

BALI

IMPRESSIONS OF PARADISE

SUGGESTED ITINERARIES AROUND THE ISLAND

CENTRAL BALI'S WATER

TEMPLES AND ANCIENT RUINS



WATER TEMPLE OF GUNUNG KAWAI SEBATU

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CENTRAL BALI'S WATER TEMPLES AND ANCIENT RUINS

**Sebatu-Tampaksiring-Gunung
Kawi-Pejeng-Bedulu-Goa Gaja**

Full Day

On this trip you will visit Bali's archeological past and beautiful holy springs. If coming from the beach, take the main road to Ubud. At the intersection leading into Ubud from Pelitan, go straight rather than left to Ubud. If coming from Ubud, go left at the intersection, rather than right to Pelitan.



One of my favorite outings is to the village of **Sebatu** and the water temple **of Gunung Kawi Sebatu**. You climb gradually up the hills of Bali, past the village of **Petulu**, which is famous for its white herons which fly back to their nest at sunset and

Tegalalang, with its streets lined with workshops producing **woodcarvings** on animals and colorful fruit trees. This road used to be relatively quiet, but I'm afraid those days are gone and you will find big tour buses hogging the road, so please be careful. Along this road you will find wood carvers shops with delicate carvings painted in bright colors and Balinese workers in the rice fields with some beautiful vistas of terraced rice fields. Take your camera! Where once was a beautiful view point is now tourist shops, and the old man who worked in the rice fields now works part-time posing for tourist photos.

At the village of **Pujung Kaja**, take the right turn to **Sebatu**. In this village you will climb up and then wind down a small road **to Gunung Kawi Sebatu**, a beautiful temple and bathing place. You can park near the

shops and walk down to the bathing area. The day I visited Balinese were bathing in the clear fresh water from an upper pool, which cascaded down through the mouths of Barongs. (This is a beautiful site on a full moon.)

Just up the road is the village of Sebatu. To get there just continue up the road past the temple.

To find the village of **Tampaksiring**, backtrack past the temple, and take the first road to the left. This road



winds across rice fields from west to east, with beautiful vistas of mountains and sea. At the next intersection, head left towards the village of Tampaksiring. You will cross a bridge over a steep

gorge and climb up to the main road. Straight-ahead is **Tirtha Empul**, the sacred springs and temple. These springs are one of the most sacred spots in Bali. Legend states that the god Indra shot a magic arrow into the ground from which appeared a healing spring. That temple surrounds the spring and a large shrine to the god Indra. The bathing pool is said to have magic healing powers. To enter the grounds a sash is needed and can be rented at the entrance if you don't always have one. **(It is wise to carry a sarong and sash with you at all times when touring Bali.)**

Outside of the temple there are small **shops** that sell bone carvings, crocheted tablecloths, bed covers and apparel. Some of **the best nasi campur (mixed rice)** can be found at the simple restaurants. On the return loop to Ubud in the village of Tampaksiring, you may visit 11th century **Gunung Kawi**. Descending a steep stone stairway into the gorge of the Pakrisan river, you will see the royal tombs and hermitage carved out of solid rock.

These 11th century monuments are from the Airlangga Dynasty. Looking towards the left you will see four Candi, while five more across the river and may be reached by crossing a footbridge over the rushing river. Next to the Candi is a monastery complex with several caves hewn out of solid rock.



The next stop is the **Pejeng** area. Follow the road south to Denpasar. The temple **Pura Penataran Sasih** houses the world's largest bronze drum, which is 3 meters wide and over 1000 years old. This drum is known as the moon of

Pejeng. According to myth it is the ear jewel of the giant Kebo Iwa. **Pura Pusering Jagat** "navel of the world" contains several Hindu antiquities. In one pavilion is a stone vessel with carved animals and birds and a story from the Hindu Mahabharata in which the gods are searching for the elixir of life.

Also visit **Pura Kebo Edan** which houses a statue of Kebo Edan, the giant. Continue south from Pejeng and at the next major intersection go left. **Pura Samuan Tiga**, meaning "meeting of three", is the temple near the village of **Bedulu**. Here are classic Hindu-Java statues in the temple forecourt, including the Naga or snake stairs with the **Karang bhoma** which is the monster head centering over the entrance.

Returning to the intersection you will go straight towards Goa Gajah. **Yeh Pulu** is off the road on the way to Goa Gajah. This is a short but beautiful walk which follows a small cliff, through rice paddies, until you come upon a carved cliff face.

These carvings date back to the 14th century. Balinese folklore says that the giant Kebo Iwa carved these cliffs with his fingernail.

Goa Gaja

Continuing on the road to Teges and Ubud you will come to Goa Gaja "the elephant cave".



When I first visited these caves, they stood alone amongst the surrounding countryside. But as tourism has grown, so have the shops on the road above the complex. However, it is still worth seeing. Be advised to late in the afternoon or early morning to beat the crowds. The cave dates back to the Buddhist period of the 9th to the 12th centuries. The

entrance to the cave is the mouth of a monster. Inside the T shaped cave see quiet meditation chambers once used by monks. A statue of **Ganesh, the elephant god** is at one end of the cave while a set of three lingga are at the opposite end. Outside the cave are the royal baths that were unearthed in the 1950's. The left one is for women and the right for men while the one at the center is considered holy. If you walk further down the path in the complex you will come upon carved stupas and two sitting Buddha. There is nothing as scary as a full moon at Goa Gaja especially if you go inside the cave.

Just up the road from Goa Gaja is the village of **Tegas**. If you are going back to the beach you will go left at the intersection and if to Ubud go straight. For those of you who are staying in or around Ubud you could stop at Pengosekan and visit the

Community of Artist which was Bali's first artistic cooperative. This style of art focused on nature with canvas filled with plants and animals and insects.

Or you may want to visit **Pelitian** and visit the famous temple of **Gunung Sari**. If it is close to evening ask where a local dance performance may be going on. The head of family in present is Cokorda Gede Putra Nindia who still live inside of Puri Peliatan with other royal family member.

Puri Peliatan is one of the oldest temples in Bali which was build during 17th century when the time was influenced by movement of the oldest kingdom of Klungkung royal family to Sekawati royal family.

From Peliatan you continue the intersection and Jalan Raya Ubud and make a left to get to Ubud central.