



the organic farm & stay

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In this update: How precious life and nature are.



It's easy to just bring the good news: Dodi has a new baby cow! We are having new baby ducks and we implanted some Perma culture techniques as all Team went to Ubud to learn.

But we have some sad news, too: where some doors close, others open right?



Angel

The white dog at the farm, as many of you know her. We found Angel 3 years ago as a puppy on the beach in Seseh with 4 broken legs and back problems. Some Balinese just dump sick or female dogs on the beach because they can't or don't want to pay the vet. My vet was laughing at me visiting again with another sick dog

and asked me "Do you believe this dog will ever walk?" I looked into Angel's eyes, she looked back, strong and naughty and replied YES. And wow, how she could run! Like Forrest Gump especially when there were cats in the area.

Where I was, Angel was, too. If Wayan and I had to leave by car Angel was following until the next village. Like saying, "You forget something? Me!"

I went for a short visit to Holland. Wayan called me, sorry, sad emergency. Angel died in a very strange way. She has a small hole in her neck and blood came out like a shower, she was dead within 10 minutes. It can't be a snake or another dog bite because then there will be two holes. "What should Dodi and I do?" It's 1 o'clock at night in Bali, evening in Holland. "Shall I call the vet for research? Or shall we bury her?"

Watching the "perfect" manicured fishpond of my parents with just one naughty frog in Holland, I decided to bury and give her a Balinese ceremony.

Back in Bali I got different versions from all villagers and team of how Angel died. The only one I trust in this case is the deaf and dumb. He has nothing to lose in this village...as he not has anything to keep up as well...

Telling me that the neighbor (detail his brother and priest) shot Angel because she was eating his chickens eggs...Eh...doesn't Angel have every day chicken and rice and cheese and milk...and all omelets she can wish for as left over from our guests' lunches?

Why is she stealing raw eggs from the neighbor?

I made a big mistake when we were building our first Pondok 2 years ago with this neighbor. I discovered that our neighbor was cheating us by using bad wood and bad materials. Like a Dutch do in a case like this you continue building with other neighbors (who are priests too) you think you can trust. Not in Bali, by doing this I made my neighbor (and priest and builder) losing face in the village.

Since then, many "strange things" happened...but I learned my (Bali) lesson and didn't say anything about it. We just solved the problems in a Bali and western mix way. Black and white/balance/poleng.

This neighbor knows how much I love my dogs...like a pet, a child...anyway you want to call it.

Angel is easy. She is nice to everybody who gives her love and or food. The deaf and dumb "told" me the story how his brother shoot Angel with a gun all farmers have to shoot birds. Angel run "home" to Wayan. And she died in his lap with desperate but strong and naughty eyes.

Poleng the black and white (rescued) dog is not easy to catch. She has her "scars" in this village. Survived and knows exactly who to trust and who not...



Ugly Huggy Bear

In Bali you don't get time to question yourself "What to do with this neighbor/priest and his actions?" Can I ever face him again without being angry? Or do I have to forgive him?" This is his family life who am I to judge?

Next morning, there is a small white puppy under our car in the garage. Big belly like a balloon filled with worms and almost no fur because covered in scabies and dirt.

You ask your Team where is this puppy coming from? No idea.

I ask the def and dumb again....

"Because the priest (his brother) killed Angel and he saw how sad he made you he gave you this new white one...he feels sorry...he found him in Ubud...very expensive because mix western and local dog. And look! It's white too!

Together with our guest Lisa from Florida we named him Ugly, Huggy Bear. We gave him a bath and the vet did a good job with all injections. He is ugly now but will be huggy very soon!

All village kids hospitalized in Tabanan

In Europe we had (have) an e.coli outbreak. In the village all school kids received lunch after their last exams before summer break. Shortly after that, the first kid was throwing up blood and had diarrhea and within a couple of hours many more kids followed. Eighty-five kids and parents were put in a truck like cattle (the only way to do mass transportation) screaming, crying.

Wayan and our car went with them to the hospital, too. They took them to 2 hospitals because one hospital couldn't handle so many patients at once.

The mayor was there, the regent from Tabanan, the police. Small Dodi and Putu could go home after an inspection. Like many others. But till today there are still 15 kids hospitalized.

There is still no answer on what caused this illness. Interesting is that the teachers ate the same food and didn't get sick. Dodi thinks it's from the cabbage...to grow cabbage it needs a lot of pesticides or maybe the mie or rice was full of pesticides?

EAT ORGANIC? The village believes they didn't do enough ceremonies.

THE VILLAGE IS BIRD FLU FREE!

We woke up with Dodi calling for us. What is very unusual. 2 of our guinea fowl died and a chicken.

Yesterday they were all healthy! Not looking sick. We called the mayor and our vet. The mayor said more chicken died last week in the village. Our vet said this is an emergency! He gave Wayan the number of our area mayor. Who gave the number or the Government responsible for animal welfare in our province Mr. Eka.

Mr. Eka told Wayan, "Please call me back when more chicken die". Heh...I took the phone from Wayan and told him in my Dutch rude way "you have to come and check! It's important for the whole village and area, it might be bird flu?"

The next morning at 8, he was there! (Try that in Holland?) He did tests (looks like a predictor test for pregnancy) on our still alive chicken, turkeys and Ginny awls. Received result. Negative! Then up to all neighbors with dead chickens and roosters. Negative, too.

Pfff. Probably our chicken died of New Castle disease. Another virus but not as deadly as bird flu. Education for the village: Wash all your animals every week with Dettol and water. Our vet vaccinated all animals against New Castle Disease.

Then we sat down for a coffee and nasi. I asked him about the rabies problem in Bali and our village. Love this guy because he loves what he is doing. Will not bother you with all details and frustrations he has to deal with in Bali. But next month we are going to do a "dog show" at school for all kids -- how to take care, how to vaccinate...will be continued.

The Marjan virus

Wayan went to the animal market to get baby ducks. He called me. "I think I have your virus as well....If I only buy 4 ducks like you asked I feel so sorry for the left over brother/sister baby ducks. Is it ok if I buy them all?" And he came home with 9 baby ducks...

The lesson for us all?

Just go to Jakarta for 5 days.

Like Wayan and I did. Back in the civilized world. We stayed in the Hilton (Sultan now) with Wayans 3 beautiful daughters and I realized".

Being in traffic jams, high tech shopping malls and upgraded to a suite by the Balinese General Manager who was so happy to have us as his Balinese guest...

For Balinese their kids are their pension plan. The whole village saw their Pension Plan leaving in a truck to the hospital.

Their roosters and chickens died, their (grand) kids in hospital. My Angel died unnecessary.

Life is precious; don't manipulate nature which brings us back to the power of nature.

Let's go back to organics/tradition/nature...where is our food coming from? That is what we can trust.

Nature...honest and pure...

Like the deaf and dumb...

We HUMAN NATURES....make such a mess of Nature by manipulating it.

I am writing this with a view on sky scrapers, traffic jams and shopping malls. My Scottish friend Fiona in Jakarta just told me that in "general" you are more than 5 hours a day in traffic jams here.

What a waist of time.

And remember our USA guest Rob at the farm last week. He wanted to take the farm kids to their favorite destination which is a 40 minutes drive without traffic jam to Tabanan to play games in their favorite Hardy's shopping mall. It was not at all the Hardy's Rob knows from USA. So depressing, but what is in the village kids eyes? Happiness!

Why do we always want what we not have?

If we have "green" we need a shopping mall...If we have the shopping mall we want "green", here in Jakarta called "the Farmers Market"...nothing farmer but all produced by Unilever, my advertising life before.

The Balinese GM from the Hilton/Sultan in Jakarta misses Bali. He is going to the Temple in Jakarta with his kids. If I call Dodi at the farm and ask how it's going at the farm he replies, "Busy with ceremony again...want to be with you Ibu in Jakarta."

Dog Angel, Huggy Bear, neighbors, Hilton suites, shopping malls.

Love from Jakarta and happy to be back at the farm tomorrow.

The reality check!

In closing, we are delighted to include the article about *The Organic Farm* that appeared in ***The Korea Herald***, June 11-12, 2011.

Love from,
The Farm Family

Eco Bali beyond the 'greenwash'

Cherishing Indonesian paradise on a mid-range budget

By Hannah Stuart-Leach

Lush, vibrant Bali has been a destination for environmentally conscious travelers for years, but as more "eco" options spring up, it's harder to distinguish genuine environmentalism from "greenwashers" cashing in on a trend, especially when it comes to mid-range comfort.

So, start by skipping well-trodden Kuta, which has long catered to foreigners' taste for nightlife and fast food, and discover some of this Indonesian island's natural and most spectacular sights, encompassing wild shores, tranquil rice terraces and active volcanoes.

Of course, buying local ensures your money benefits the local community. Set yourself up in a "surf shack" for instance, with nothing but Balinese-owned bamboo huts for accommodation and \$1 meals, and you will save money and have far less environmental impact than if you stayed at one of the many towering resorts.

But barebones travel isn't for everyone. And you don't have to sacrifice worthy ideals just because you'd like a dash of luxury on vacation. Here are some bona fide options to ensure your impact on this captivating and endlessly cheerful isle is positive.

The Organic Farm

Perched atop a hill looking out onto the volcanic Mt. Agung, this farm stay offers a lovingly decorated Indonesian "bale," or bamboo lodge, where going back to basics seems to reignite life's spark.

Freed from the distractions of modern existence, replacing showers with hot springs and substituting TV for misty cloud-gazing, this idyllic place could lure the most cynical traveler toward soul searching.

The black and white checkered décor, from the duvet of the four-poster bed to the bamboo veranda floor, symbolizes balance, in Balinese, "poleng" — a

Hindu philosophy espoused by the wonderfully accommodating owners.

Dutch expat Marjan van Ravenzwaaij and her Indonesian husband Wayan Sukerta fell in love with the area's lush land, created their unique homestay in May last year, and now welcome guests and day-trippers to their farm as if they were old friends.

As well as growing their own crops to use in impressive home-cooked meals, the couple rent out plots to Bali's chefs to grow organic produce.

Days here are happily filled with meeting the neighbors, exploring the abundant land on treks or bike tours, and taking life at the relaxed pace of the accepting and jovial villagers.

Visitors, provided with a cellphone to contact staff, can have meals brought up to eat on their "own mountain" if they're staying at The Bale lodge.

The Pondok, which offers fine views of the rice terraces, is the only other accommodation option, leaving plenty of space to roam free and take in the beauty of this special place.

For more information visit www.theorganicfarmbali.com or email marjanbali@gmail.com.

Sarinbuana Eco Lodge

Down picturesque winding paths, reminiscent of an English country garden, sit four distinctive bungalows crafted by local artisans.

With some accommodating families, others couples, each individually decorated bungalow has its own charm. Tucked away in a rainforest valley, the Rumah Manis bungalow has real "wow" factor, with a stunning vista of sparkling Kuta below.

Set 700 meters above sea level, boasting no TVs and an opportunity to "reconnect with nature," this elegant ecolodge sets the scene for quiet reflection, especially as it holds just 15 guests at any one time.

Owned by Australians Linda and



Ploughing rice fields using water buffalo on a day trip organized by The Organic Farm.

The Organic Farm

Norman vant Hoff, Sarinbuana Eco Lodge is one of the longest running eco establishments in Bali. Having achieved acclaim including Wild Asia's 2010 Responsible Tourism Award, they now offer insights honed over 20 years to help others replicate their brand of environmentally conscious tourism.

A host of activities are offered here, many of which are community-based, including treks through the rainforest and up Mt. Batukaru; stone carving, cooking and massage workshops; dawn bird watching or strolling in the grounds to see monkeys and koi carp; yoga and massage; and tours of the lodge's edible garden to see permaculture in action.

There are also plenty of opportunities to contribute to the community, as the vant Hoff's facilitate direct donations to local causes — including school maintenance and university scholarships — and volunteering.

For more information visit www.baliecolodge.com or email info@baliecolodge.com.

Bali Eco Stay

Not too far from Sarinbuana Eco Lodge and designed on a model by the vant Hoff's, these three beautiful bungalows set amid rice paddies have a quaint colonial feel.

Although less than a year old, the setup is exquisite, with the eco-conscious rooms maintaining an air of luxury and

relaxation. The organic cotton bed covers are printed with natural dyes and the locally produced and deliciously fragrant liquid soaps are also made from natural sources.

Humming with wildlife, this place is perfect for admiring the impressively manicured rice fields which are key to the livelihoods of rural folk. Peaceful and serene, some of the best views in Bali are surely to be had from the top of these steps, which have sustained families here for as long as villagers there can remember.

Take a local guide to learn about the stunning array of produce growing in this fertile land, including coffee, cacao, vanilla and all manner of tropical fruits and herbal remedies, and then meander through a village to see Bali life away from the holiday makers.

If you're after a spot of relaxation, this is the perfect place to lounge and take up a good book, or venture down to nature's swimming pool for a cool dip beneath a waterfall. In an innovative project, this is also used to generate power for the lodges.

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What is ecotourism?

According to responsibletravel.com

spokeswoman Krissy Roe: "It's a combination of environment measures; conservation and preservation of local habitats and environments; a respect for and a celebration of local cultures and customs; and efforts to involve and benefit the local community."

The company, which organizes the respected Virgin Responsible Travel Awards, says the situation has changed, mostly for the better, in the 10 years since they launched, and that even an overzealous use of the eco tag is positive if it means green and ethical issues are now being discussed.

"For the average consumer it is hard to tell whether or not a business or activity is practicing responsible tourism," said Roe, adding that this is largely because there is no universal labeling system in place, as there is with fair trade food, for instance.

But, she explained, there are key characteristics to look out for which can help you make an informed decision.

Here are five signs that your eco-stay is the real deal:

- 1) A written eco-policy is in place
- 2) Most produce is sourced within 25 km
- 3) There are specific conservation/charity projects
- 4) Most staff are locally employed
- 5) Owners are knowledgeable and proud of their achievements

eye wander



Anapji in Gyeongju, North Gyeongsang Province

Gyeongju tells 1,000-year history of Silla

By Kim Yoon-mi

Gyeongju in North Gyeongsang Province was the center of politics, economy and culture in the ancient Silla Kingdom (B.C. 57-A.D. 935) for 992 years. The Wolseong Palace, the seat of Silla, was also called Banwolseong Palace, as the palace was shaped in banwol, or a crescent.

Around the Wolseong district, the most eye-catching relic is Cheomseongdae, or Cheomseong Observatory, the oldest astronomical observatory in Asia. In keeping with the 361 days a year found in the lunar calendar, the observatory was built with 361 stones. The 28 stairs point to the number of the zodiac, 28, and the upper 12 stairs from the window and the 12 stairs below the window represent the 24 divisions of the year under the lunar calendar.

On the way from Cheomseong

Observatory to the Wolseong Palace, you will find Gyerim Wood, the sacred spot filled with ancient trees. It is known for the tale that Kim Al-ji, the founder of the Kim clan of Silla, was born in the woods.

If you go up to the Wolseong Palace, there will be Seekbinggo, an icehouse where ancient Koreans used to store ice.

Across from the Wolseong area sits Anapji, or Anap Pond, where upper-class Silla people used to frequent. Constructed by order of King Munmu in 674, the pond is an oval shape.

Namsan, or South Mountain, has been the center of Buddhist culture. Although a millennium has passed, there are still 121 temple sites, 87 Buddha statues and 71 stone pagodas.

The most essential tour course is Samneunggol Valley, where Bud-

dhist relics are spread from the entrance to the top. Baeri Samjonbul, the three Buddhist statues, are known for their gentle smiles. Hiking up the mountain along with the thick pine trees gives brings the pleasure of silence and peace.

Past the pine tree forest, you will first meet Seokjo Yeorae Jwasang, or stone seated Buddha, without a head. Then, another Buddha called Maae Gwaneumbosal engraved on a stone wall will appear. A round face with red-tinted lips looks unusual. After climbing up to the top, you will find the 5-meter tall Buddha, the largest one in Samneunggol Valley.

The Bulguksa Temple and Seokguram Grotto were registered as UNESCO World Cultural Heritage in 1995. In 2000, five districts in downtown Gyeongju were designated as World Cultural Heritage under the name, "Gyeongju Historical Ar-

eas." For more information, call (054) 779-6077.

(Source: Korea Tourism Organization)

How to get there:

- By train: Take the KTX from Seoul Station to Sin Gyeongju Station. It will take about 2 hours and 10 minutes.

- By bus: Take the bus from Gangnam Express Bus Terminal to Gyeongju. It will take about 4 hours.

- By car: Take the Gyeongbu Express Way and come out at Gyeongju IC. Head for Oreung intersection and follow the sign, Wolseong Historical Site District.

Related Websites:

- www.gyeongju.go.kr
- guide.gyeongju.go.kr
- www.cultureexpo.or.kr
- www.smpark.co.kr
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TRAVELER

Takayama City designates June as Korea Month

Takayama City said it has designated June as Korea Month to promote cultural exchanges between Korea and Japan. The city will hold diverse events including a June 11 forum on new possibilities in the future tourism industry between the two countries and June 26 joint concert of Nagoya University of Arts and its sister Kyungnam University. "Korea Exhibition," showcasing Korean traditional culture and hallyu stars, will be held at the Takayama City Hall through June 30. During the event period, those who participate in quiz games about Korea will have a chance to win a round-trip ticket to Korea and two-night accommodation certificate. For more information, visit www.hida.jp/hangul/index.htm.

Cathay Pacific offers getaway discounts

Cathay Pacific Airways said it will offer "Getaway Surprise" online tickets for travelers planning a trip to Sydney, Melbourne and Perth in Australia for four days from June 13. Round-trip flights leaving Incheon or Busan between Aug. 16 and Oct. 31 will be offered at 579,000 won for Sydney/Melbourne and 649,000 won for Perth, excluding taxes. Business class tickets will be 2.08 million won and 2.38 million won, respectively. The discount tickets will be open at 10 a.m. on Aug. 13 at www.cathaypacific.com/kr and the maximum stay is one month.

KTO supports summer Korea travel

For those who are planning a local trip in the summer, the Korea Tourism Organization will support part of the accommodation fee and provide free Sonata Hybrid car rental service in partnership with Hyundai Motor. The program is part of government's effort to promote Korean tourism in the summer when a large number of Koreans go on overseas vacations. The program will let travelers choose one of the five-themed trips recommended by the KTO and the KTO will pay for a Friday night stay. The traveler can take a Sonata Hybrid car rental for free for six days. The trip should take place between July 8 and Aug. 31 and applicants can apply for the tour at www.visitkorea.or.kr, www.letsgotour.co.kr and www.hyundai.com. A total of 300 teams will be selected through lottery.

Renaissance Seoul Hotel's summer package

The Renaissance Seoul Hotel offers a "Summer Package" from June 17 to Aug. 31. Four different packages are offered with prices ranging from 129,000 won to 255,000 won per night. All packages include complimentary use of the indoor swimming pool, Renaissance Recreation Center and 50 percent discount on the sauna. The 129,000 won "Summer Saving Package" includes a night in a deluxe room with general benefits. The 255,000 won "Summer Luxury Package" includes a night in a corner suite, free in-room Internet service, one free in-room movie, Club lounge benefits including happy hour service and free sauna. Call (02) 2222-8500.

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