



BENOA BALI

INDONESIA

Bali is a small, fertile and mountainous island just 8 degrees south of the equator. The island is 87 by 50 miles (140 km by 80 km), with an overall area of 2,175 sq. miles (5,632 sq. km). Within the central mountain chain you will find several peaks over 6,560 feet (1,968 meters), including the Mountain “Mother” Gunung Agung. South of the central range is a sloping area where most of the islands’ abundant crops of rice are grown. It is here that the main export crops of coffee, copra, rice and vegetables are produced. Cattle is also exported from this area. The Bukit Peninsula in the south and the western mountain region get little rain and have limited agriculture.

Derived from Indian Hindu traditions, Hindu as practiced in Bali is much more relaxed and has a moderate approach to the caste system, with caste playing a role only for religious rituals. There are no “untouchables” and members of the different castes can have any occupation, and be poor or wealthy. The Balinese have even found ways to get around the problem of marriage for “mixed caste” couples. In fact, “no problem” is a very typical response from these pleasant and hospitable people.

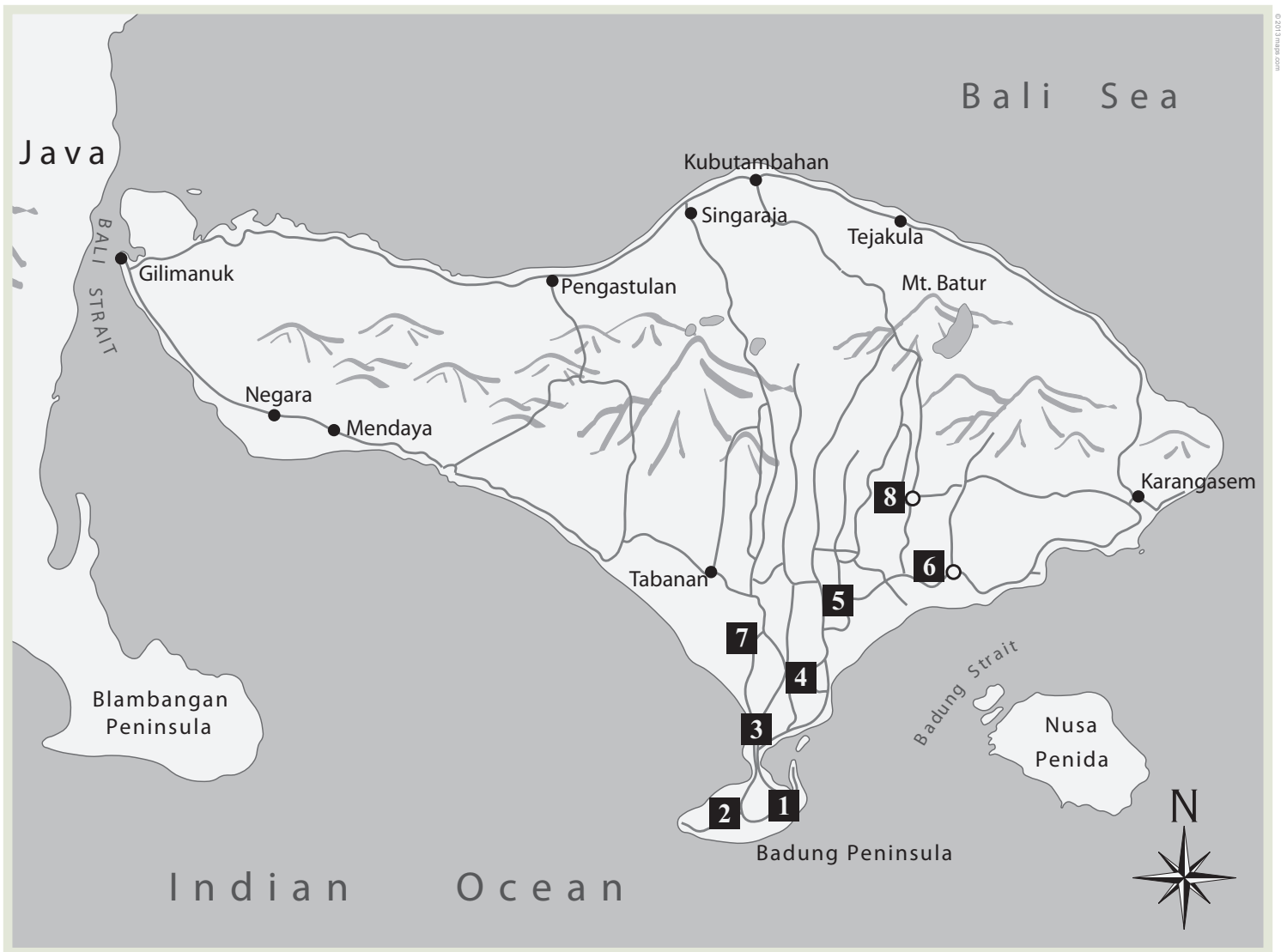


HISTORY

Recorded history shows no evidence of habitation by man during the Stone Age in Bali. Stone inscriptions dating to the 9th century A.D. are the earliest records discovered. At this time, rice was being grown and the culture and art indigenous to the Balinese was developing. It was during the reign of King Airlangga in the 11th century that the Hindu influence spread to Bali and during the 14th century, the capital was moved adjacent to modern Klungkung.

In 1478 a great influx of people migrated to Bali from Java, including artists, dancers, musicians and actors. According to history, the first explorer from Europe to visit Bali was Marco Polo, but the first Europeans to actually disembark in Bali were the Dutch in 1597. The Balinese were under Dutch rule until Indonesia was captured by the Japanese during WW II.

It was on August 17, 1945 that Sukarno, the leader of Indonesia, proclaimed the nation’s independence, but it was only in 1949 that the Dutch officially acknowledged it.



PLACES OF INTEREST

1 Benoa is a principal harbor for visiting cruise ships and for some ferries. Its central location offers access to the highlights of Bali.

2 Nusa Dua, meaning “two islands,” is considered Bali’s top end beach resort. The beach is good, but the water is shallow at low tide. The best surfing at Nusa Dua is on the reef to the north and the south of the “two islands.”

3 Kuta is Bali’s biggest tourist beach area. It is considered the best beach in Bali although many feel the area is overdeveloped. Watching the spectacular sunset is an evening ritual.

4 Denpasar, the capital of Bali, has a population of around 300,000. Denpasar means “next to the market” and the main market (Pasar Badung) is the biggest and busiest in Bali. Within Denpasar you will find the Bali Museum which consists of a series of separate buildings and pavilions. Exhibits include modern and older paintings, arts and crafts, tools and items of everyday use. It’s a good place to see masks, wood-carvings and weaving.

5 Ubud is the cultural center of Bali. It was established as an arts and crafts center in the 1930s. The Neka Museum, opened in 1982, has an interesting collection of Balinese art by some of the best local artists. Works by Gusti Made Deblong, Ida Bagus Made, Made Sukada and many others are on view.

6 Klungkung was once the center of Bali’s most important kingdom and a great artistic and cultural focal point. For almost 200 years this was the seat of the Gelgel Dynasty until the Dutch took over in 1906. It is here that you will find the Kerta Gosa (Hall of Justice) which is a superb example of Klungkung architecture. Nearby stands the Bale Kambang (Floating Pavilion), which has been extensively rebuilt this century.

7 Mengwi Temple or Pura Taman Ayun of Mengwi is the second largest temple complex in Bali. The huge state temple is surrounded by a wide moat and was the main temple of the kingdom which ruled from Mengwi until 1891. The temple was originally built in 1634 and renovated in 1937.

8 Tirta Empul, (Temple of the Holy Spring) is an important temple because the springs are believed to have magical powers. According to legend, the springs were created by the God Indra who pierced the earth to tap the “Elixir of Immortality” or Amerta. The springs have been used since 962 A.D. and bubble up into a large, crystal clear tank within the temple, and flow out through waterspouts into a bathing pool.

SHORE EXCURSIONS

To make the most of your visit to Bali, we suggest you take one of our organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult your Shore Excursion Brochure or contact the Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, be advised to take only necessary items and secure any valuables onboard.

LOCAL CUSTOMS

Bargaining: Bargaining is widely practiced in Indonesia. Bargain hard for everything, even in “fixed price” shops. Buying and bargaining can be good humored or infuriating. It’s a game won by technique and strategy, not by anger or threats. The price is usually made in consideration of the merchant’s need on that day.

Tipping: It is generally not customary to tip, although a 10% service charge may be included in many upscale restaurants. Some people may expect to be tipped when photographed.

Dress Code: Light cotton clothes are ideal for the tropical and balmy weather in Bali. Slacks and short sleeved shirts (with collar), for the men, and slacks or skirts covering the knees for women, are preferable to short pants. Indonesians do not wear shorts except for field workers and becak drivers, and sometimes look down on people who do. To visit temple grounds, a cloth sash, usually yellow in color, must be worn around the waist of both men and women. These are usually available for rent at temple entrances for a nominal fee.

Avoiding Offence: Pointing the soles of your feet at a person or touching his head (especially with the left hand) are considered rude in almost all of Indonesia. In fact, do not use the left hand to touch anyone as this hand is to be used in the toilet. Aggressive gestures and postures such as crossing your arms over your chest or standing with your hands on your hips while talking are regarded as insulting; this is the traditional posture of defiance and anger in Wayang theater.

LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES

Balinese food is mainly rice with small portions of spicy vegetables, fish and meat accompanied by a Sambal (hot paste ground from fresh, fiery chillies). Nasi Campur (rice with various side dishes) is the usual find at warungs (food stalls). Specialty dishes include Babi Guling (roast suckling pig) and Bebek Tutu (smoked duck wrapped in banana leaves). Many restaurants serve International fare and it is just as easy to find Chicken Kiev, sashimi, spaghetti or Mexican food as it is to find local cuisine. The traditional way to eat is with the fingers of the right hand. Always eat with the right hand.

About the only drink Indonesians take with meals is a variety of warm or cold Chinese tea, excellent without milk or sugar. Kopi (powerful coffee) is widely grown in Java, Bali and Sumatra and is often laced with chicory or chocolate. Juices are the best thirst quenchers and Es Zirak (citrus juice), Es Pokat (avocado) and Bajigur (coconut milk, rice and palm sugar) are the most popular. The best known local beer is Bintang, but Guinness Stout and Heineken are also easily found. Brem is a rice wine and Bedek is another fermented drink made from rice. Tuak is a thick palm wine tapped fresh from a palm tree and is a local favorite. Bottled water is recommended.

SHOPPING

The main shopping areas in Denpasar are located along Jalan Raya Tuban and Jalan Gajah Mada where you will mostly find antiques. Hundreds of craft shops line the major roads between and within tourist centers. Small shops and kiosks are found in the Kuta Legian area and bargaining is a skill required here.

Most shops are generally open from 9:00 am to 11:00 pm, but many close at 12:30 pm and reopen at 5:00 pm. The main market at Pasar Badung is near the east bank of the river. It is a three story building which houses shops specializing in fruits, vegetables, household goods, food, spices, clothing, sarongs, baskets and handicrafts. Other shops can be found in this area along Jalan Sulawesi that carry batik, ikat and other fabrics. The specialties of this area include textiles, silver and gold jewelry, ceramics, earthenware, antiques and paintings. Indonesian law forbids the export of items over 50 years old without permission. Beware of “new antiques” that have been weathered to look like the genuine article. Many tourist oriented stores and street merchants will accept U.S. Dollars. Most stores accept major credit cards.

LOCAL CURRENCY

The official unit of currency in Indonesia is called the Rupiah (Rp). Notes are available in the following denominations: 100, 500, 1,000, 5,000, 10,000, 20,000 and 50,000. Coins are issued in denominations of 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000.

POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE

The main Post Office is at Jalan Raya Puputan Renon, Denpasar.

The main Telecommunications Office is at 6 Jalan Teuku Umar, Denpasar. Dial the following access numbers to use a personal calling card:

AT&T: 001.801.10
MCI: 001.801.11 or 007.801.11

TOURIST INFORMATION

The Badung District Tourist Office is located on Jalan Surapati 7, north of the Bali Museum.

TRANSPORTATION

Taxis are available at the pier and some are metered. If the meter is “broken” it is recommended to look for another taxi. The taxis are blue and yellow in color and have air-conditioning. Within the capital and outlying areas you may find “Bemos” or small mini-vans that run a route. Check the route with the driver beforehand, giving your destination and asking the price first. Price depends on the distance being travelled.

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

Indonesia has over 300 languages spoken throughout the country. The national language of Indonesia is Bahasa Indonesia, which is almost identical to Malay.

- Please – Tolong
- Excuse me – Permisi
- Thank you – Terima kasih
- You're welcome – Selamat datang
- Good morning – Selamat pagi
- How much? – Berapa?
- Where is the toilet? – Di mana ada kamar kecil WC (waysay)?
