

FOR THE LOVE OF FOOD  
BY KANISKA CHAKRABORTY



## Warung warriors



Bali is magnificent. Specially Sanur, where we stayed. Laid back, stress free, traffic sparse, family oriented. None of the party craze that Kuta is so famous for.

**O**UR hotel was a beachfront with a grand span of relatively calm water. The beach was dotted with comfortable seating and a bar facing the sea.

I had heard of the warungs, the family owned small restaurants that are abundant in Indonesia. Asked the hotel security and were directed to a warung very close to the hotel - Warung Parahyangan. A simple, spacious place with ceiling and stand fans. Slip pad and pencil comes with printed menu in English. You write down what you want to have.

We ordered chicken and mushroom stir-fry, deep fried squid and steamed rice. While we were waiting for the food, I peeked into the kitchen. Otherwise clean but for a butter-paper with like a million dead flies on it. They said it was mango

The chicken with mushroom was more like a quick stew than a stir-fry, yet with very clean flavours. Chillies and ginger shone through and the chicken was not as bland and stringy as we are used to back home.

The veggies in the dish were crunchy. Sticky rice was there to soak up the light gravy of chicken mushroom. Seemed to us

it was Indonesian comfort food. The entire meal was worth some 60,000 Rupiah or around 5 USD. Comfort indeed!

One word of caution when in Sanur. You need to watch out for flies. Most eateries are not air-conditioned and hence flies do invade.

**Photo: Kaniska Chakraborty**



Room was spacious, comfortable, close to the beach and had Wi-Fi. Not much more that one can ask for.

So, once we checked in, we went in search of food. The lane in front of Prama Sanur Hotel is packed with eateries, street shopping and massage places. But most places looked like an attempt to reciprocate some Western experience. A sports bar, an Irish bar, pizza places, burgers and steak, seafood on display on bed of ice a la Thailand. We wanted something typically Bali.

season which attracted the flies. And that is when we realised we were in Southern hemisphere.

It was summer.

This large man was welcomed with warm smiles in the kitchen and was offered a tasty piece of salt fish. Delicious. Food came. The deep-fried squid golden and crispy outside, fresh and clean inside. It came with a dipping sauce of soy, fish sauce and chillies. The egg coating reminded me of Calcutta's very own Kobiraji cutlet. This could easily have been squid kobiraji.

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