

Pose in Bali

Janine Hall isn't the first mid-30s executive to decide there is more to life than a career that demands a 24/7 commitment. But she may be the first to decide the antidote to her mid-life crisis is to run off to Bali and set up a surfing and yoga retreat for women called Surf Haven Bali.

"I figured there had to be women like me who felt totally burnt out and wanted to just get away from everything and hang out with their friends," says Hall, a New Zealander whose fashion marketing career had necessitated stints living in London, Sydney and Tokyo.

Hall had loved Bali since childhood visits, so it wasn't difficult to pick a location. The yoga and surfing combination seemed a good fit with today's women and with Bali, she says.

"Lots of women are really into yoga and I decided to add the surfing element because of where we are situated and also it's a challenge that is totally refreshing," Hall says.

She also wanted quality accommodation. "You get to a point in life where you don't want to share bathrooms or stay in bunks." Consequently, guests stay at two luxury four-bedroom villas at the resort in Seminyak.

Hall has employed the Australian nutritionist and award-winning restaurateur, Samantha Gowing, to design the menu with a view to using local produce and maximising health benefits. "We did surveys and found that nutrition is uppermost in our guests' wish list," she says.

Gowing turned the Grace Darling Hotel into one of Melbourne's first gastro pubs during the 1990s. She now runs Gowings Food Health Wealth, a successful nutrition and well-being business in Byron Bay, as well as consulting to the spa industry, here and internationally.

The seven-day retreats each month are limited to eight women. Packages including accommodation, 15 hours of surfing tuition (with instructors trained by the Australian Surf Industry Training) daily yoga and meditation classes, three hours of spa treatments, all meals, a full-day Bali tour and airport transfers, are priced from \$2311, twin share.

See surf-haven-spa-retreats.com.