CREATIVE PROCESS

Story by Virginia Jen

Moon Gang is an artistic haven that's embedded in the Ubud community and inspired by another time.



Prue Ruscoe. Anson Smart

YASMINE GHONIEM

"Having a space that felt ancient was important," says Yasmine Ghoneim (right), founder of Sydney-based design studio YSG, of her international project, Moon Gang Bali (moongangbali.com). "I wanted to walk down the stairs and feel like I'd just stepped into Babylon."

The Ubud property may have only opened in June but the considered use of colour and materials helps achieve the desired effect with curved rendered plaster, tiled surfaces, textural fabrics and an earthy palette. "There's an abundance of nothing and the space to appreciate it," says Ghoneim about the sense of time slowing down at the five-suite stay.



Her studio's past assignments include Sydney cafes Edition Coffee Roasters and Superfreak and the residential apartments at the new Powerhouse Parramatta. But the designer's approach at Moon Gang is distinctly her own.

Woven poolside sunloungers give a nod to the surrounding palm trees, shapely furniture made from recycled plastic invites guests to linger in the communal lounge (above), and the suites are dressed with hand-dyed curtains, understated lighting and low-fi tech, including record and cassette players. Many of the pieces are the handiwork of local practitioners – BYO Living, Weedoo Plastics and Altarize among them – working closely with YSG and the property's owner and operator, designer Kirsten Millbank, during the four-year project.

A stay at Moon Gang is geared towards creative expression through wellbeing and the onsite Wellness Lab spa has a range of offerings, from yoga, meditation and ritual movement to facials, massages and body treatments using an exclusive Fields of Yarrow skincare range. Ghoneim has given the spa a touch of Japanese minimalism, with its "wabi sabi, the beautiful piece of hand-carved timber [for the door] and the stone steps over the koi pond" encapsulating her design vision.