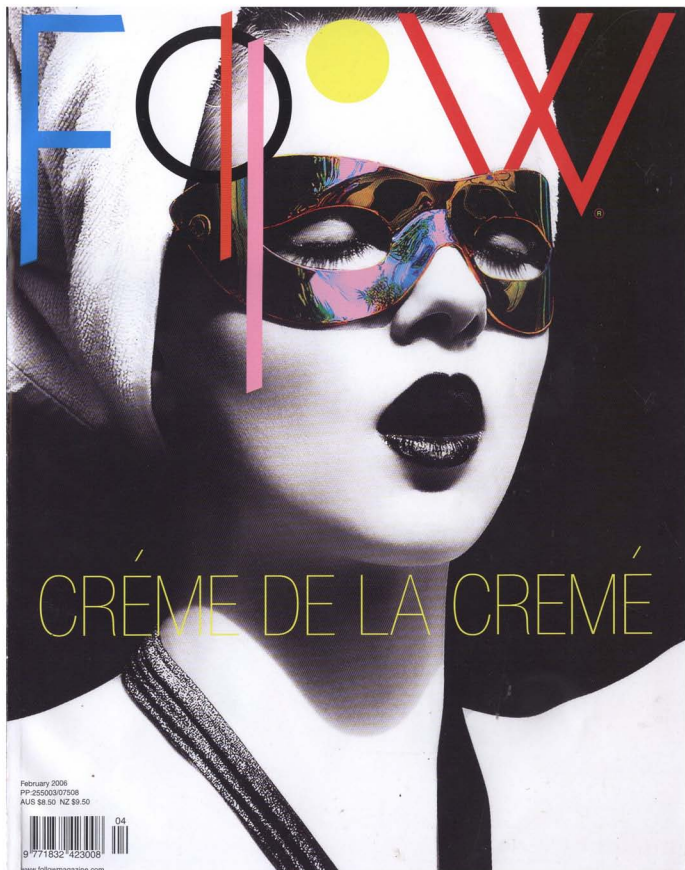


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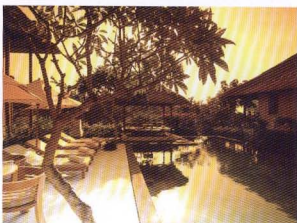
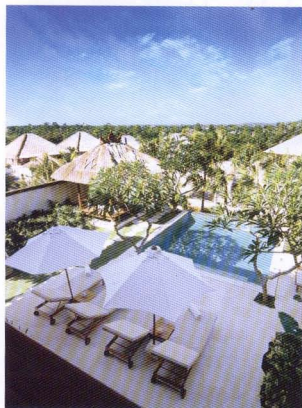


February 2006  
PP-265003/07508  
AUS \$8.50 NZ \$9.50



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# NEW WAVE



The Karma Resorts are boutique lifestyle resorts where (almost) anything goes. Private villas, personal chefs and nimble-fingered masseurs create the kind of rock star holiday where you can be as reclusive, or as friendly, as you like. This summer *Follow* oils up, lies back and thinks of Bali: there's nothing wrong with a little bit of luxury.

Karma owner and founder John Spence has a surprisingly salty past. A music industry leader, who has worked with the likes of Boy George and other high-maintenance stars, Spence has seen it all. He's also rather well travelled, has a young family and has come to expect certain standards of service and accommodation. There was nothing, he thought, that seemed to cater for every aspect of a traveller's experience, from arrival to departure, but at the same time looked after a slew of guests – all with different needs and expectations.

Karma is his response to a gaping hole in the high-end resort market, an experience that quite cleverly covers all bases. From saucy couples, families and those holidaying alone, to cheeky gangs of friends who drink at the Karma Beachclub and skinny-dip at midnight in their own private pool. One-, two-, three- and four-bedroom private villas are linked with winding lanes; there's a signature restaurant, the trademark Chakra Spa, bubbling fountains, and all the colourful trappings of local life. It's all about choice. A little shy? Order room service and eat in your villa. Want to make some friends? Hang out in the bar or dine in the restaurant. Control freaks can go shopping and cook at home in sprawling kitchens, watch MTV Asia and knock up a few bragging business emails to send back home. Guests can be as gregarious, or as private, as they want. There's an obsession with providing space for choice that's only really possible in boutique resorts. Spence's staff live and work on site and oversee the high level of service, sneaking around on golf carts double-checking that towels are folded, beds are turned down at night and, most importantly, toilet paper is folded into that sharp little point. It may seem a touch over-zealous, but the attention to detail is incredible.

Step off the plane (Garuda Indonesia fly once a day from Sydney) and Karma staff smile and whisk you through customs and immigration, plop you down in an airconditioned cruiser, plug you into an iPod and dab you down with chilled towels. A few minutes later it's as if you've lived in Bali forever. It's a beautiful island, a treasure of treats that way surpass your expectations of cheap DVDs and the odd sarong. Karma's Chakra Spa is a highlight, with chakra-specific therapies, suitably wily Californian yoga masters, and local masseurs trained

in Turkey and India that will pummel and scrub you into quiet and contemplative submission. You can choose pre-prepared products, or fresh local spa ingredients that are mashed in front of you, along with imported essential oils. It doesn't stop there. There's an Australian New Age leader who claims he can yank out your soul, wash it and pop it back in again, and trips to the local village leader might involve an impromptu cooking class or your numerological qualities analysed with ancient scrolls. Then there's surfside horse riding, raving, or lying around in the Frangipani gardens for hours and hours doing absolutely nothing (our favourite activity).

Jimbaran is just the first in a new wave of John Spence's lifestyle resorts, with a Koh Samui site opening right on the beach this summer. Then, Karma Kandara, which is scattered across a deep gorge, and teetering over cliff tops overlooking Bali's only coral reef. Spence fell in love with the site a few years ago when he visited an uncharted, and supposedly haunted, cave at the foot of the cliffs. There is something electric about the area: the views are impossibly high and breezy, and the sea a perfectly clichéd turquoise. A Seychelles hideaway will soon follow and finally, Margaret River, in W.A., (with its own airstrip) will open in 2007. You can have your own private slice of Karma too. All the villas are for sale – you can have it for a few weeks a year, enjoy the Karma experience, and then rent it out for times when, sadly, you have to go back to work.

In as much as Karma is a break from roaring hedonism, it's a reflection of it too. Soaked in a sleepy silence during the day, the resort can also turn into raucous one-off parties. Either way, full-throttle luxury is expected. Nine course degustation dinners, sunset picnics, personal chefs, Australian and European wines and other imported fancy bits can make it a rather posh affair. There are quieter moments though: a couple share a candlelit dinner by the pool with its floating flower art pieces and quiet, tinkling music. But a few hours later there's a hot young guy in a cowboy hat, singing *Kokomo* at the top of his voice, and splashing around in the water. Naked. You see? There's something for everyone.

Karma Resort and Spa, Jimbaran, Bali.  
www.karmaresorts.com  
phone: + 62 361 705 600, fax: +62 361 705 901.  
Garuda Indonesia Airlines  
www.garuda-indonesia.com, phone: 1300 385 330.

# SO CAN WE BE A BEAUTIFUL FOLLOW

Photographed by Justin Smith  
Stylish by Mark Vossello

It's not just how you look, it's how you feel. In a world obsessed with physical perfection, confidence is our most attractive quality. There are many ways to be beautiful, so make the best of what you've got. *Follow* flies to Bali for a week of deep relaxation, aromatic massage, organic facials and the slippery, sensual pleasures of Karma Resorts' Chakra Spa, Jimbaran. With its detox (and retox) programs, mysterious Reiki masters, award-winning chefs and sure-footed reflexologists, a flock of therapists salt-scrub away your worries and make you beautiful from the inside out.



### The good life

After an afternoon tussling with the pool boy, even the most gamorous hair can get a little tired. British power brand ghd's Indulgence Treatment Mask will seal luxury into your hair, tickling your senses with its calming and healing natural extracts and herby aroma that includes sage, amica, chamomile and calendula. A pinch of ginkgo biloba encourages increased blood flow to the scalp, leaving your hair youthful and rejuvenated. Just wash your hair, rinse with warm water and gently massage your scalp with the mask, which acts as a conditioner, penetrating deeply. Wrap it all up in a fresh towel and leave for as long as it takes. After all, it's much better to keep things warm and moist, don't you think?

Seafolly bronze yoga cutaway one-piece maillot swim suit with buckle trim \$229 US, Sox Fellen's hair chrome eye mask \$40 and Terry de Havilland cream sneakers and gold stiletto wedges \$1,395 @ Miss Louie