

RETURN FROM...

let the HEALING BEGIN

“Does the universal law – you reap what you sow – apply to Bali?”

– Rachael Oakes-Ash wonders.

Bali has long been an Asian spa capital for a very good reason. Nature designed the first spa retreats of the region in the jaw-dropping gorges and rainforest valleys of Ubud. Man added pampering and plunge pools and daily offerings to the spirits to ensure all remained in balance.

It is heart wrenching to experience the balance now disturbed by external forces. When I contracted a mosquito-borne virus at a health retreat in Australia I was told that it was “a physical manifestation of an emotional issue.” Being a firm believer in taking responsibility for one’s own well-being and health I failed to see how an external force that was not within my control (i.e. the mosquito) could be blamed on me. The flu when stressed, definitely. But this?

It is a pithy comparison, I thought, to the external forces out of the Balinese control and witnessed in play in the bombings of 2002 and 2005. If anyone did nothing to deserve such terror, it is the Balinese. A peace-loving people grounded in their Hindu beliefs, the Balinese consistently offer a smile and warm hospitality despite their unstable future. The Western philosophy of “we reap what

we sow” does not apply here. If a sense of community, of family, of spiritual harmony is a crime to be punished then they have long done their time.

Hooray to the tourism folk who continue to invest in Bali. Christina Ong’s newly opened Como Shambhala Estate at Begawan Giri brings luxe wellness retreats of the highest standard to Ubud and gives back to the community with the charity of the Como Foundation.

If you have been to Bali once, if you have been served by a Katut, a Putu or a Ngurah then you know the magic of this island and you have a responsibility, like Como, to return.

By spending money here you are helping keep alive the tourism industry that you helped create. Don’t leave Katut waiting, he may not have a job by the time you come back. **sa**

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