

Bali's Kuta Cowboys & the Gals they Ride



The last Blah Blah was too serious. Let's tour of one of the great surfing beaches in the world - Kuta. We beached out the last couple of days before flying back to Bangkok.



It sweeps around in a grand crescent for 3-4 miles and we strolled the entire length. There's great sights to see all along, like in the next shot this intriguing pair bouncing along.



Now where the hell did this come from? Sorry Su. I must still be getting used to this camera.



I meant these kites dancing on the breeze. We were so intrigued we bought one.



It's a helluva popular beach, attracting surfers and sun lovers from around the world. I've beachbummed on virtually all of them, from Copa to the Riviera to Santa Monica and far beyond and this one is right up there, with great surf all along. When I was last here in '79 there were only \$1 a night losmen (family run cabanas) set in the jungle and two short streets with bars and souvenir shops. Now the latter are in the *thousands* and stretch unbroken all the way to Ubud! It's too ugly with commercialmania back there to include in this Blah Blah.



But that's where Paddy's Pub, now a memorial to those stupid suicide bombings in 2002 that murdered 202 and injured 240, once stood. The gentle Hindu Balinese ten years later are still in shock and bewilderment how their Muslim countrymen could carry out such an attack which they saw, rightly, as senseless, other than to make themselves "famous." It devastated the Balinese psychically and, for several years, financially.



Dammit, there goes that camera again. It's definitely on the blink.



There's another problem with Kuta. likewise, I won't subject you to shots of the garbage - the plastic even on the northern beaches was *unbelievable* - but where the oil slicks washed in it can be pretty.



Kuta Cowboy roping in a herd of Aussi mares. Guys get their jollies in Thailand and the Philippines. Gals head for Kuta and the Caribbean. Hey, you don't think those muscular Caribs on the beach in the Barbados are really interested in selling just their jewellery, do you?



Here's another. You can bet this palomino is going to be ridden hard and put to bed wet tonight.



The Dragon Lady was so taken with them she got all dolled up and went trolling.



Well, what's good for the goose is good for the gander so I gave it a try but all I got were a lot of girls laughing and calling me "Gramps." I can't figure that out? Hell, I'm not even a dad.



Dammit, this damned camera did it again. It must have wifi and is picking up some pervert's camera.



Foresight being a component of intelligence, I'd say it took him a couple of tries to get through Grade II. I call it the TIQ, or the Tattoo IQ test: the more tattoos, the less IQ. You see these young guys strutting all over Asia, covered in this crap, dumbly unaware that in ten years these things are going to be bleeding all over and look so disgusting they'll want to cut their arms off. Didn't they see what happened to great uncle Bob's Navy tattoo from that time on shore leave when he got drunk with his buddies? This one is also already dated. This Moiri stuff was all the fad two years ago.



This guy clearly didn't make it through grade school.



They two are going to be scaring children and dogs in just a few years. When you see one squinting while wearing a ballcap backwards, dock another ten points.



For once I'm almost glad to see one of these popping up on this bloody piece of crap camera. I'll tell ya, Nikon ain't Nikon anymore. I'm taking it in for servicing first thing I get back.



Our hotel was right at one end of the beach, where the breakwater begins, presenting a panoramic sweep of the entire beach. It's the only resort right *on* the beach at this end. I recommend it, the Bali Garden Beach Resort, about \$100 booked on [agoda.com](https://www.agoda.com).



From here we heard gongs and wondered what the hell was going on? It was some kind of procession.



It turned out to be a Balinese funeral - actually two of them. And on the beach right next to our hotel! The deceased were carried on these elaborate palanquins which were destroyed.



After many elaborate rituals they were cremated using two jumbo size tiger torches which produced just a fraction of the pungent smoke I've experienced with wood cremations in India and Sri Lanka.



The final act was the spreading of grandma's ashes in the surf. It was a poignant ceremony, filled with respect. Note the surfboards in the background.



Which reminded us of this, just days before. Two married couples and 12 single friends flew to Thailand from North America this winter, a record. One couple was Bernie and Warren (R), here taken at Cheap Charlie's in Bangkok. Both were incredibly

fit, on their second bicycle tour of Thailand. Nine days after this picture was taken Warren awoke at Ko Samui and was preparing for a fun day when a fuse in his head blew. He was 47. He didn't get to enjoy the 50s, my favorite decade. The hardest lesson to learn is that life is not fair. Enjoy it while you can.



I'm about ready to give up and chuck this damned camera in the Indian Ocean. BTW, where's Su? She hasn't come back yet...?



Oh, gawd, now I KNOW this camera is on the fritz! Into the ocean it goes!