

## **PRESS RELEASE**

Tropical Islands - Europe's largest tropical holiday world



### **The Tropical Village**

The Tropical Village is home to four remarkable buildings, characteristic of the architecture in Thailand, Borneo, Bali and Samoa. Each of these intricately designed authentic buildings is truly unique in its own way. They were built exclusively for Tropical Islands by experienced craftsmen in their countries of origin, then transported to Germany and reconstructed in Europe's largest leisure world by the same craftsmen.

#### **The Balinese Temple Gate**

The impressive Bali Gate serves as the entrance to the Tropical Village. The Gate is nearly 14 meters high and is the largest Balinese gate outside of Bali, the Hindu country also known as "Island of the Gods".

In Bali, such open gates signify access to holy sites, with the "split" gate symbolizing a mount of the gods that has been torn asunder through its midpoint. The inner sanctum is protected by an additional, closed gate. The Bali Gate at Tropical Islands is an excellent example of intricate Balinese handicraft. The sandstone and brick decoration depicts lions and dragons in ornamental form, along with typical Balinese figures and patterns.

#### **The Bali Pavilion**

Passing through the Bali Gate leads to the imposing Balinese Pavilion. The Pavilion has a hexagonal ground plan and three pagoda roofs, giving it the same aesthetic proportions as a Balinese temple. The roofs are decked with palm leaves.

The timbers used in the construction are bangkirai and merbau, two extremely strong woods from Asia. On the ground floor, a sandstone relief depicts scenes from the Ramayana, the epic tale of Prince Rama, his beautiful wife Sita and the Monkey King Hanuman. The Ramayana is a classic of world literature and contains the philosophical basis of Hinduism.

#### **The Borneo Longhouse**

Opposite the Bali Pavilion is the Borneo Longhouse. It is a typical example of a residential house on the island of Borneo (Malaysia). These buildings can be up to 100 metres long, with the entire village living under one roof. As the families expand, so the house is extended. Longhouses are typically located close to fast-flowing rivers, and are therefore built on stilts. An open veranda runs along the whole length of the longhouse, with the private living quarters of the individual families located behind the veranda. The Borneo Longhouse at Tropical Islands is built in the typical Orang Ulu style. They are known as the artists among the original peoples of Borneo. Their longhouses are traditionally decorated with carvings and paintings, and their household objects are adorned with fine pearls. The Borneo Longhouse was built in partnership with the Sarawak Central Tourist Office and is based on an actual house in the historical museum village in Kuching.

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### The Thai House

The largest and most elegant building in the Tropical Village is our traditional Thai House, built out of wood and bamboo. Thai houses are perfectly adapted to the tropical climate. For example, because of frequent flooding, they are built on tall stilts. The Thai House would typically be home to a large family. It consists of three smaller buildings: the sleeping quarters, the reception building, and a large house for eating. These three houses are built around a central atrium where there is usually a large, shady tree. The Tropical Islands Thai House was designed and built by architect Ladda Teijavnaija. In her native Thailand she has also worked for the Thai royal family. Our Thai House was inaugurated by Thai monks with a traditional Buddhist ceremony.

### The Samoa Fale

Typical Polynesian straw huts are called "fale". The ground plan is usually oval in shape, with large tree trunks supporting a leaf-covered roof. The houses are usually open at the sides, even at night. The "walls" consist of plaited mats that are rolled up and only let down in rain or strong wind.

The Samoan fale at Tropical Islands would typically be a sort of community centre for a number of villages. It is unusually large and each of the 28 beautifully carved wooden pillars stands for one of the family groups. The Tropical Islands fale was constructed with the assistance of the Samoan Tourist Authority.

### The Wayang Stage

At the edge of the Tropical Village stands the Wayang Stage. Wayang is the Malay word for "show". In every village there is a wayang, and it is a centre for culture, dancing and fun. Every day, the Tropical Islands Wayang Stage plays host to an entertainment show.

It is even possible to stay overnight in luxury lodges in the **Bali Pavilion** and **Thai House**. The Tropical Village also offers numerous other options for overnight stays in neighbouring authentic houses and lodges.

**Should you have any questions, please contact:**

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Correct as of: March 2011