

#FAMILYBALI

Bali high

Step away from the pool bar: these family-friendly Bali adventures will keep the whole family happy.

By Sue White



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ALI'S FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESORTS can make it so easy to 'flop and drop' that it's often hard to pull yourself away from the jam-packed activity schedule, kids' clubs or, while said kids are occupied, pool bar. But there are plenty of ways to ensure your family's Bali holiday memories extend beyond buffets and beach chairs.

ADVENTURE 1 } HIT THE SURF

If the kids are keen to get active above the waves, Bali can be an excellent spot to learn to surf. Lessons for beginners are run at locations such as Legian, Sanur, Kuta and Seminyak, and there are plenty of operators to choose from. Most will require kids to do a private or semi-private class, although if the adults are keen too it's a great chance to book a family lesson and learn together.

ADVENTURE 2 } SNORKEL WITH MANTAS

Swimming alongside a huge but harmless manta ray will send a thrill of excitement through snorkellers of any age. In Bali they are found in the waters of Nusa Lembongan, an island 30 minutes off the coast of Sanur.

Many visitors head over to Lembongan for a snorkelling day trip, ready to enjoy Lembongan's clear waters and marine life.

Operators like Lembongan Water Sports can collect families from any of Bali's major tourist hotspots and whip them across to Lembongan for this water-filled day out.

Day-trippers usually visit three snorkelling spots, one of which is home to the manta rays – lucky snorkellers bob in the sea with up to a dozen of the four-metre-plus creatures. To up the adventure stakes, stay on Nusa Lembongan for a few nights; that way you'll also have time to kayak the mangroves or laze in the pool at Sandy Bay Beach Club one afternoon while watching the waves break nearby.

Just one word of caution: the water where the mantas hang out is often choppy, so ensure young snorkellers are ready for the experience.

**ADVENTURE 3 }
TAKE THE FAMILY CAMPING**
Next door to the architecturally impressive Green School Bali lies Green Camp. Here, families can sign up for the physical, emotional and intellectual challenges that come with taking on a jungle adventure.

Green Camp's Family Camps run for three or five days, allowing up to 12 families at a

time to connect to each other and nature. Suitable for children aged five and over, the camps help family members cultivate survival skills, develop sustainability know-how and take part in activities such as bamboo raft building, kite making, organic gardening and laughing yoga.

It's not all jungle play: Green Camp also provides a chance for parents and their children to experience the philosophy of Green School Bali and learn about various aspects of Balinese culture.

ADVENTURE 4 } GET ON YOUR BIKE

The hills outside Ubud offer plenty of scope for families who like two-wheeled adventures. That's just one reason why a day of cycling often becomes the number-one Balinese experience for many families.

Get an early start with a company such as Greenbike, and after a quick eyeball of the active volcano Mount Batur (its last serious eruption was in the year 2000) head off to explore Bali's backroads for the day.

Young children will ride in comfort on the provided child seats, while guides cycle at the front and back of each small group to divert



OPENING IMAGE: Kids can't wait to join surf school at various locations in Bali. **CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:** A manta ray is just waiting for snorkellers to visit; Cyclists get to ride past lush rice terraces in Ubud; It's a jungle out there at Green Camp; The writer's son Ollie takes on a cooking workshop in Sarinbuana.

any traffic on the country roads. As you ride through forests, pedal by rice paddies and zoom past villages, the slightly unfit need not worry: the whole trip is downhill.

A tip for those with young kids: see if you can organise a trip that skips the first stop (a coffee tutorial). It's reasonably interesting but won't hold children's attention long enough to warrant the stop.

ADVENTURE 5 } CULTURAL EXPLORATIONS

Not all adventures are for the body; many are for the mind. The place to do it? Sarinbuana Eco Lodge. Tucked in the mountains about two hours from Seminyak or Ubud, this is an authentic, well-run lodge with strong connections to its local community. For the body, local guides offer rainforest hikes taking as little as three hours; primary schoolers will cope nicely with the pace. Younger children will need

help, so take a carrier or be prepared to offer some shoulder rides. It's also satisfying to wander solo around the property exploring treasures such as Sarinbuana's small waterhole and its secret jungle swing, where kids can soar above the jungle's edge.

Back at Sarinbuana proper, workshops abound so that young and old can soak up Balinese culture during their stay. Four-year-olds will love making a limestone carving under the guidance of a local carver; costume fans can try on traditional dresses; and young chefs can chop, grind and pour their way through cooking classes in the restaurant's small kitchen. (Grinding chilli often provides some extra adventure: goggles may help!)

Visitors will get to know the other guests and the staff, the latter of who are all from the local village. Each stay at Sarinbuana supports over 25 locals who receive well-paid jobs and skills training from the owners of this sustainable property. ♻️



TRAVEL FACTS

GET YOUR ADVENTURE ON

Lembongan Water Sports
lembonganwatersport.com
Green Camp
greencampbali.com
Green Bike Cycling Tour
greenbiketour.com
Sarinbuana Eco Lodge
baliecolodge.com

SURF OPERATORS

Surf School Bali – Seminyak
surfschoolbali.com
Rip Curl School of Surf – Sanur and Legian
ripcurlschoolsofsurf.com
Odyssey's Surf School
odysseysurfschool.com