

Just Add Photos

Instant Bali Website & Gallery

by Deb Fugitt

Bali is one of our three most productive destinations for underwater photography. The sea surrounding Bali has an abundance of small exotic creatures and offers the opportunity to see larger species like the mola mola, manta rays and sharks. Bali offers wrecks, muck sites and reef diving. These diving opportunities, taken in combination with the low cost of accommodations, food and diving in Bali make this a “must do” stop on every trip we make to Indonesia.

As the webMs. for UwP and other diving and travel clients, I spend my days building websites, a job that seems fun at first thought, but is actually very tedious and stressful when working with clients who depend on their websites for their livelihood. At the end of each eye-crossing, boggled mind day, the last thing I want to do is build another website. So,

although we’ve made many trips to Bali over the years, I’ve always been too busy or burned out to build a photo gallery that wasn’t part of the work for a client.

Proimageguide’s “Instant Website, Just Add Photos” caught my attention. Right. No Dreamweaver, no layout problems, no PHP, CGI or perl, just add photos and content and leave the sticky bits to Proimageguide’s designers? I can have my Bali Gallery, indeed an entire website, without the usual hassle and without banner ads, Adwords or distracting links to Proimageguide’s offering? I was skeptical.

The proimageguide.com website offers a free 90 day trial offer. Free is well within my personal price range and within UwP’s budget. Being skeptical as well as rather paranoid about the use of my personal email addresses, I created a new email address

and used it to sign up for that free trial.

Within minutes, I received an email with the password for my new account, the URL’s of my new website, uwp.proimageguide.com, and of the documentation. I logged on and was instantly presented a menu to build my new Home page.

If you want to follow this article by viewing our webpage, the URL is bali.uwpmag.com.

Modifying the Home Page

Ah yes, Content. Out of the dozens of interesting images from our recent Bali trip, which should I use on my Home page? First I tried the Harlequin Shrimp from a sandy black sand slope near Tulamben. The shrimp was perched on a rusty-orange starfish and was one of many we found in a day’s diving with our Balinese guide and friend, Wayan, from AquaMarine Diving - Bali.

I used the Browse button to find the shrimp image on my PC and then clicked Save



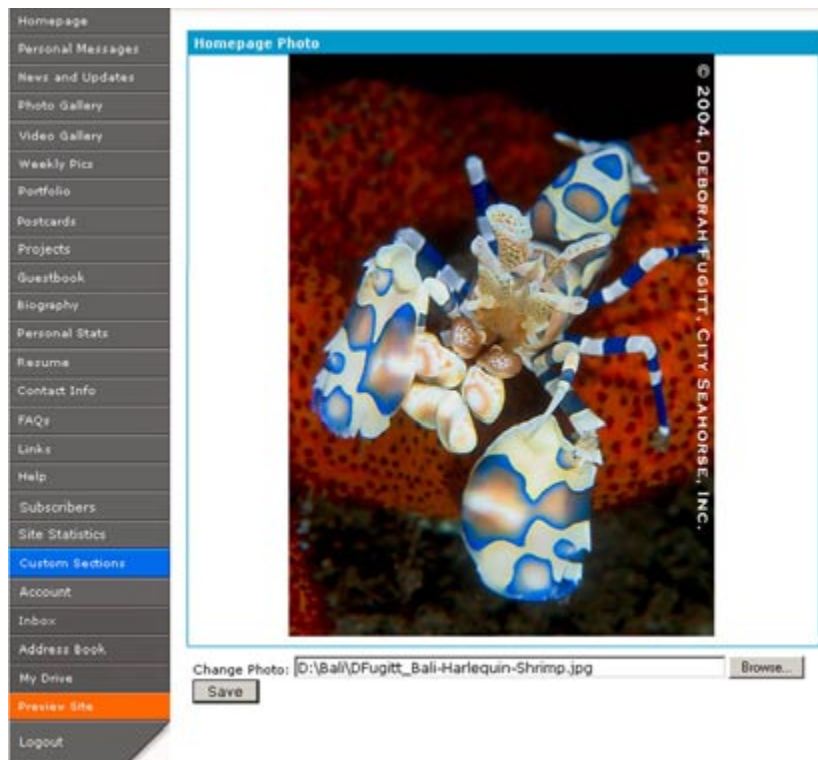
There were so many interesting photos that I made a collage instead of just using a single image for the Home page of our Bali website. There are links top and bottom which I have chosen to include from Proimageguide’s standard list, or have defined as “Custom Sections”.

to upload the image. It was instantly resized and added to my page. The browse-to-upload method, plus a Multiple Images function is used to add images on auto-formatted pages, such as Gallery and Portfolio.

On the same design page, I typed in text and used the formatting tools to make it look more interesting. Colors, text and fonts for the title, background and links of each page are selected using the

Account menu. During the course of my gallery building I changed these items several times since I could not make a final decision on the images I wanted to include. There wasn’t a font I really loved. When I mentioned this to Proimageguide support I was told they can add a title for me using any font I have licensed.

In the end, I decided to create a collage of images and use it for my Home page



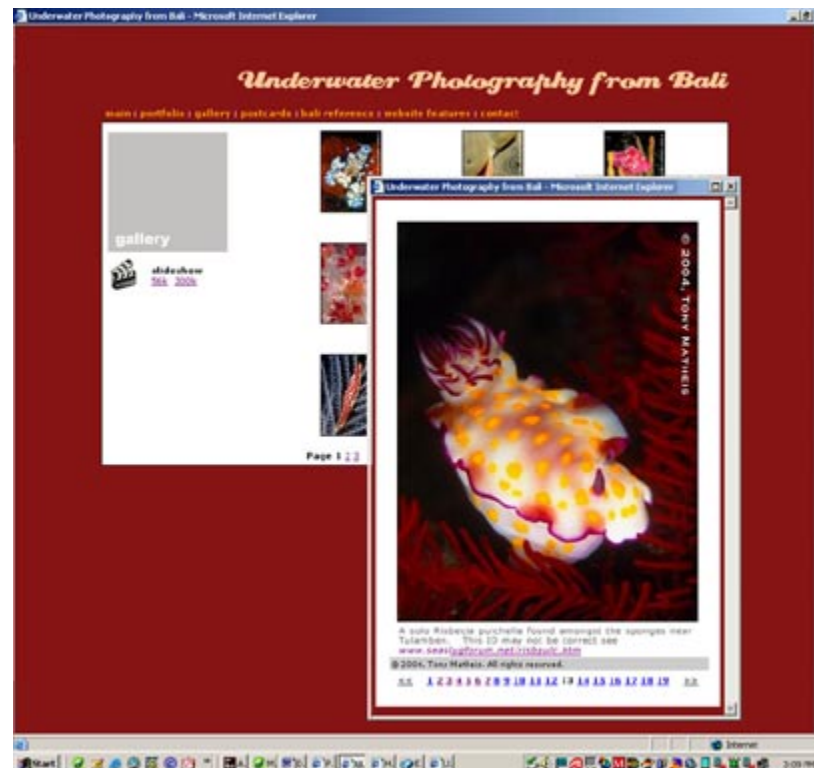
Should I use the Harlequin Shrimp for the Home Page? There are plenty of these shrimp on Bali's black sand slope that also had an abundance of these tasty (to a shrimp) orange starfish. Nikon F4S, 105mm, YS-300, YS-120, Nexus Housing, 1/60, F22, Velvia 50.

Gallery and Portfolio

These were the easiest and most fun sections of the site to create. The difficult part again was selecting the images. I recommend putting a copyright notice on each photo even though pages on Proimageguide sites disable

right click downloads to help prevent image theft.

Tony Matheis and I dive together and share many of the same creatures for our photos. We've seen most of the common nudibranchs in Bali and are always looking for something new. Many nudibranchs we find are in



Tony Matheis' photo of a Risbecia pulchella framed by red crinoid arms was a definite for inclusion in the gallery. Each gallery shows pages of thumbnails which expand to a large photo with caption. There is also a slideshow option. Nikon F4s, 105mm lens, Nexus housing, 2 x YS-120 strobes, Velvia

the sand and don't make very spectacular images. We were both happy to find a Risbecia nudibranch sitting on a dirty sponge but framed by red crinoid arms. Tony's photo of the striking fellow was a definite for inclusion in the underwater gallery. I've included several species of

nudibranchs in addition to several other creatures in our Bali website.

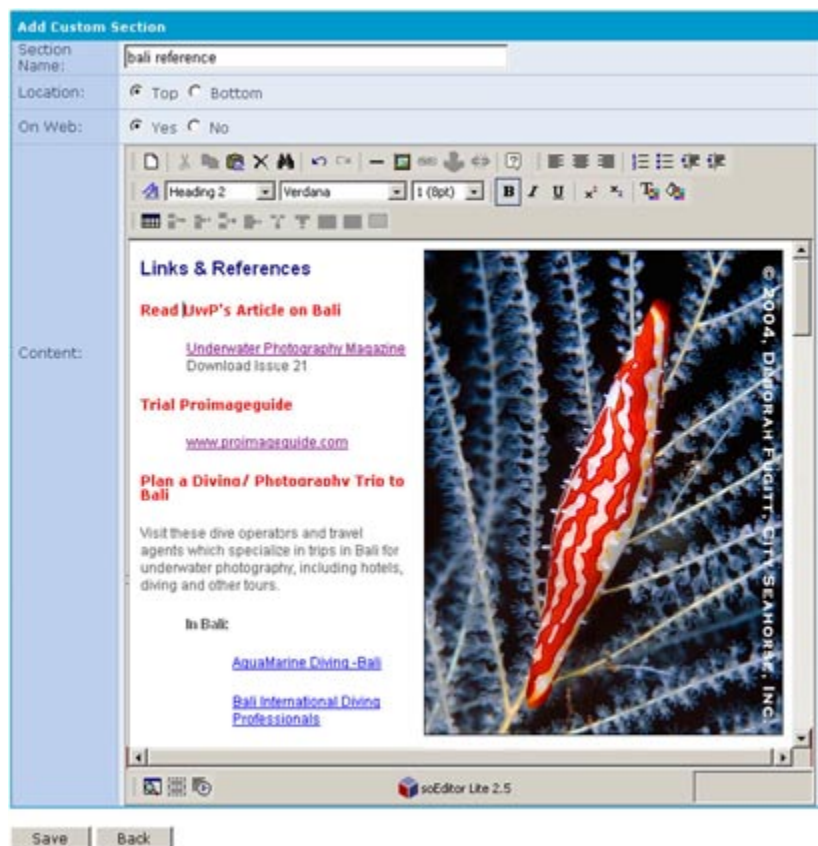
The gallery section of a Proimageguide website organizes images by sets so it is possible to split images into different categories, each in its own gallery section. For each gallery section, one

chooses an image and title to identify the gallery to website visitors.

Once a gallery section is defined, one links to a separate page to add photos to the gallery. I would browse to an image on my PC, enter some text for a caption in the form, and save. The image was uploaded and instantly available in my gallery. On the same page, there is even an option to add a slideshow with a choice of music and transition effects!

A gallery can be password protected, which is a very nice feature for restricting viewing of certain images to clients or editors (right, Peter?). Photos in a gallery can be organized to display in a different order by dragging image thumbnails into new positions.

Proimageguide resizes the images, creates the thumbnails, builds multiple pages and navigation through the gallery and builds the slideshow. It was true; all I had to do was add photos.



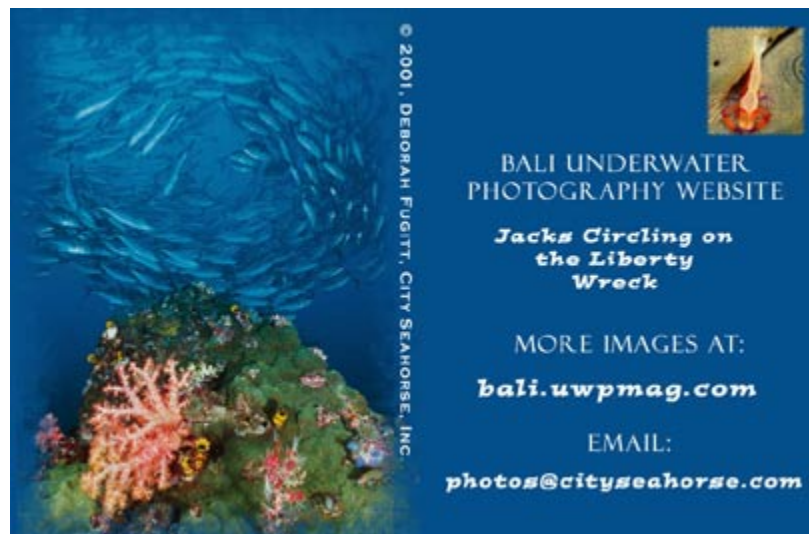
The allied cowrie photo is one of my favorites from our last trip. Use the Custom Sections menu to create a page not addressed by the standard menus. Nikon F4s, 105mm lens, Nexus housing with Woody's diopter, YS-300 & YS-120 strobes, Velvia 50. 1/60, f22, -.3 exp.

Add a Custom Page

Since I'm writing about my website for UwP, I thought it would be a good idea to use the Links menu to build a page with links to UwP, Proimageguide and

some of Bali's dive centers, illustrated with photos of course.

I couldn't place a photo on the preformatted Links page, so Proimageguide tech support suggested I create a custom page instead. Any



The resident school of Jacks is nearly always around the Liberty Wreck. Photographer's with an eye for composition can find plenty of subjects to use in the foreground. I used this photo on the Postcard page. Nikonos V, 15mm lens, 2 x YS-300 strobes with bee blasted domes, 1/90, f8, Velvia 50 pushed 1 stop.

page can be made unavailable or available. While working on a page it would be a good idea to make it unavailable until it is fully designed. Otherwise website visitors are looking at errors and construction.

In Custom Sections I created a new page and titled it "bali reference". The navigation for a new page is automatically added to all the pages at either the top or bottom of the page, a choice made by clicking a radio

button.

Text on most pages can be formatted using tools in the edit window. HTML knowledgeable users can switch to "Source Mode" to enter and edit the HTML for most pages.

The allied cowrie image on the Bali reference page is one of my favorite images from our June 2004 trip. We don't usually dive deep but I'd gone down to 80ft. just to see what was there. I saw a small feathery white coral,

not much bigger than my outstretched hand, with a pretty Glossodoris nudibranch attached! No matter how I tried to compose that perfect shot there was an unattractive lump on the coral that I just couldn't frame out of my shot. When I looked on the opposite side the "lump" was a small but very beautiful red cowrie.

Postcards

I turned a few of our images, UwP covers and screen prints of my Bali website into postcards with a process similar to creating a gallery. Visitors to the site can select and send a postcard that has my message attached.

Bali's Liberty Wreck is a great place for photographers. The old hands know that the best time to be there is before the day trip divers arrive. When the water is clear and the resident school of jacks is circulating around the wreck the wide angle photos ops can't be beat. I used one of my older images from the wreck to create a postcard with a shrimp "stamp".

Other Features

The features I used in my Bali website are:

Portfolio
Photo Gallery
News
Postcards
Guestbook
Contact Info
Subscribe
FAQ
Custom Section - bali reference
Custom Section - about this website

I tested all of the available functions except for the Video Gallery which allows several 5Mb video clips to be defined. The Guestbook allowed me to review comments before allowing them to display on the Guestbook page; the News let me enter multiple news items that pop up in small windows when requested by my website visitor; and the FAQ required simply typing in questions and answers. (I like this as I only enter questions where I know the answer.) . Please [sign my guestbook](#) if you visit bali.uwpmag.com and have a comment.

The Subscribe page is a very nice touch. It allows the collection of email addresses and names of those who want to be on your list for

a newsletter, event announcement, maybe even people who are interested in a photo trip to Bali! The guestbook form has a checkbox that when checked will collect subscriptions as well. Plans to add subscription based services, such as mailing a newsletter are in progress.

There were several pages that I tested but did not add to my site. For a complete list see the proimageguide.com website and sign up for a free trial. Some of the pages I did not choose to include were a resume, biography and weekly image pages. Webmail and POP email addresses are part of the service. Proimageguide assigns a subdomain name to each account, but it is possible to register and use your own domain name with this service.

The Proimageguide service worked very well for us. I created the website and Tony (less knowledgeable about web design) signed up for an account and checked it out as well. Nothing crashed and it was all fairly simple to understand after trying a few things. We did think the documentation could be improved, particularly for people who are just getting started, but once we got a start, it was straightforward.

As a webMs. there were some things that I wanted to change and couldn't, like the background color behind the photos. Stark white

just doesn't do them justice. The near future promised to satiate those desires with more dynamic templates, new templates that can be modified by someone with web design experience, support for MAC OS (only PC / Windows for now), an e-commerce capability plus many small enhancements to make the service faster to use in implementing a website.

I've heard they are dropping their prices soon (probably before UwP21 is published) prior to the implementation of all the new enhancements. The lower rate will be locked in for people who subscribe to the service now. All upgrades are free to those who have signed up for a year's license.

Please explore our *Underwater Photography from Bali* website, bali.uwpmag.com. We'll be back in Bali in December for another round of great diving, so watch for updates to our gallery in January. This time I'll put Tony to work.

Our *Underwater Photography in Bali* website URL is bali.uwpmag.com

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