

PRESS RELEASE: January 2008

Uma Paro in Bhutan and Uma Ubud in Bali join Design Hotels for 2008

Uma Paro in Bhutan becomes the first in the country to be listed in the 2008 Design Hotels' directory while Uma Ubud in Bali joins an elite selection of Design Hotels' members on the Indonesian island. Both hotels form part of COMO Hotels and Resorts, which also owns the Metropolitan London (a Design Hotels' member since 1993) and the Metropolitan Bangkok, which joined Design Hotels in October.

Design Hotels™ represents and markets a hand-picked collection of more than 160 hotels in over 40 countries across the globe. Established in 1993 as the first of its kind, the company offers unparalleled international representation to member hotels – all independently owned but united by a commitment to individuality, progressive design and cultural authenticity. The company has its headquarters in Berlin and branches in London, Barcelona, New York, Singapore, Bali and Tokyo.

This exciting development for both Uma Paro and Uma Ubud recognises both properties' belief in a sophisticated luxury credo, which is shared by Design Hotels. Luxury is defined as something which adds pleasure to our lives, highlighting real substance over that which is only packaging. The hotels speak to guests as individuals, enhancing our quality of life.

With both properties, guests can enjoy a unique cultural adventure, complemented by the core of the COMO Shambhala experience with Yoga and Asian-inspired therapies. In design, each hotel reflects local aesthetics, combining indigenous detailing with a serene modernity. The number of rooms is deliberately limited. In cuisine, both Uma properties incorporate local organic foodstuffs with sophisticated Asian-led traditions. Uma Paro and Uma Ubud also offer the opportunity to explore the surrounding landscapes with experienced guides.

Uma Ubud in Bali, new in July 2004, is located within Ubud, an inland town revered as the island's cultural hub. The 29-room hotel overlooks the Tjampuhan Valley. The interiors are by Japanese designer Koichiro Ikebuchi. Carved panels open up the rooms to incorporate views, while the simplicity of pared-down spaces keeps light flowing through the interiors, from the bedroom through to garden terraces, private courtyards and pretty plunge pools. This respect for Uma Ubud's natural surroundings is repeated in the choice of materials, including local woods and along-along thatched roofs.

Uma Paro, which opened in November 2004, is located on a 38-acre hilltop site. It is close to the town of Paro, one of the main cultural centres of Bhutan. There are only 20 rooms and nine villas, with interiors by traditionally-trained Bhutanese artisans working alongside Cheong Yew Kwan, architect of COMO Shambhala Estate at Begawan Giri, and Kathryn Kng, who did the contemporary-styled Metropolitan Bangkok. The hotel staff have substantial experience in trekking and cultural excursions, taking guests all over the country to explore monasteries, markets and hidden Himalayan valleys.

For more information on Design Hotels, visit www.designhotels.com.

For COMO Hotels and Resorts, visit como.bz.

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Uma Paro entrance

This image can be downloaded at:

http://www.como.bz/download/paro/Uma_Paro_Entrance.jpg



Uma Ubud pool bar and yoga pavilion

This image can be downloaded at:

http://www.como.bz/download/ubud/Pool_bar_yoga_pavilion.jpg



Uma Paro Deluxe Room

This image can be downloaded at:

http://www.como.bz/download/paro/deluxe_room.jpg



Uma Ubud Terrace Room (twin)

This image can be downloaded at:

http://www.como.bz/download/ubud/Twin_Terrace_Room.jpg

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Uma Paro, Bhutan
Website uma.como.bz/paro

Uma Ubud, Bali
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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Understanding Uma: Uma means 'Living House' in Bahasa, the Indonesian national language. Developed by COMO Hotels and Resorts, Uma properties are located in unspoilt, inland locations. They are also ecologically aware. Every aspect of an Uma resort is infused with indigenous attributes, from design to cuisine to local staff knowledge. The intention is to immerse guests in the textural richness of the resort's carefully chosen region – from culture to religion and landscape – offering the dual experience of escape and adventure. This is complemented by the holistic core of the COMO Shambhala philosophy, featuring Yoga and Asian-inspired therapies. Uma Paro's sister resort, Uma Ubud, is located in Bali.

Understanding COMO Hotels and Resorts: COMO Hotels and Resorts' first property opened in 1991 – the Halkin in London's Belgravia. The winning combination of smooth and accurate service, healthy Michelin-starred food and contemporary, understated style has since led to the creation of further properties, each different from the other while respecting COMO's core commitments – to indulge every guest's sense of respite, be it on a private island or a city hotel in the world's most dynamic capitals. Currently the COMO portfolio consists of two properties in London: the Halkin and Metropolitan, London. The resort product launched in 1998 with Parrot Cay in the Turks and Caicos. In 2002, Cocoa Island in the Maldives was born, followed in 2003 by the Metropolitan, Bangkok. In early 2004, COMO Hotels and Resorts assumed management of Begawan Giri Estate in Bali. That same year saw the opening of Uma Paro, Bhutan, and Uma Ubud, Bali. In 2005, Begawan Giri was relaunched with substantial new facilities as a top-end residential wellness retreat called COMO Shambhala Estate at Begawan Giri.