Colonial Living

For an entirely original take on the **Bali luxury villa**, Villa Batavia inspires dreams of **Great Gatsby proportions**. Step into a world where old-fashioned standards of luxury and **glamour** have been reinvented as modern tropical paradise. Cocktails at six mandatory…

Text by Hannah Rose Photography courtesy of Prestige Bali Villas

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WHEN Steven Surname and his partner first decided to build a holiday home in Bali, their catalogue of must-haves included a cocktail bar; a big, natural swimming pool; a Moroccan steam bath; and a "romantic, airy atmosphere". More than that, though, they knew it "had to be a place where people could come together but also be separate; a place with a lot of different spaces, giving people options," explains Steven of their vision.
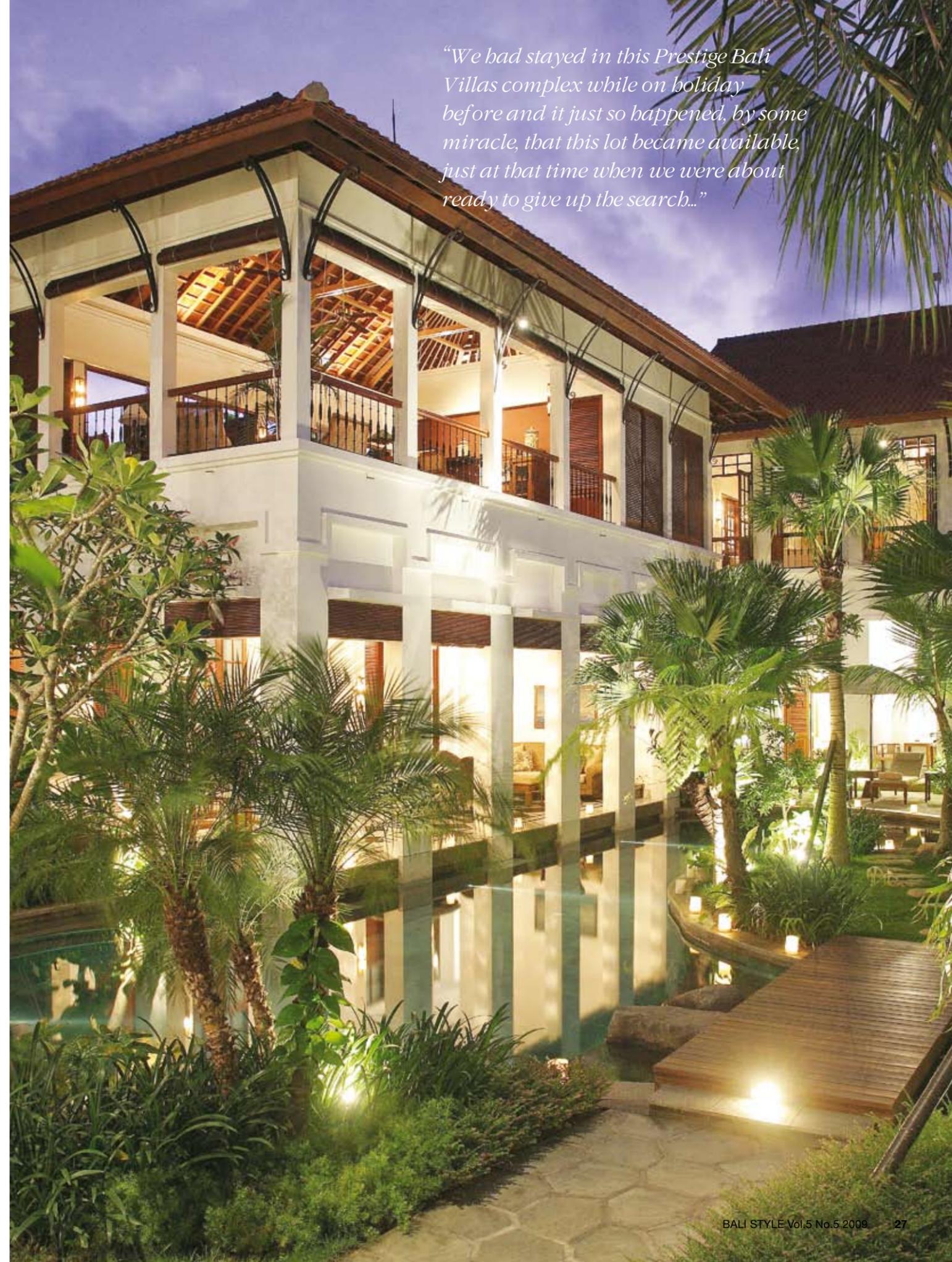
It's not surprising, given the specific nature of that vision - "We're Swiss," laughs Steven, "everything has to be very precise and we have to be sure of the details!" - that they looked at over 40 villas, over rather a long period of time, before striking gold. "We had stayed in this Prestige Bali Villas complex while on holiday before and it just so happened, by some miracle, that this lot became available, just at that time when we

were about ready to give up the search." Now, with an empty lot serving as blank canvas to their vision, Steven and Alfred could give free reign to their imagination. "We had an idea in mind of something very colonial, a mini-Raffles hotel almost. Back in Switzerland we live in a very modern house, so we really love the contrast between home and Villa Batavia's old fashioned colonial feel." With Prestige Bali Villas helping them,

This page & opposite: Verdant tropical gardens provide the perfect counterpoint to the Raffles-esque colonial grandeur of Villa Batavia.

they brought Indonesian architect Putu Edy Semara on board. "He already knew the colonial style – high ceilings, high timber doors, and he paid such attention to details. We just knew he was right from the start."

What followed was a building process practically unheard of in Bali: an easy one. "It's a big risk building in Bali," agrees Steven, "but if you do your homework and have good contacts and workers it can run smoothly. We know absolutely everything about our house, we have all the permissions and licences, and we had amazing contacts." All that said, "We did change our plans so many times! Once you start, you end up adding things and because we wanted a real colonial look, nothing artificial, we were constantly upgrading things. All I can say is, once you've got your initial budget… double it!" laughs Steven.

All those changes of plan, and budget, certainly paid off, however, when you see Villa Batavia as it stands today. It is an incredibly unique, and classic, villa – you will be hard pressed to find anything else quite like it in Bali. Built over 1100m2 as three separate spaces – one housing two master en suite bedrooms; one housing the downstairs greeting/living area and upstairs cocktail bar, lounge and dining area; and one housing two more en suite bedrooms – all linked by a covered walkway, Villa Batavia offers exactly what Steven and Alfred hoped for. Space to be alone, space to be together, space to breathe, space to just be. A large natural pool, including a children's paddling pool, set

This page top: Terrace facing the swimming pool.
Below left and right: With some spectacular lighting in the gardens Villa Batavia comes alive at night.

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This page: High ceilings and archways as well as black and white chequer-board flooring invokes the ambience of great colonial hotels like the Raffles or the Majapahit.

amidst lush tropical gardens - a wonderful contrast to the colonial feel of the buildings - and plenty of outdoor lounging space adds to the feeling of space. It is the obvious love for these spaces, however, which really gives Villa Batavia the edge over so many of the other villas out there.

Furnished by themselves, with the help of Orchard, "Our main goal was to create a home where we would feel comfortable - like a hotel room - but with personality. Everything had to be good quality and furniture had to be good looking as well as useable. We really worked to find that balance between usability and uniqueness of character," explains Steven. Much of this they found in Bali, but they also have a new hobby which reflects in the undoubted uniqueness of character they were going for. "Every Sunday back home in Europe we go to antique flea markets looking for treasures for Villa Batavia," reveals Steven. The real treasure, however, remains Villa Batavia itself. **bali**

This page top: A cozy bar in the living area with high-back bar stools. *Left:* stunning bathroom with hammered copper bath tub, of course! *Below:* Master bedroom beautifully decorated in classic colonial style with four-poster bed.

For more information on Villa Batavia please contact Prestige Bali Villas, Jalan Laksmana #22, Seminyak; Tel:+62 361 733 320; Email: info@prestigebalivillas.com; www.prestigebalivillas.com

This page: Upstairs dining room and living room; cool breezes and views courtesy of the abundant floor-to-ceiling shuttered windows. Note the classic colonial style lighting fixtures.