palms, a spacious dressing area, an office, a gym and a massive bedroom with views of the ocean and an outside terrace you could hold a party on.

While the exterior design and the location certainly make this place shine, it is the interiors that make it glow in the dark. "I found the interior designers through a friend who recommended that I meet with them," explains Katie speaking of David and Lesley Campbell, the owners of Campika Interiors in Bali. Katie was the captain and steered the ship while David navigated the waters.

"David was great in that he didn't take over," she explains. "I knew what I wanted for the villa and made my choices, but he would sometimes say, 'mummm I'm not sure, have you thought about this?', and I would stop and think about it and realise that it would really work!" He helped them with some of their most prominent feature pieces such as the stone-carved frangipani lights that dot the gardens, the beaten copper mirror in the master suite, and the huge moon chandelier that holds sway in the living pavilion.

"They had some great things in the showroom that we wouldn't have thought of. I saw a beautiful Chinese style mirror on the wall and just knew I had to have it. We put it in one of the rooms and worked around it. From then on in, this became the theme and thus we created the Chinese Room." This then became the rule for each of the rooms. Katie would choose one significant object, and the room would be designed around it.

Although the rooms are of different sizes and positions, and could easily cause animosity between groups of friends who are sharing the one, the way in which they have been individually designed makes each of them unique. This in turn, will suit a wide range of tastes and leave everyone happy with their draw of the straw and, hopefully, keep arguments to a minimum.

Villa Sepoi Sepoi is simply stunning, a triumph of location, architecture and interior design. Six bedrooms of forget-about-life tropical pleasure that will have you crying when it comes time to leave. **100**



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relaxation gazebo sits at the head of the pool and stares down the expansive lawn to the sea. To the left of the pool is a cabana-style bar and to the right, the standalone Sepoi Sepoi Suite. Each of the bedrooms echoes a different theme. There is the red and black Chinese Room and the Oyster Room in blue, both facing out onto a sand covered 'beach' garden; the Frangipani Room in yellow with a garden view; the Hibiscus Room in orange also facing the garden; and the Sepoi Sepoi suite, a stand-alone bedroom situated in the garden with beautiful views directly down to the beach.

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