

ASIA · ISLANDS · BEACHES · DIVING · WILDLIFE · CULTURE · MOUNTAINS



Indonesia

Indonesia is more than 17,000 islands strung along the equator: Bali's temples and rice terraces, Java's volcanoes and the Buddhist monument of Borobudur, Komodo's dragons, and coral reefs in Raja Ampat richer than almost anywhere on Earth. Distances are vast, so most trips pick one or two regions rather than attempting it all.

 Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Indonesia and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 18 September 2026.

 CAPITAL Jakarta	 CURRENCY Indonesian rupiah (IDR) £1 ≈ IDR 24,045	 LANGUAGE Indonesian, Javanese Sundanese	 BEST TIME May–Sep
 DAILY BUDGET £30–£160 ££ Moderate	 PLUGS Type C, F 230V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 17h 30m via Singapore, Doha or Dubai ~£650–£1,200 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+7, UTC+8... standard time

Indonesia stretches more than 5,000 km from Sumatra to Papua, and the sensible approach is to choose a corridor. The classic first trip links Java and Bali: Yogyakarta for Borobudur and Prambanan, sunrise over the Tengger caldera around Mount Bromo, then Bali's temples, rice terraces and beaches, perhaps extending east to Lombok, the Gili Islands or a boat trip through Komodo National Park from Labuan Bajo. Second visits head further out — orangutans in Sumatra or Borneo, Toraja culture in Sulawesi, or diving in Raja Ampat and the Banda Islands.

Away from Bali's busiest resorts, Indonesia is good value: simple guesthouses, local warungs and ferries cost little, though domestic flights, dive trips and liveaboards push budgets up. Travel can be slow — ferries run late, volcano sunrise trips start at 3am — so build in slack. Visitors are struck by the warmth of everyday encounters, by how devout the largely Muslim country is compared with Hindu Bali, and by how different each island feels. It suits surfers, divers and temple-hoppers alike, provided you don't try to rush.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

SACRED SITE

Borobudur

The world's largest Buddhist monument, a ninth-century stepped pyramid of carved relief panels and 72 latticed stupas rising above the Kedu Plain near Yogyakarta. Access to the upper terraces is limited to guided, pre-booked slots.
- 2

WILDLIFE

Komodo National Park

Boat trips from Labuan Bajo visit Komodo and Rinca islands to see Komodo dragons with rangers, then snorkel with manta rays and climb Padar Island for its famous three-bay viewpoint.

3

CULTURE

Ubud and Bali's rice terraces

Bali's cultural heart, surrounded by emerald subak-irrigated rice terraces such as Tegallalang. Watch a Legong or Kecak dance, visit the Monkey Forest and temples, and walk the Campuhan Ridge early before the heat and crowds.

4

NATURE

Mount Bromo

An active volcano smoking inside the vast Tengger caldera and its 'sea of sand'. Watch sunrise from the Penanjakan viewpoint, then cross the sand and climb the steps to the crater rim.

5

NATURE

Raja Ampat

Some 1,500 jungle-capped islands off the western tip of New Guinea, with around three-quarters of the world's known coral species, manta rays and teeming reefs. Fly to Sorong, then ferry to Waisai; stay in homestays or on a liveaboard.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Jakarta

≈ 33.4 million people

The sprawling capital is a transit point for most visitors, but the Dutch-era Kota Tua quarter, the National Monument and an excellent food and nightlife scene reward a day or two.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Surabaya

≈ 9.6 million people

East Java's port city, with colonial architecture, the House of Sampoerna museum and an Arab Quarter; most visitors pass through en route to Mount Bromo and the Ijen crater.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Bandung

≈ 8.4 million people

A cool highland city linked to Jakarta by the Whoosh high-speed train, known for Art Deco buildings, factory outlets and students; day trips reach the Tangkuban Perahu crater and tea plantations.

Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

Holiday regions in Indonesia

These areas have their own season and weather — see their guides for sea temperatures, resorts and flights.

**Bali**

Indonesia Best: May–Sep 18h from London

Sea up to 29°C ~£90/day

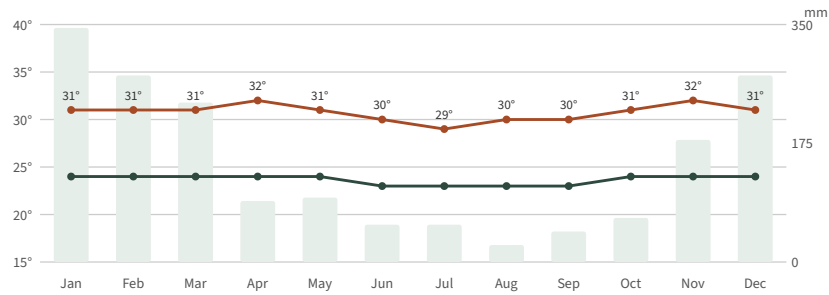
When to go to Indonesia

Best time: **May–Sep**.



Average climate in Denpasar (Bali)

— High °C — Low °C — Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Mar	Nyepi Bali's Day of Silence, the Hindu new year: after a night of parades with giant ogoh-ogoh effigies, the whole island shuts down for 24 hours — including the airport.
May–Jun	Waisak at Borobudur Buddhist monks process from Mendut temple to Borobudur to mark the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death, with chanting and, in some years, lantern releases after dark.
Oct	Ubud Writers & Readers Festival Southeast Asia's best-known literary festival brings authors, talks, food events and performances to venues around Ubud, usually in October.

How much does Indonesia cost?

SHOESTRING £30 per person / day ≈ IDR 721,337 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £70 per person / day ≈ IDR 1,683,119 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £160 per person / day ≈ IDR 3,847,130 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Rendang

Beef slow-cooked for hours in coconut milk with lemongrass, galangal and chilli until dark and nearly dry — a Minangkabau dish from West Sumatra, found nationwide in Padang restaurants.

Nasi goreng

Fried rice with sweet soy sauce (kecap manis), shallots and chilli, topped with a fried egg and krupuk crackers; eaten at any hour.

Sate

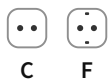
Skewers of chicken, goat or beef grilled over charcoal and served with peanut sauce; in Bali, try sate lilit, minced fish or pork wrapped around lemongrass.

Getting around

Domestic flights on Garuda, Citilink, Lion Air and Batik Air link the main islands cheaply. On Java, KAI trains are comfortable and punctual, and the Whoosh high-speed line runs from Jakarta to Bandung. Car ferries cross from Java to Bali and Lombok, fast boats serve the Gilis, and Grab and Gojek handle cars and motorbike taxis in most towns. Many visitors hire a car with driver by the day.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE



230V — bring a UK-to-C/F adapter

DIALLING CODE

+62

TAP WATER

Not safe — drink bottled or treated water

TIPPING

Not obligatory; many mid-range restaurants add tax and a service charge. Round up for drivers and tip guides and spa staff.

ETIQUETTE

Use your right hand to give and receive, never touch someone's head, and dress modestly away from beaches. A sarong and sash are required at Balinese temples, often lent at the entrance.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Soekarno–Hatta International Airport (CGK), Jakarta; I Gusti Ngurah Rai International Airport (DPS), Denpasar (Bali); Juanda International Airport (SUB), Surabaya

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance: **118**

Fire: **112**

Police: **110**

Source: FCDO “Getting help”

TIME ZONES

UTC+7, UTC+8, UTC+9 (standard time)

DRIVING

On the left

Visas & entry for Indonesia

Shown for a British passport.

Visa required — apply before you go

You must have a visa to visit Indonesia.

You can get a 30-day visa on arrival (VOA) for:

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Hepatitis A

Tetanus

Typhoid

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Chikungunya

Dengue

Hepatitis B

Japanese encephalitis

Measles

Rabies

Tuberculosis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

High risk of malaria

- There is a high risk of malaria in Irian Jaya (Papua): antimalarial tablets recommended.

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Indonesia

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Tue 5 Jan 2027	Isra' and Mi'raj
Sat 6 Feb 2027	Lunar New Year
Mon 8 Mar 2027	Day of Silence
Wed 10 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Thu 11 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr Second Day (date may shift)
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday
Sun 28 Mar 2027	Easter Sunday
Sat 1 May 2027	International Labour Day
Thu 6 May 2027	Ascension Day
Mon 17 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)
Thu 20 May 2027	Vesak Day
Tue 1 Jun 2027	Pancasila Day
Sun 6 Jun 2027	Islamic New Year
Sun 15 Aug 2027	Prophet's Birthday
Tue 17 Aug 2027	Independence Day

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Indonesian

ENGLISH	INDONESIAN	SAY IT
Hello	Halo	HAH-loh
Thank you	Terima kasih	tuh-REE-mah KAH-see
Please	Tolong	TOH-long
Excuse me	Permisi	per-MEE-see
How much is this?	Berapa harganya?	buh-RAH-pah har-GAH-nyah

Know before you go

To ride a scooter legally you need a motorbike licence and an International Driving Permit; police checks in Bali are common and insurers may refuse claims without them.

Avoid travelling during the Idul Fitri (Lebaran) holiday at the end of Ramadan, when millions head home and flights, trains and ferries sell out for days either side.

Use ATMs inside banks or malls and change money only at licensed money-changers; Bali's street booths advertising unusually good rates are a well-known short-changing trick.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.