



INDONESIA PRACTICAL INFORMATION

We are pleased to offer you herewith some useful tips and practical information on traveling in Indonesia.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Official Name:	Republic of Indonesia
Population:	250 million
Capital City:	Jakarta
Area:	Land: 1,811,569 Km ² Water: 93,000 Km ² Total 1,904,569 Km ²
Religion:	Muslim 88%, Christian (Protestant and Catholic) 8%, Hindu 2%, Buddhist 1%, Other 1%
Language:	Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia) and more than 700 regional
Currency:	Indonesia Rupiah (IDR)
Time Zone:	GMT +6 / +7 /+8 12:00 in Sumatra, Java, and Central and Western Kalimantan; then it is 13:00 in Bali, the Sunda Islands, East Kalimantan and Sulawesi; and it is 14:00 in Maluku and Papua
Dialing code:	+62
Electricity:	220V AC 50 Hz
Driving:	Left hand side





INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS BY ISLAND AND CITY

JAVA

Jakarta – (CGK) Soekarno-Hatta International
Jakarta – (HLP) Halim Perdanakusuma International
Bandung – (BDO) Husein Sastranegara International
Semarang – (SRG) Achmad Yani International
Surabaya – (SUB) Juanda International Airport
Surakarta (Solo City) – (SOC) Adisumarmo International
Yogyakarta – (JOG) Adisucipto International

SUMATRA

Banda Aceh – (BTJ) Sultan Iskandarmuda International
Batam – (BTJ) Hang Nadim International
Padang – (PDG) Minangkabau International
Medan – (KNO) Kuala Namu International
Medan – (MES) Soewondo Air Force Base
Palembang – (PLM) Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II International

KALIMANTAN (BORNEO)

Balikpapan - (BPN) Sultan Aji Muhamad Sulaiman
Tarakan – (TRK) Juwata International

SULAWESI

Makassar – (UPG) Sultan Hasanuddin International
Manado – (MDC) Sam Ratulangi International

BALI

Denpasar – (DPS) Ngurah Rai International

LOMBOK

Mataram – (LOP) Lombok Praya International

RIAU ISLANDS

Pekanbaru – (PKU) Sultan Syarif Kasim II International
Tanjung Pinang – (TNJ) Raja Haji Fisabilillah International

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Visa On Arrival

This visa is valid for 30 days, extendable up to 60 days. This “Temporary Stay” visa is issued when entering Indonesia. The visa costs US \$35 and can be paid in Dollars or Euros. You will need to show a return ticket and a valid credit card (or 1000 Euros in cash) on arrival. If you fly with Garuda, you can purchase the Visa on Arrival onboard the aircraft, which saves a long wait upon arrival.

The Visa On Arrival in Indonesia allows for a one-time extension for a further 30 days (with this visa you can stay in the country for up to 60 days).

60-day “Sosial Budaya” Visa

If you go to the Indonesian embassy and apply for a “Sosial Budaya” Visa (Social and Cultural Visa) before you leave your own country, you can stay in the country for 60 days (without having to renew the visa, such as the Visa On Arrival). The cost of this visa at the embassy can vary, you can best check it directly at the embassy in your country.



The processing time is normally one week, but this can easily go up to 2 weeks! With this visa, you can avoid the often long queues for a Visa On Arrival at the airport in Indonesia (especially in Bali). For stays longer than 60 days, you will need to renew this 60-day Visa, in Indonesia, every 30 days for up to six months in total. This is completely legal, although this information is often not provided to the Indonesian embassy.



For a visa, you need the following documents:

- A passport that is valid for at least 6 months after your arrival in Indonesia;
- A passport sized photo;
- Clearly completed and signed visa application form;
- A copy of your flight schedule, make sure you have a departure flight before your visa expires.



MONEY

Cash and traveler's checks can be exchanged at the bank, but it is easier to do this in a Money Changer, which often offer a better exchange rate than the bank. Always check for a moneychanger who is reliable and remember to count your money carefully before you leave, because there are many tricks to deceive unwary travelers. One scam is they count out your money, put it down in front of you. Then they let you count it. Then they take it back in their hands and count it again....this is when they sneakily remove money. Never let them touch the money after you have counted it, or be sure to recount it once given back. Also, money changers that have more permanent style text rates, rather than written by hand, are more legitimate generally speaking (in Bali).



The currency in Indonesia is the Indonesian rupiah. The exchange rate of EUR 1 currently amounts to around IDR. 15,000 and for USD 1 it is 12,500 IDR. Coins come in 100, 200, 500 and 1000 rupiah. Notes come in denominations of 1000, 5000, 10.000, 20.000, 50.000 and 100.000 rupiah. Make sure you carry a good supply of rupiah in small denominations with you (1000, 5000, 10.000 and 20.000). Often people struggle for change if you pay with a 50.000 note or more. Most mayor towns have ATMs. Exchange rates also can fluctuate greatly from month to month.



Bargaining

In small shops and markets it is very common to bargain ('tawar'). It is difficult to indicate how much you have to bargain. Think of a price that is reasonable for you. Sometimes it helps leaving the shop; if you are lucky the seller will come after you with a better price. While bargaining the most important is to keep smiling!



HEALTH

Health risks in Indonesia include: Cholera, dengue fever, hepatitis, Japanese encephalitis, malaria, rabies and typhoid. We strongly recommend you to visit either your personal physician or a travel health clinic 4-8 weeks before departure. Up-to-date advice should be sought before deciding whether these precautions should include vaccination, as medical opinion is divided over its effectiveness. Malaria risk exists throughout the year in the whole country, except in bigger cities.



Medical facilities with western standards are limited in Indonesian depending on the island. Many doctors have been educated in abroad but have limited access to modern medicines and limited updated knowledge on medicine.





CLIMATE

Sumatra

The best travelling period is in the dry season between May and September. The sun shines 12 hours per day, as Sumatra is situated around the equator.



Java

The raining season on Java is from October till March, but it is possible to go to Java all year around. Only in the raining season is the chance of rain bigger than at other times of the year.



Bali

Bali has a similar climate as East Java and has therefore, apart from the mountainous regions, low rainfall during the dry season, which is from April to November. Bali is also an island that you can visit at any time of the year.



Lombok and Sunda Islands

The best time to travel to Lombok and the Sunda Islands is in the dry period from April/May until October. January and February are the wettest months on the Sunda Islands, but even during monsoon season, it isn't raining the whole day.



Sulawesi

The best time to travel to Sulawesi depends on the area you wish to visit. Sulawesi lies on the separation line between the monsoons; the Southern part of the island has the opposite season of the Northern-east part. Rainy season is from October till March. The temperature on Sulawesi is between the 25 and 34 degrees. The sun shines 12 hours per day, because Sulawesi lies on the equator.

In the mountains in the middle of Sulawesi it is possible to have rain during the summer months. The mountains catch the clouds and you will often have rain in the late afternoon for one or two hours.

The Northern part of Sulawesi has its wettest season during the summer months. The coastal areas have oppressive heat the whole year around – only a little sea breeze will cool you down. In the mountains it is more pleasant and in the evening it can be very cold.



Kalimantan

Kalimantan has a lot of rainfall in the tropical forest. The centre of the mountains is the wettest area and the Southern part of the island is the driest. In November and December the South and the West have the most rain. Rainy season is from October until June and the dry period is from July until September. In the dry season it is still possible to have you rain, but only in the late afternoon for around an hour or so. The sun shines 12 hours per day.



Papua

Papua has its wettest months during from December until March. January and February have the heaviest rains. Dry season in Papua is from April until November.



FOOD & DRINK

All water should be regarded as being potentially contaminated. Water used for drinking, or making ice should have first been boiled or otherwise sterilized. Bottled water is available throughout the country. Try to limit the use of plastic bottles.

Avoid dairy products that are likely to have been made from raw milk.



Only eat well-cooked meat and fish, preferably served hot. Vegetables should be cooked and fruit peeled.



Indonesian food is traditionally eaten with steamed rice using either the fingers or spoon and fork (chop sticks are sometimes used for Chinese food or noodles). In the countryside, people will all eat family style; sitting on the floor, sharing a few dishes.



Rice (*nasi*) is the staple across the country as in most of Asia, often being eaten three times a day. Noodles (*mie*) are quite popular as well. Given Indonesia is composed of thousands of islands, seafood is found almost everywhere. Given the Muslim culture, chicken, goat, and beef are the main meats. However, the Hindu of Island of Bali has more pork options. Also, vegetarians can find tofu (*tahu*), tempe, and an assortment of vegetables through out the country.



Here are some favorites:

- **Satay**, delicious skewers cooked over coals ranging from chicken, goat, mutton, or rabbit. "Sate Madura" is a nice one served with some additional vegetables.
- **Nasi Goreng** is considered by many to be Indonesia's national dish. Nasi means rice and goreng is fried. This fried rice is usually cooked with a sweet thick soy sauce and cucumbers and carrots.
- **Gado-Gado** is a great vegetarian option that is mix of boiled long beans, potato, spinach, egg, bean sprouts, tofu, tempe, and chili. It comes covered in the country's classic peanut sauce. This is an Indonesian style salad.
- **Bakso** is a meatball noodle soup sold mostly from street-vendor's pushcarts. The meatballs are made from chicken, beef, pork, or maybe a mixture of them all. The broth also contains a mix of cabbage, bean sprouts, friend shallots and celery.
- **Ayam Bakar (grilled chicken)** chargrilled spiced chicken served with rice, tempe and tofu.
- **Ayam Goreng (fried chicken)** deep-fried spiced chicken served with rice, tempe and tofu.
- **Nasi Padang** is a very popular meal where up to a dozen dishes are placed on your table. Feel free to eat whatever looks appealing! Don't feel the need to finish it as you are only charged based on your consumption.
- **Soto Ayam** a tasty soup consisting of broth, chicken, shallots, rice, onions and other ingredients depending on what region you are in.



TIPPING

In a country where most people have an income of less than 100 euro per month, tipping for good service is very much appreciated.

You can give a porter carrying your bag e.g. IDR. 7.500-10.000. In a hotel or restaurant you can leave a tip of 5-10%. Also a guide and a driver will be happy with something extra.

A reasonable amount for a driver and/or guide 85.000 IDR per day. Visiting a village, local house or temple it is customary to leave a donation.





DONATIONS & GIFT-GIVING

It's always better to give donations (gifts bought locally as this is better for the Indonesia economy) to adults, teachers or a village head rather than to children. Supporting somebody's small business will also contribute positively so don't feel swindled if your taxi driver asks a price that is 50 cents higher than your guide book indicated; he probably is not a millionaire and can certainly use the money. Also, a rich Indonesian would generally also accept paying a higher price than a poor Burmese.

People greatly appreciate if you bring postcards and pictures etc. from your own country to show – always a good icebreaker to start a conversation.

Gifts for school, orphanages, local hospitals etc. are always greatly appreciated – best is actually to buy gifts locally at the market in Indonesia (cheaper, good fun to do, better for the economy and you can be sure the receiver knows how to use it and it also saves you space in your luggage).

While everyone loves children, please be aware that in some tourist spots like Bali there are a lot of scams associated with orphanages. Sometime they basically parade tourists around the “orphanages” trying to collect money which goes mostly in to their own pocket. Please do your research about donating to them. Reputable orphanages don't let tourists just walk in like a zoo and play with the children.

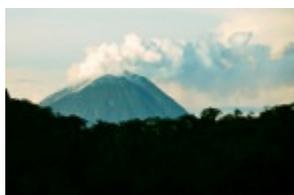
COMMUNICATION

Upon arriving in Indonesia telephone sim cards are readily available at many various shops on the street for a couple of dollars. Then you can add credit or “top up” your plan. 3G is also easily added so that you can use the internet on your smart-phone. However, coverage maybe limited based on location through out the country. Service can very greatly depending on which island you are on, as well as where you are on an island. Wifi is typically provided at most hotels and guesthouses and there are many internet cafés. But the more remote you are in the country the more limited this becomes.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Every culture has its unique set of unwritten rules, as does Indonesia. When you visit try to adapt to the culture as much as possible. Here are some examples of rules visitors should try to obey to:

- When greeting some one, a soft handshake is generally the norm. After the handshake, usually the person will touch their hand to their heart as a sign of respect. Nice to do the same if you remember.
- Slightly bow your head upon greeting a guest or host.
- Avoid touching the head of people.
- When pointing, use more of a generalized motion of the hand, not using one finger.
- Better to sit both feet on the floor rather than cross your legs.
- Expect little personal space, as this is not an important concept, and being close in conversation be a sign of friendliness.
- Avoid using your left hand if possible when touch, passing money, food, or shaking hands as the hand is considered dirty by many.
- Dress conservatively when possible. You will find despite the tropical temperatures, most locals wear long pants and shirts.
- Indonesian's have a different concept of time and things are often slow or late. Punctuality is rare.



Always better to stay calm and cheery when discussing your frustrations, as people are then more likely to want to help you out. Speak softly, with out anger or aggressiveness. Be calm and subtle whenever possible, despite whatever frustration you may be experiencing.

DRESSCODE

Indonesia is an Islamic country and therefore dressing accordingly is appreciated. Shirts should cover shoulders and trousers / skirts, should cover the knees. Shorts and tops are accepted at the beach. Often locals will go swimming pants and shirts. Bali is the most liberal of places in the country, however, other beach communities throughout the country are familiar with western tourists and their styles. Please just be respectful and use your best judgement to what is appropriate dress. At temples you may be asked to cover up or put on a sarong that will be provided.

SAFETY

Indonesians are generally very nice and helpful to tourists, quick to smile and lend a helping hand. However, in tourist hotspots such as Bali, please be careful when traveling on motorbikes as people have been victimized by bag snatchers that pull people entirely off their bike. At night, it is good to be with others.

As a precaution it is of course always better not to leave money or valuable goods laying around in your hotel room or elsewhere but to carry your money with you or to store it in the safe in your hotel. Besides the normal precautions don't get involved in any political activities in the country, especially due to the recent presidential elections.

There have been reported deaths from drinking local homemade spirit in Java, Bali, and Lombok called arak. Poorly made batches can lead to lethal methanol poisoning.

READING

Before visiting Indonesia it is good to read some more about the history, culture and politics of the country. Different authors have different point of views so always keep in mind that any book written about Indonesia always describes the personal opinion of that particular.

Some recommendations:

- The Year of Living Dangerously by Christopher Koch
- This Earth of Mankind by Pramoedya Ananta Toer
- Asta's Ogen by Eveline Stoel (in Dutch)

LANGUAGE

Bahasa Indonesia, literally meaning Language of Indonesia, is the national language. It was recognized as the official language in 1945 in Indonesia's constitution as it emerged from control by Japan near the end of WWII. It is spoken throughout the country along with around 700 other languages and dialects! Given the separation of people from island to island, local languages vary greatly even if islands are only 50 km apart. Also, there may be several languages spoken within the same island. Since Bahasa Indonesia it is relatively new as the national language only being implemented 70 years ago, some of the older rural population may not be able to speak it.

Travelers generally don't have too many problems in basic communication, as there is always somebody near who is willing to help (and find somebody who speaks English) or somebody who is eager to meet foreign visitors. And body language is always fun too!

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