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## HOTEL TUGU BALI

Jalan Pantai Batu Bolong • Canggu Beach-Bali • Indonesia • Tel +62-361-4731701 • Fax +62-361-4731708 • bali@tuguhotels.com

# Anhar Setjadibrata

**Bali's Largest Collector of Fine Indonesian Art  
and Owner of Hotel Tugu Bali & Villa Tugu Bali**

Anhar Setjadibrata is the quintessential 20<sup>th</sup> Century Renaissance Man. In addition to being a successful hotelier, he is also a physician, lawyer, and more importantly, the owner of a priceless collection of fine Indonesian art and cultural antiquities.

Setjadibrata's passion for Indonesian art and history began while he was a young, and very poor, medical student in Java. He began collecting antiques in 1972 at the age of 25 years old. At that time he had completed his medical studies and was waiting to complete the last year of his hospital internship. Young Setjadibrata was looking forward to taking Indonesia's government regulated medical examination – a necessity to practice medicine in that country. As fate would have it, political problem arose and the examination was postponed for an indefinite period.

Having a lot of spare time on his hand, Setjadibrata accepted a job as a medical representative for an international pharmaceutical company. He was sent to visit doctors and nurse in small villages far from Java. During these visits, Setjadibrata had the opportunity to explore Java, Bali, Nusa Tenggara, West Timor, Kalimantan and Borneo. He came across many people of these regions who were discarding priceless antiquities and cultural relics, innocently believing these historical treasures to be out of style, old-fashioned, or simply not “modern”.

Setjadibrata saw the natural beauty of these village and the remains of their rich history, of which the locals were painfully unaware. Because of his keen interest in history, he also worked as a non-professional guide in his free time. One day he was hired by an elderly European professor who was studying the legend of Ramayana. The professor asked the young Setjadibrata to take him to a place in Bali where he was to rendezvous with a stranger. The place was situated along a broad sandy beach nestled amidst verdant paddy fields near an old temple. But what Setjadibrata remembered most about this place was the sunset ... the most spectacular one he had ever seen.

As twilight fell, the stranger approached the professor and handed him an object. It was a *Cupu Manik*, a 16<sup>th</sup> century stone bowl of three parts, from which ancient priests sprinkled holy healing water over villagers suffering from sickness and disease. Although still a novice collector, Setjadibrata was aware of the priceless cultural value of this treasure.

Thereafter, Setjadibrata began collecting antiques, and the histories that surround them, piece by piece, and competing with scores of antique dealers from abroad who flock to Indonesia to buy its priceless antiques – and pieces of its history. To gain more thorough knowledge of the history of antiques, as well as learn how to authenticate them, Setjadibrata spent much time reading about antiques, visiting museums and reproduction workshops, and engaging in lengthy discussions with fellow collectors.

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Tired of waiting to take the government's medical exam and facing an unsure future in medicine, Setjadibrata entered law school in 1973. He began a career as a practicing legal consultant following his graduation in 1977.

Setjadibrata's endless search for cultural antiquities was never motivated by financial gain. It began as a quest, fuelled by his youthful idealism, to learn the history of his country. "I never thought of collecting for profit," remarks Setjadibrata. "I was only thinking of a way to save these treasures because they are related to Indonesia's history, a part of history that I can touch and feel".

Through the years, his vast collection of antiques continued to grow. "I began to realize that my collections must no longer speak only to me, they must also speak to all mankind as a symbol of my country's rich history and cultural heritage," added Setjadibrata. After 12 years, Setjadibrata left his law practice and decided to make his dream a reality.

In 1989 he built his first boutique museum hotel, Tugu Park, in the East Java city of Malang to showcase his overflow of treasures from Java and beyond. His efforts were soon rewarded. In addition to being the only hotel in Indonesia to win a national award for architectural excellence, Tugu Malang is a home to one of the largest collections of Javanese, Chinese and Dutch colonial antiques in Indonesia and is ranked among the 101 Best Hotels in the world.

Despite being successful in business, Setjadibrata never forgot about the beloved Cupu Manik and continued to look for it through the years. Then one evening while visiting a friend and fellow antique collector he saw it – the very same Cupu Manik he had seen in the old professor's hand. Through much effort and expense, he managed to procure the precious cultural relic.

Hotel Tugu Bali and Villa Tugu Bali, Setjadibrata's new luxury museum boutique resort. Tugu Bali is located in the ancient village of Canggu a long a broad sandy beach nestled among lush paddy fields near Batu Bolong Temple, one of Bali's most sacred temples.

Hotel Tugu Bali's architecture and interior reflect the art, culture and history of Indonesia in general and Bali in particular. The Wantilan Agung (Grand Ceremonial House), where traditional Balinese dances are performed for guests, houses an art gallery featuring Setjadibrata's exclusive collection of historic Indonesian artwork, antiquities and cultural artifacts. Wantilan Agung is decorated with wooden Boma Head (mythological giant guardians) carvings on the top of crossbeams, and columns inspired by the ancient ceremonial house in the ancient village of Bayung Gede. Among the antiquities displayed here is the precious Cupu Manik. The main entrance leads to the resort's 21 villas and suites, amidst tropical and a tranquil pool of wild lotus.

Among Hotel Tugu Bali's artistic and cultural highlights are guardian statues from the 12<sup>th</sup> century; a 150-year-old wooden well; an immense 19<sup>th</sup> century marble table; two suites built in memory of distinguished individuals who contributed to the art and culture of Indonesia; a vast collection of Indonesia art located throughout the resort and its exclusively gallery; a 19<sup>th</sup> century meeting room decorated with royal antiques and other works commemorating Bali's greatest heroes; and Bale Sutra (The Palace of Harmony), an elegant dining room recalling an 18<sup>th</sup> century Kang Xi period temple.

Adds Setjadibrata, "We want Tugu Bali guests to not only enjoy the amenities of the hotel, but to become involved in Balinese tradition".

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