



BALI FACTS & TRAVEL INFORMATION GUIDE

BALI - OVERVIEW & HISTORY

One of the most popular tourist destinations in the world, Bali was awarded the world's best island by The International Travel Magazine. The rapid growth of development in tourism has had a big impact and influences to Bali tradition and lifestyle. Interestingly, Balinese culture is still as what it was, and it is this preserved Balinese culture and civilization that makes the island so different from any other destination.



HISTORY: The first Hindus arrived in Bali around 100 BC, but the unique culture which is so apparent to any current day visitor to Bali hails largely from neighboring Java, with some influence from Bali's distant animist past. The Javanese Majapahit Empire's rule over Bali became complete in the 14th century when Gajah Mada, Prime Minister of the Javanese king, defeated the Balinese king at Bedulu. The rule of the Majapahit Empire resulted in the initial influx of Javanese culture, most of all in architecture, dance, painting, sculpture and the Wayang puppet theatre. All of this is still very apparent today. The few Balinese who did not adopt this Javanese Hindu culture are known today as the Bali Aga ("original Balinese") and still live in the isolated villages of Tenganan near Candidasa and Trunyan on the remote eastern shore of Lake Batur at Kintamani. With the rise of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago, the Majapahit Empire in Java fell and Bali became independent near the turn of the 16th century.

The Javanese aristocracy found refuge in Bali, bringing an even stronger influx of Hindu arts, literature and religion. Divided among a number of ruling rajas, occasionally battling off invaders from now Islamic Java to the west and making forays to conquer Lombok to the east, the north of the island was finally captured by the Dutch colonialists in a series of brutal wars from 1846 to 1849. Southern Bali was not conquered until 1906, and eastern Bali did not surrender until 1908. In both 1906 and 1908, many Balinese chose death over disgrace and fought en-masse until the bitter end, often walking straight into Dutch cannons and gunfire. This manner of suicidal fighting to the death is known as Puputan. Victory was bittersweet, as the images of the puputan highly tarnished the Dutch in the international community. Perhaps to make up for this, the Dutch did not make the Balinese enter into a forced cultivation system, as had happened in Java, and instead tried to promote Balinese culture through their policy of Baliseering (the "Balinisation of Bali").

Bali became part of the newly independent Republic of Indonesia in 1945. The current chapter in Bali's history began in the seventies when intrepid hippies and devoted surfers discovered Bali's beaches and waves, and tourism soon became the biggest income earner. Despite the shocks of the terrorist attacks in 2002 and 2005, the magical island continues to draw crowds, and Bali's culture remains as spectacular as ever.

PEOPLE AND LIFE STYLE

Bali's population of over 3 million is spread over an island just 130kms across and 110kms north to south. The overwhelming majority of Balinese are Hindus (approx 95%), with the increasing number on non-Hindu migrating from the closest neighboring islands of Java and Lombok. The coastal areas in the south are the most populous areas with over 370,000 people living in various professions in the capital of Denpasar. Farming has been the primary way of living in Balinese life, with fishing, and craftsmanship also in fashion from generation to generation. But the fast growing tourism industry now takes the lead with over 45% of Bali's workforce linked in some way to tourism.

Life in Bali is very communal under the organization of villages. Temple ceremonies, marriage, cremation, farming and even the creative art festivals are decided by the local community institution called the "Banjar". The responsibilities in the day-to-day life are normally administered by both the Banjar and the Bali Government. The government mostly responsible for schools, health clinics, hospitals and roads, and the Banjar is responsible for all other aspects of life. There is another association which exists within the Banjar named "Subak" that concerns in the production of rice and organizes the complex island irrigation system. Every family who owns a rice field must be a member of their local Subak, which ensures that every member gets his fair distribution of water. A Banjar consists of an average of 50 to 150 family members, owning a meeting venue called the Bale Banjar, which is used for regular gatherings and a center for local Gamelan orchestras and drama groups.

POPULAR BALI TOURIST DESTINATIONS

KUTA - Located in southern Bali, Kuta was a sleepy fishing village half a century ago, but it has slowly expanded since the 1960s after its long sandy beach was discovered by travelers from Asia and wandering surfers from nearby Australia. Nowadays Kuta is quite busy and packed with varied accommodation from four-star hotels to budget hostels. Cheap bars and clubs make it “Party Central” amongst revelers, while local and international restaurants offer great dining. Kuta also offers shopping aplenty, from the chic beachfront ‘Discovery Shopping Mall’ and Kuta Square to the small shops lining the famous Poppies Lane, Jalan Pantai Kuta and up to Legian and trendy Seminyak – all within easy walking distance. Despite its negative “party town” labels, Kuta has its own beauty and attractions and remains one of Indonesia’s major tourist destinations; particularly during the peak season from July to August and the holiday season for Christmas and New Year: at these times Kuta will be fully booked by a local younger crowd of Asian travelers and Australian teenagers who are intent on enjoying an affordable vacation in Bali.

LEGIAN – Kuta’s neighboring suburb Legian is probably the second most popular area with visitors after Kuta because of its close association with beach life and its parties. Indeed, one of Legian’s main attractions is its extravagant night life. Another attraction is the white sandy beach filled with tanned wannabe celebrities. For first timers Legian is just like another Kuta but give yourself a day, and an evening walk along the famous Double Six Beach, and a night in a cosy niteclub, then you decide what you’ll do with the rest of your vacation.

SEMINYAK - A few miles north of Kuta and bordering Legian is Seminyak which has the reputation as being the hippest part of southern Bali. More upmarket than Kuta and home to Bali’s most chic bars, clubs and restaurants with new places opening almost weekly. Creative energy is the phrase that best sums up Seminyak, energy which also extends to the fashion boutiques. Cool comes at a price, featuring strongly are world class hotels and resorts located next to the beach.

SANUR BEACH - While the rest of Bali’s beaches have developed at a breathtaking pace, Sanur (Bali’s first beach resort) remains largely unchanged. Sanur is one of Bali’s biggest traditional villages but it’s also one of the most established tourist areas. Fine hotels, restaurants and modern entertainment venues compliment traditional village activities like drama and dance, so it’s a good place to enjoy the delights of a tropical island and gain a real appreciation of Balinese culture and local life. Many ex-pats choose Sanur as a place to live on the island. Its only 15 mins by car to all the action in Kuta but a quiet haven to retreat to. Sanur is fast gaining a reputation as the islands gastronomic capital with many fine dining restaurants in the area.

NUSA DUA - Nusa Dua (meaning Two Islands) is the name of the peninsula that extends off the southern tip of the island of Bali, hosting a pristine complex of luxury hotels. A heavy concentration of big name international hotels lines the beautiful white sand shore that offers excellent swimming conditions in a protected lagoon. Located ten kilometers from the international airport, Nusa Dua is designed as an enclave of the most sumptuous and luxurious hotels in the world dedicated to big-spender tourists. It is an idyllic place for honeymooner and those who are bringing the entire family, the white sand and shallow water are ideal for children to play in the sea while lifeguards keep a watchful eye. The roads in the area are well maintained and 24/7 security staff guard two entrance gates with full security procedures for every incoming and outgoing guest.

TANJUNG BENOA - Like many other beachside destinations in Bali, also used to be a fishing village and an old dock, and today most of the shore-side properties have become upper class hotels and resorts. The remaining mangrove marsh still lies at the western side entrance. Tanjung Bena is located 15 kilometers from the international airport and neighbors Nusa Dua.

JIMBARAN - Located on the west coast of Bali’s southern peninsula - Jimbaran offers a small secluded beach area, where tranquility and peace is the perfect antidote to a stressful world. The land gently slopes away from the beach revealing exclusive celebrity haunts hidden under a canopy of leafy tropical forest. Jimbaran Bay is world renowned for its many beachside seafood restaurants with produce straight from the fishing boats to your table.

CANDIDASA – Pronounced “Chandi-dasa” it’s located at Samuh Bugbug Village about 12 kilometers from Amlapura, the main town of Karangasem. It was formerly known as Teluk Kehen (Kehen Bay), but since the tourism industry was introduced the name was changed to Candidasa. Only one thing is for sure, Candidasa is a tranquil village offering varying accommodation, from basic to five-star resorts and quite a few great restaurants in between.

UBUD - In many ways Ubud is considered Bali’s cultural heart. Located in the cool mountains, just one hour’s drive north of the airport and the resorts of southern Bali, this traditional country town is the home of the Balinese Royal family. Ubud is also a flourishing crafts centre. Around Ubud the surrounding villages like Camphuan, Penestanan, Peliatan and Batuan specialising in crafts and woodcarving which are sold all over the island. There are hundreds of shops selling antiques, woodcarvings, crafts, textiles, paintings and jewellery as well as some of the best art museums in the country, dozens of art studios, an excellent local craft market, and galleries selling local and international art.

BALI 'S CLIMATE

Daytime temperatures are pleasant, varying between 20 and 33 degrees Celsius (68 to 93 degrees Fahrenheit) year-round. From December to March, the west monsoon can bring heavy showers and high humidity, but days are still often sunny with the rains starting in the late afternoon or evening and passing quickly. From June to September, the humidity is low and it can be quite cool in the evenings. At this time of the year there is hardly any rain in lower coastal areas. Even when it is raining across most of Bali you can often enjoy sunny, dry days on the Bukit Peninsula which receives far less rain than any other part of the island. On the other hand, in central Bali and in the mountains, you should not be surprised by cloudy skies and showers at any time of the year. At higher elevations such as Bedugul or Kintamani, it gets chilly and you will need either a sweater or jacket after the sun sets.

To see live Bali Weather & Time go [HERE](#)

GETTING TO & AROUND BALI

There are many modes of transport to help you "Jalan Jalan" your way around Bali.

By Air : Most international visitors will fly to Bali directly. There are numerous direct flights from Europe, America, Australia and most Asian Countries and also domestic flights to and from other major cities within Indonesia like Jakarta. Helicopter Charter: One way to beat the traffic around Bali is to go around by air! Air Bali can provide helicopters and seaplanes for joy rides and/or charter flights. It's all possible in Bali.....

By Sea : There are regular passenger ferry services from Java and Lombok. Also, cruise ship stop-overs in Bali are becoming more frequent with the upgrading of Benoa Harbour, (Bali's main shipping port). Beat the traffic by boat. It is noted that one ingenious individual who wanted to avoid a traffic jammed By-pass road chartered a boat from Benoa Harbor to Nusa Dua.

By Land : You can also get to Bali by car or bus from mainland Java (via a vehicular ferry traveling between Gilimanuk in west Bali and Ketapang in east Java every 15 to 30 minutes, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The actual ferry crossing takes around only 30 minutes. A variety of excellent half day, full day and overnight tour packages are available from your hotel desk or any of the numerous travel agents and tour operators in Bali. Or you can find a car and driver in the street who will also act as your guide. Whilst walking about, you will be barraged with constant calls of "Transport, transport?". Competition is tight and many drivers know several languages. Tell the driver your desired route or destination and then negotiate (barter) a fee with him. Usually 350,000Rp for a half day and 550,000Rp full day is what you should be paying him, this is inclusive of vehicle and fuel, if you enjoyed yourself then a 10% tip on top is considered appropriate.

Walking: Is still one of the best ways to see Bali. You'll be close to the action but don't forget the essentials, a sun hat and bottle of water (Aqua). If you're walking in Kuta be wary of the undulating footpaths and access holes placed every meter or so in the footpath. Every so often, the access holes are left open or the lid is broken, which can result in a nasty fall (especially at night).

Buses – Bemos – Bicycles: The public transport system in Bali can virtually take you anywhere you want to go but slowly. Buses and bemos are often over-crowded and hot and are recommended for short trips only. Metered "Bluebird" branded taxis are everywhere and at the very reasonable prices of 5000Rp flag fall and 4000Rp per kilometer. Bicycles are available for rent but bear in mind the heavy traffic in Kuta, Legian and Denpasar. Bicycles are ideal in areas like Sanur and the Ubud countryside if you're fit. A few companies offer mountain biking excursions, the best part being that they are all "downhill".

Car Rental & GPS: If you're feeling adventurous, drive yourself hire cars and motorbikes are everywhere. You will need your license from your home country and an International Driving Permit (IDP) for renting a car or a motorbike. Types of cars range from small 4WD Jeeps & larger 4WD Kijangs (for 6 people), to Suzuki APV's and comfortable sedans and hatchback vehicles. Around 99% of car rentals are manual transmission, it's very rare to find automatic hire cars in Bali, although they are becoming more available (at a price).



GPS navigation is now available in Bali. The Bali Navigator company has 4 outlets around Bali that will sell or rent you a GPS unit. The Bali Navigator map has over 15,000kms of roads and streets and over 13,500 POI (Points Of Interest) including hotels, villa, department stores, shops and boutiques, restaurants and bars and other tourist attractions. Their motto is "It's like having a tour guide in your pocket".

For more information about the Bali Navigator GPS please go [HERE](#)

An important virtue to have while on the road in Bali is patience! Although the road system in the heavily populated areas is quite reasonable in comparison to other developing countries, it can at times be heavily congested during peak periods. Ceremonial processions often overtake the whole road so if you're caught behind a procession, simply enjoy the colorful experience. In less populated areas, roads may not be sealed and the famous "gang" (a very small road or lane just big enough to accommodate one car, but very often two-way) is ever present no matter what area you may be in.

More Bali Driving Tips :

There are some important points to remember while driving in Bali. It is not unusual for cars and bikes to swerve into your lane without indication. Because there are often obstacles such as parked cars or the ever present procession of "Bakso" sellers (soup food carts) on the sides of the road, a system of "sharing lanes" has developed, it's not unusual to find 4 lanes on a 2 lane road. Quite often red traffic lights are considered "only as a suggestion" and there are a few lights where traffic in the left lane may turn or continue straight through whilst the light is red. Remember to "hoot" your horn when overtaking or going around curves on mountainous roads as it is very common to drive in the middle of the road here. There are a lot of one way roads in Bali. If you miss your turn off you may have to drive quite a distance before being able to turn back.

It is not recommended to drive at night especially the road to Gilimanuk where the ferry to Java commences. Truck drivers to and from Java are notorious for overtaking on corners. Obstacles such as pot holes or road construction is often marked only by a leafy tree branch. By the time you think "what's that there for?" you could well be in a deep pothole or ditch! So always be alert and prepared for the unexpected to happen !!!

Drivers License : If you wish to hire a car you must be over 18 years of age and posses an IDP (International Driver's Permit). For more information regarding IDP's please look [HERE](#)

Petrol/Gas: We highly recommend you fill up at any of the numerous government owned petrol stations "Pertamina". In more remote areas at stalls by the side of the road they sell bottles of fuel. The quality may not be as good as at the petrol station and could cause damage to your rental car or motorbike.

DINING & NIGHTLIFE

Balinese cuisine is known for its spicy ingredients, the Balinese roasted baby pig 'Babi Guling' is a favorite as well as the Indonesian 'Nasi Goreng' rice, 'Mie Goreng' noodles or 'Satay' are frequently chosen dishes by foreigners. Other appetizing alternatives such as Chinese or Oriental cuisines are represented in numerable food-stands or restaurants, while European and American foods are now also found in most of the tourist hubs. Bali offers a wide selection of tropical fruits as well as various kinds of canned or boxed soft drinks made from them. Bottled mineral water is served at restaurants and hotels and travelers can protect themselves against digestive discomfort by drinking these and not tap water. Excellent domestic made beers and rice wine called 'Brem' or Balinese alcohol 'Arak' and sweet coconut wine 'Tuak'. Or try hot drinks like : the tasty Balinese coffee or sweet Javanese tea. In Bali today, you can eat extremely well, and choose from many different national cuisines. Furthermore, the cost is a fraction of what you would pay, for the same quality of food, in any of the world's major cities. When you add to this, for no extra charge, some of the most magnificent dining settings that you could ever imagine, then you know that you really are holidaying in the 'land of the gods'. Checkout the Bali Eats Restaurant Guide [HERE](#) to read reviews about many of Bali's more popular eateries.

BALI TRAVEL TIPS

Bali Airport Information :

Information relating to Arrivals/Departures – Waiting Lounges – VIP-VOA & Airport Map please go [HERE](#)

Passports & Visas :

Bali Visa Information - Important changes to Indonesia's Visa Policy for Tourists.

Please read carefully as there have been changes to Indonesia's Visa policy, if in doubt check with your Travel Agent or local embassy.

Countries that **do not require** a Visa to enter Bali are:

Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Macao Special Administrative Region, Malaysia, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam

Countries **that require** and are eligible for a VOA (Visa-On Arrival) are:

Algeria, Arab Emirates, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan (processed on plane), Kuwait, Laos, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States America

VOA Price is: US\$25 for a stay of up to 30 days (can now be extended). The 7 day visa is NO longer available.

For more information about VOA and Bali Airport arrivals/departures information please go [HERE](#)

Citizens of countries not on the VOA (visa on arrival) or visa free lists will be required to apply for a visa before entering Indonesia. Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months from the date of entry into Indonesia, and you must have proof of onward passage (either return or through tickets). If you cannot fulfill both of these requirements, you may not be allowed to enter the country. Find and contact your nearest Indonesian Embassy, please go [HERE](#)

Currency – (Rupiah)

Bank Notes: 100, 500, 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, 50,000, 100,000. Coins: 25, 50, 100, 500, 1000.

Use this handy Currency Converter to check the IDR rupiah against your home currency, please go [HERE](#)

Bali Shopping

Most shopping is done in Bali by the “barter” system (with the exception of the major shopping malls and department stores). The shop keeper will give you a “starting price” and then you barter the price down to something that you both are happy with. We have a useful Shopping Guide that helps by indicating the price you should be paying for things. To checkout Bali shop prices for stuff look [HERE](#)

Bali Time

There is a joke that says everything on the island is done in “Bali Time” in reference to Bali’s laid back style of getting things done.

Bali’s “actual” Time Zone however is : GMT + 8 hours.

See live Bali time & Bali weather [HERE](#)

Electricity

Most hotels use 220 volts, 50 cycles and a round, two-pronged euro style wall plug. Bathroom shaver plugs usually have a transformer switch. We suggest taking an adaptor for your appliance. See electrical adaptor guide [HERE](#)

Credit Cards & Offices in Bali

Major credit cards are acceptable in most hotels along with American dollar traveler’s cheques.

American Express :

Grand Bali Beach Hotel, Sanur. Tel : 288511 ext. 111

Mastercard :

Bank Central Asia, Jl. Cokroaminoto, Denpasar. Tel : 222652

Visa Card :

Bank Duta, Jl. Hayam Wuruk 165, Denpasar. Tel : 226578

Clothing

Light, airy, casual clothes are the most practical and you’ll find natural fibers like cotton or linen are the most comfortable in Bali’s often humid conditions. Waist sashes should be worn when visiting temples.

Emergency & Useful Phone Numbers

Emergency Numbers

110 : Police 224111: Tourist Police
113 : Fire 51111 : Search & Rescue
118 : Ambulance 26465 : Red Cross

Medical

AEA International (Medical Evac) : Jl. Hayam Wuruk 40, Denpasar. Tel : 228996

BIMC (Bali International Medical Center) Private Hospital : Jl Bypass Ngurah Rai 100X Denpasar. Tel : 761263

Rumah Sakit Dharma Husada (Hospital) : Jl. Panglima Sudirman No.50, Denpasar. Tel : 227560

Kuta Clinic : Jl. Raya Kuta No.100X, Kuta. Tel : 753268

Nusa Dua Clinic : Jl. Pramata No. 81A, Nusa Dua. Tel : 771324

Sanglah Central Public Hospital (Rumah Sakit Umum) : Jl. Diponegoro, Denpasar. Tel : 227911

Taxis

Make sure the meter is switched on when you get in. The Flag Fall is 5,000 Rp to start then 4,000 per kilometer.

Airport Taxi: 724724 (set costs from airport to various destinations) See prices [HERE](#)

Taksi Praja : 289191, 289090

Taksi Bali : 701111

Bali Fast Facts

Area: 5620 km²

Timezone: GMT +8

Currency: Indonesian Rupiah

Area Dialling Code:

0361 (Central Mountains, East Bali,
South Bali, West Bali & Ubud)

0362 (North Bali) and

0370 (Lombok)

Country Code: +62

Directory Assistance: 108

Population: 3551000

Languages Spoken: English, Indonesian

Code: IDR **Symbol:** Rp

Electrical Plugs: Two pin Euro



220V 50Hz

Operator Assisted Calls: 100