

Janet Molloy

Originally from Melbourne, Australia. Moved to Ubud, Bali 22 years ago. Has one son and one daughter. Nowadays a (mostly) proud citizen of Indonesia

Interviewed by Alek

Janet started in Ubud with two restaurants, Mumbul and Bumbu and also ran the Wiz boutique. After the birth of her first child, she concentrated on jewelry design. Her latest project is Café Havana, which is situated on Jalan Dewi Sita.

In her talk with Ubud Community she tells us more about her new restaurant and the similarities and differences between Bali and Cuba.

"the inspiration for Café Havana came during my two months holiday in Cuba last year and also because my daughter Lili and I love to dance." Janet said. "We also love cooking and presenting food to our guests.

When I arrived in Cuba, I had in a way a very strong sense of déjà vu, Cuba these days in many ways reminds me of The Indonesia when Suharto was still in power. There is a strong sense of history and tradition on the island, There are many old



buildings, 400 to 500 years old, of which many are still in very fine condition and people live happily in them. Music and dancing, which are subsidized by the government are very much an integrated part of every day life in Cuba. Every where there is music and people dancing.

It would be nice if I could create something similar in my restaurant. All my waiters and waitresses have been taught how to dance salsa and will be happy to have a dance with you, provided they have the time of course. We also organize dance classes as well as Spanish language classes. Twice a week we have salsa band in Fidels playing, now that is on Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons.

Whilst music and dance in Bali is very restrained and prescribed, Cuban music keeps evolving, is spontaneous and if you cannot dance to it, don't play it!

Downstairs we have space for dancing as well as upstairs where our gorgeous, intimate dining room is situated. And if many people want to dance, we simply move some of the furniture so there is always enough space for dancing.

Characteristic for salsa dancing is its sensuous hipmovements. Yes, I know, well if they start arresting salsa dancers here, I might have to move to Cuba!

Even though Cuban food is of course quite different from Balinese food, because the climate is very similar, most of the ingredients used in the Cuban kitchen are also readily available here on this island. We are therefore able to use all kind of fresh and organic produce grown here in Bali for the dishes we serve. In general Cuban food is comfort food. Cubans are not very keen on vegetables. Their food is very starch oriented- potatoes, sweet potatoes, rice and beans. However they like fruits. they are also very fond of seafood and surprisingly, suckling pig, which reminds me of Bali, even though the spices they use for the suckling pig are different from the ones they use in Bali.