

APRIL 2026

# LUXE BEAT

Vacationing in a  
Luxury Maze

Canals of Time,  
Tables of Bruges

Australia's Green Heart,  
Queensland's Scenic Rim

*Jetwing*  
*Wahawa Walawwa*









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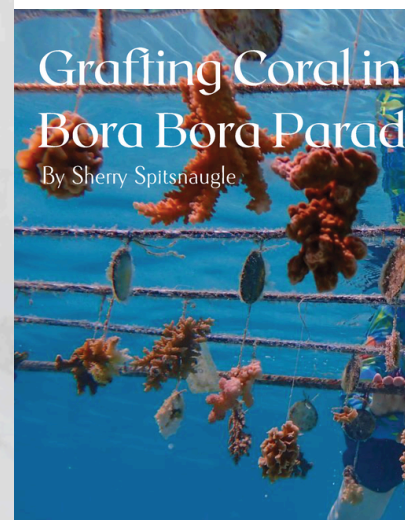


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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Fellow Traveler,

April is the season of open doors, and this issue walks through every one of them. From the storied elegance of Jetwing Wahawa Walauwa in Sri Lanka to the candlelit canals of Bruges, England’s privately owned villages to the gastronomic soul of Edinburgh — this month, we are unapologetically global.

Closer to home, Nashville’s Gulch buzzes with creative energy, Fort Lauderdale delivers sun with a side of culture, and Los Angeles invites you to sip, stay, and score downtown.

Australia opens its arms wide with luxury escapes in Queensland’s Scenic Rim and behind-the-scenes cultural encounters that go well beyond the ordinary.

We also go deeper on this issue. Jessica James shares the story behind her new novel. London Fashion Week becomes an act of healing. The Pairing Project and Wealth, Legacy and the Law round out a collection that reflects the full, rich range of the Luxe Beat life.

*“Attention is the defining luxury of our time.”*

With love and wanderlust,

  
Sherrie Wilkolaski

Publisher & Editor in Chief

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## MAY 2026 ISSUE

Luxe Beat puts Raleigh in the spotlight — Heights House takes the cover as the city's most sophisticated new stay. Inside: legendary tables in Budapest and Tokyo, Washington wine country, a Virgin Voyages cruise, and Patrick Schwarzenegger's case for the daytime martini.

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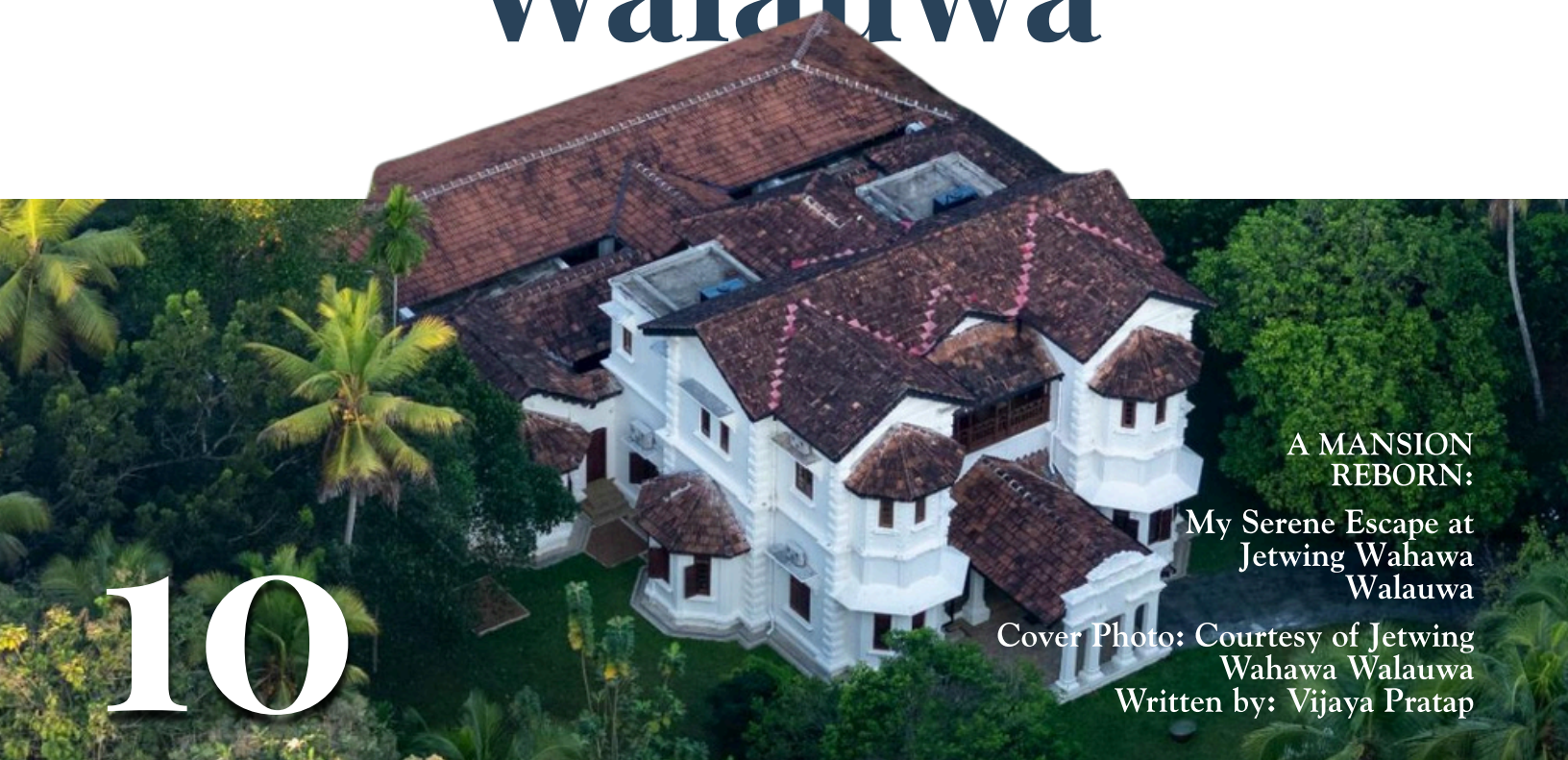
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# Jetwing Wahawa Walauwa



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A MANSION  
REBORN:

My Serene Escape at  
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Cover Photo: Courtesy of Jetwing  
Wahawa Walauwa  
Written by: Vijaya Pratap



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# WEALTH, LEGACY AND THE LAW:

## When Family Mission Statements Help, or Hurt, Estate Plans

by Merilee Kern

*How well-meaning estate planning language can either preserve family harmony or become evidence in probate court*

As wealth transfers accelerate and multi-generational planning becomes more sophisticated, families are increasingly looking beyond traditional wills and trusts to articulate values, purpose, and long-term vision. One tool gaining attention is the family mission statement. While often viewed as a unifying document designed to preserve legacy and harmony, estate litigation attorney Don Ford cautions that these statements carry legal implications that families may not fully appreciate. When disputes arise, even informal writings can influence how intent is interpreted in court.

Estate planning disputes rarely begin with bad intentions. According to probate, trust and estate planning attorney Don Ford, Managing Partner at Ford + Bergner LLP, most probate and trust conflicts arise because family members disagree about what someone meant, what they wanted, or how much discretion a fiduciary was expected to exercise.

Ford, a seasoned probate and trust litigation attorney, frequently speaks about the growing use of family mission statements in estate planning. While these documents are not legally binding in most jurisdictions, he explains that they can significantly influence how courts interpret intent when disputes arise.

**A family mission statement can either clarify a legacy or complicate it.**

**It depends entirely on how it is drafted and whether it aligns with the governing estate documents.**

“

— Attorney Don Ford

A family mission statement typically outlines a family's values, long term priorities, and philosophical approach to wealth. It may address stewardship, philanthropy, education expectations, work ethic, entrepreneurship, or the broader purpose behind trusts and multi-generational planning. Unlike a will or trust, it is generally informational rather than legally enforceable.

However, Ford cautions that informational does not mean irrelevant. “In litigation, anything that sheds light on intent may become evidence,” he explains. “If a dispute involves discretionary distributions or fiduciary judgment, opposing parties often look for supporting language wherever they can find it.”

When carefully coordinated with estate planning documents, family mission statements can reduce the likelihood of conflict. They can provide context for trustee decisions, clarify why distributions are structured a certain way, and help beneficiaries understand the reasoning behind unequal allocations. According to Ford, clarity often discourages litigation by managing expectations early.

At the same time, poorly drafted statements can create problems. If the language contradicts a will or trust, beneficiaries may argue that the legally binding documents do not reflect the decedent's true intent. Vague phrases such as treating everyone fairly or supporting family success can invite competing interpretations in court.

**Ambiguity is the oxygen of litigation. The more room there is for interpretation, the greater the risk of dispute.**

“

— Attorney Don Ford

He also warns against attempting to impose moral or lifestyle directives through non-binding language. Beneficiaries may challenge fiduciaries who try to enforce expectations that lack legal authority, while others may accuse fiduciaries of ignoring stated family values.

Generally speaking, family mission statements are not enforceable unless their provisions are formally incorporated into a valid will or trust. Even so, courts

may consider them when evaluating fiduciary discretion or alleged breaches of duty. This makes alignment between the statement and the estate plan essential.

Ford advocates what he calls litigation aware estate planning. “Estate planning is not just about transferring assets,” he says. “It is about anticipating human dynamics. If you understand how disputes unfold in court, you can draft documents that reduce the risk of conflict.”

For families considering a mission statement, Ford recommends ensuring it aligns with all governing documents, clearly stating that it is non binding, avoiding subjective language, and reviewing it periodically as circumstances change.

**A thoughtful mission statement can strengthen a legacy, But it must be drafted with precision and with an understanding of how it could be used in a courtroom.**

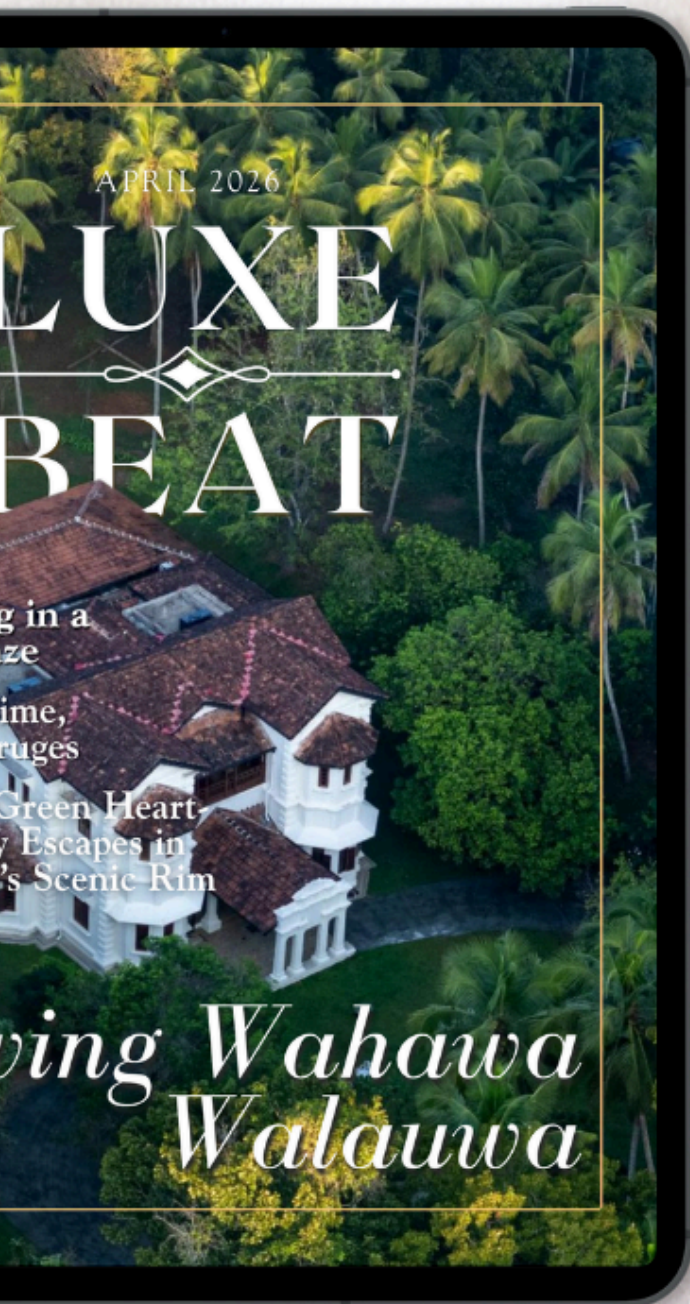
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— Attorney Don Ford





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