

My Life in Bali

By Tom West – PADI Professional Development Team

One thing which has a huge impact on your life as a dive professional is the environment in which you live and work. I have personally lived and scuba dived in four countries in Southeast Asia: Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines. While each of these countries is uniquely fascinating in its own right, it was the call of Bali which has finally led me to settle down and stay for a while.

Throughout my career as a [PADI diving instructor](#), I have been stricken with wanderlust. I always figured I must have descended from some ancient nomadic tribe. That was, until I came to Bali for the first time in 2007. That first trip was supposed to be a short excursion to help run a PADI IDC in Bali, but it ended up being the experience which led me to spend the next year searching out the perfect opportunity to teach for a PADI Career Development Center here in Bali. I found that opportunity at Blue Season Bali.

My time here is normally divided between teaching exciting PADI courses and enjoying the sights, history and culture of Bali. The history of Bali makes it a place unique to the world. The religion of Bali is 95% Hindu, a cultural remnant of previous ties to imperial India. The Chinese and Indian influences in Bali have taken place over nearly 2000 years, making it a stark contrast to the rest of Indonesia, which is the world's most populous Muslim nation. The peaceful and welcoming spirit of the people is possibly the best aspect of Bali- and is one which I have not encountered anywhere else in Asia.

You can do nearly anything here. There are rainforests with wild monkeys, rivers for kayaking and rafting, stunning crater lakes, towering volcanoes and some of the world's best beaches. You can bike, hike and trike your way all over the island. I should also mention that Bali has some of the best (and most easily accessible!) surf breaks to be found anywhere.

Now, I'm not personally a surfer. I think this is probably on account that while I'm like a dolphin in the water, I'm also very much like a dolphin on dry land. With that said, I can appreciate the awesome contribution that surfing makes to the atmosphere of Bali. The surfer culture here in Bali has been going on for decades and it has helped mold Bali into the relaxed paradise it is today. If surfing is your thing, get out there and hang ten. I'll be on the shore, trying to unbeach myself.

Daily life for a scuba diving instructor in Bali normally starts pretty early. I usually start with a cup of coffee on my upstairs balcony to watch the sun rise across the city and then I'm off to the dive shop. I normally turn up at Blue Season Bali around 6:20 each morning. Depending on the day, I may be teaching PADI divemasters, running a [PADI IDC](#), or sitting here writing about my personal resemblance to porpoises. You just never know.

The other lads here at the shop are much the same. It's very much an atmosphere of relaxed, efficient professionalism in diving. After a good day's work diving, guiding, teaching or exploring; it's time to head out to one of Sanur's fantastic local restaurants or pubs for some great food and maybe a cold drink or two. Then it's off to bed in preparation for another sweet day's diving. That is, unless of course it's my day off the next day.

Bali's nightlife scene can arguably be placed among the best in the world. It's great! The world-famous strips at Kuta and Legian are a few minutes taxi ride away from where I live here in Sanur. Folks, we're talking about hundreds of clubs, pubs, and bars packed with people from all over the world. Get in!

If I'm not feeling like an all-nighter, I'll head down to Sanur Beach with a few friends to watch the sun set with the sand between my toes and a cold beer in my hand. It's always times like that when I think that life as a scuba diving instructor really isn't all that bad. Who can argue against friends, sand, surf, sunsets, and a cold one? I, for one, sure as hell can't.

It's also times like that when I remember back to when I worked in an office. Yep, I did five years in corporate consulting. (Notice how I said that like "yep, I did five years inside," which for me is pretty much the same thing). I can't help but think how radically different my life is now than it would have been had I stayed with that career. I sadly used to chase money, now I chase the passion of living this one life to its fullest extent- every day.

Well friends, I'll leave you with one final thought: *What will you be doing one year from now?*