

Sipping chic at Sri Panwa

Beautiful people, fine food, exotic cocktails... it ain't Beverly Hills, but it's about as close as you're likely to find in Phuket. Sri Panwa, located on Cape Panwa, is a community of residences overlooking the Andaman Sea, surrounded by foliage and lush scenery.

Baba Dining Lounge, nestled in the heart of Sri Panwa, is a refined, three-story socialites' restaurant that doubles as a bar – it's a playground for people who enjoy the finer things in life.

Forty meters above the sea, Baba affords spectacular views of the cape, making it ideal for catching the sun setting on the Andaman.

Sunday July 29 saw Baba's grand opening party unveil the new establishment to a varied selection of guests.

The venue looked fab, with earthy, wooden tones defining the entrance, where guests were whisked in by attentive staff offering a welcoming massage and a glass of wine.

There were high expectations for the party, with a DJ from Bed Supperclub in Bangkok slated to spin the tunes accompanied by Singha (no relation to the beer) from Sqweez Animal on guitar.

Two-piece Sqweez Animal are one of the hippest pop groups around at the moment, with songs "Let's Cry" and "Krueng Sai Ta" receiving major radio airtime.

How Singha would perform on his own was a point of interest at this party.

The mood was casual down on the restaurant level, with Phuket's playful out to meet and greet each other with the usual levels of emphatic enthusiasm. Rather than dancing, guests pre-

AFTER DARK

By Matt Crook

COCKTEAU TWINS:
Benny and Danny Sorum mix it up at the opening to lend four helping hands to Baba's regular bar crew.



ferred to mingle while taking time to admire the view and sampling cocktails, including fresh coconut milk spiked with rum.

The cocktail list provided enough treats to keep the busy socialites happy. The apple-tinged Sri Panwa cocktail proved to be a firm favorite.

The bar staff were quick and efficient, but it wasn't until twin barmen Benny and Danny Sorum stepped up that the party took an interesting twist.

The Swedish duo made light work of wow-ing partygoers with their bottle-flinging showmanship, working side by side with Baba's own Kaiping and Marilyn.

Although Baba is technically a restaurant, the party was limited to finger foods and snacks, no doubt to complement the copious amount of alcohol being consumed. What food there was proved tasty, with most people

BABA BABE: MTV VJ and swimsuit model Janesuda Panto was one of the many beautiful people on hand to mark Baba's opening.



scouting back and forth three or four times to fill their plates before they were satisfied.

Lychee-soy duck, passion fruit-sake shrimp, fresh watermelon salad and the lemongrass infused chicken wings were all thrown into the mix along with the usual vol-au-vent selection.

As the night wore on and more drinks were sampled, people started to loosen up and conversation soon began to flow.

The second-story lounging area provided a relaxing retreat from the hustle and bustle of the restaurant level, and sure enough there was Singha playing his guitar to the tunes of the DJ.

A talented musician, Singha heavily used his FX pedal to create some interesting accompaniment without exerting himself.

Three hours passed before the party started to quieten down. The party's success was testament to the reasons to visit Baba, and no doubt many of the guests will return another time.

Baba is open for breakfast, lunch, dinner and, of course, cocktails. It can't classify itself as a lively nightclub, but for drinks with friends, a romantic meal at sunset or just a place to hang out, Baba will appeal to islanders who enjoy low-key, casual evenings.

The lunch menu features a range of light snacks, soups, noodle dishes, traditional Thai fare and the obligatory steaks and burgers, as well as a range of

sandwiches served in ciabatta.

German chef Jimmy Karl has created an intriguing selection of main courses for the dinner menu, including tiger prawns with green-peppercorn sauce and lamb chops with truffle sauce, with the option of ginger-infused mashed potato or mixed vegetables in oyster sauce as an accompaniment.

A five-course dinner at Baba will set you back 2,000 baht

per person – good value for such a distinguished venue.

The drinks menu boasts the usual suspects, from Sangsom to Johnnie Walker Blue Label, joined by a tasty range of cocktails.

Baba. Open 7 am till late. For more information or reservations call 076-371006 or K. Jay at 085-9181969. Website: www.sripanwa.com

<p>* Price for July - October</p> <p>Thermage Face only 40,000 B. Face & neck 60,000 B.</p> <p>BOTOX start at 5,000 B.</p> <p>Restylane 10,000+ B.</p>	<p>Phuket Laser Center</p> <p>LASIK Laser Vision Correction for both eyes 66,000 B.</p>
<p>Laser Teeth Whitening 8,500 B.</p>	<p>Phuket Laser Center Patong Beach</p> <p>106/11-12 Thaweewong Rd. Tel. 076-296-221 Mobile 085-069-4757</p> <p>Open : Mon-Sat 10AM-8 PM email : infolaser@phuketlaser.com www.phuketlaser.com</p>