

IN-STORE

## Four Seasons Bali leverages astronomy for cultural immersion

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*Four Seasons Bali yoga*

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Four Seasons Resorts Bali in Indonesia is taking advantage of a celestial coincidence to immerse guests in local culture.

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On March 9, both Four Seasons Bali resorts will host Nyepi Eclipse Yoga to commemorate the Balinese holiday and the solar eclipse. The program not only capitalizes on growing trends, but also is designed in accordance with local traditions that lend the activity an authentic cultural experience.

"Nyepi is a special time of purification and renewal supported by silence and inactivity, as nature turns within and encourages us to do the same. To have this combined with a total solar eclipse makes it even more unique," said Luisa Anderson, regional spa director for Four Seasons Resorts Bali.

Happy New Year

Nyepi is a Hindu celebration popular primarily in Bali, timed with the start of the new year on the Balinese saka calendar. Because the saka calendar is based on lunar cycles, a new year will thus begin with a new moon. This also overlaps with an upcoming solar eclipse, which in turn can occur only on a new moon.

Nonetheless, solar eclipses occur on average only once every 18 months, have a high degree of variance and can only be seen from certain parts of the world, making the overlap rare.



*Four Seasons Bali*

Accordingly, both the riverside mountain retreat of Sayan and Jimbaran Bay, the beach resort, will mark the occasion with Dharma Shanti Yoga Bale and Nirvana Shanti Yoga Bale, respectively. Both take inspiration from Bali's natural beauty, but where the Sayan yoga will take place at the edge of the forest, Jimbaran Bay's will place at the waterfront.

The complimentary class will begin at 8 a.m. and last 90 minutes, thereby lasting through most of the eclipse, including the max eclipse at 8:27 a.m.

However, rather than just being an astronomical coincidence monetized in accordance with the growing popularity of yoga, the experience also will fit the Balinese culture.

Unlike the Solar New Year celebrated by much of the world, particularly the western world, Nyepi is not known for its lavish parties. Instead, it is referred to as the "Day of Silence."



*Four Seasons Bali meditation*

For the holiday, the entire island abstains from using any machinery, including vehicles. The population does not work or even light fires, strenuous activity of any sort is eliminated. Most extreme, the airport and seaport close and citizens stay indoors.

Guests will also be able to partake in Nyepi Eve activities. In order to trick the spirits into leaving the following day, celebrations and parades take place in every village on the island to wake up the spirits the night before Nyepi. The purpose of the quietude is to trick evil spirits into thinking the island is empty, thus inciting them to go elsewhere on the following Day of Silence.



*Four Seasons Bali resort*

The appeal of the Nyepi Eclipse Yoga is therefore wide ranging. It will likely attract consumers concerned about wealth and yoga, those looking to immerse themselves in a local culture on one of its biggest holidays, and even "eclipse chasers," a generally affluent group of people that plan vacations with the hopes of seeing a solar eclipse.

#### Eclipsing tradition

The increasing popularity of home sharing services, most notably Airbnb, make it particularly important for hotels to stand out and make themselves irreplaceable with cultural immersion. Hotels aside from Four Seasons are taking similar steps.

For example, Mandarin Oriental Prague is enticing the whole family with the promise of "A Fairy Tale Getaway."

The "Tale of the Puppeteer" package will grant families with young children two marionette-filled nights in the heart of Prague. With family travel on the rise, a targeted but culture-heavy campaign such as this one could be a popular choice for travel ([see story](#)).

Because of its spiritually attuned culture and nice climate, many hotels on the island are offering patrons ways of

staying healthy during their stay.

For example, The Ritz-Carlton, Bali, is sharing its "Revitalizing Secret" with the health-conscious business professional.

Ritz-Carlton's Bali hotel is now offering three healthy meeting experiences that will add team-building and productive fun into a long day of business and work. The initiative showcases Ritz-Carlton's commitment to the comfort of its guests as well as its dedication to a healthy lifestyle ([see story](#)).

"An eclipse is an ideal time for spiritual practices, chanting, meditation and introspection, and it is with this in mind that we have created a special sequence for Nyepi Eclipse Yoga," Ms. Anderson said.

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