

Dear Travellers,

Prior to booking your holiday to Indonesia, it is essential to be well-informed about various aspects of the country. This information will help you make an informed decision and ensure that you are well-prepared for your trip. Therefore, please carefully review this document and don't hesitate to contact us if you have a question.

About Indonesia:

Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country in the world, situated between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, with over 17,000 islands spanning from Sabang to Merauke. The country is rich in cultural diversity, with more than 300 ethnic groups each possessing unique languages, customs, and traditions. Indonesia has a rich history, from ancient kingdoms like Srivijaya and Majapahit, to the Dutch colonial period and its struggle for independence in 1945.

Indonesia boasts breathtaking natural beauty, ranging from exotic beaches, towering mountains, lush tropical forests, to stunning underwater wonders. Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, serves as the political, economic, and cultural hub of the nation, with its bustling population and rapid urban development.

The Indonesian cuisine is famous worldwide for its deliciousness food, with dishes such as nasi goreng (fried rice), rendang (spicy beef), sate (skewered meat), and soto (soup) being favorites of many.

Despite facing challenges in terms of development and environmental sustainability, Indonesia continues to strive towards advancing its nation by preserving its cultural and natural diversity and improving the welfare of its people.





Language

Bahasa Indonesia, the official language of the country, unifies over 17,000 islands and more than 300 ethnic groups. Indonesia is also home to numerous regional languages and dialects, each reflecting its unique cultural heritage. It is estimated that there are over 700 living languages in Indonesia, making it one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world.

Whether you're bargaining in a bustling market or conversing with locals in a rural village, learning a few phrases such as "Selamat pagi" (good morning), "Selamat sore" (good afternoon), "Selamat malam" (good evening), "Apa kabar?" (how are you doing), and "Terima Kasih" (thank you) in Bahasa Indonesia can open doors to deeper connections and richer experiences during your visit. Especially in remote areas, only a few people speak English.

Religion

Indonesia officially recognizes six religions: Islam, which constitutes 87% of the population, Christianity (including Catholicism and Protestantism) at 10%, Hinduism 1.7%, Buddhism 0.7%, Confucianism, present in a very small percentage, and Indigenous beliefs, with varied representation and often not officially documented.

These religions reflect the diverse cultural and historical influences that have shaped Indonesian society over the centuries. In Indonesia, it is not possible to not have a religion, as religious beliefs play a significant role in the culture and society.

During your holiday in Indonesia, you may notice that locals engage in their daily religious practices. Be prepared for the possibility of waking up to the sound of early morning prayers from the mosque.



Economy

The Indonesian economy stands as the 16th largest globally, having experienced steady growth averaging around 5% per year in recent years, presenting numerous opportunities for its populace. With varied industry under which oil and gas manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, fishery and minery. Indonesia has undergone significant development.

Of particular significance is the role of tourism in the country's economy. The tourism sector has witnessed consistent growth, fostering job creation and economic expansion throughout the diverse regions comprising the archipelago.

Financial matters

The official currency in Indonesia is the Indonesian Rupiah (IDR). Be aware that not all ATMs accept foreign bank debit cards, so we recommend using Bank BNI, Bank BRI, Bank Mandiri, or Bank BCA for withdrawals, as they accept most international cards. Credit card payments are accepted (mostly) at major hotels throughout Indonesia.

It is advisable to check the current exchange rates before and upon arrival and bring some cash in the local currency or withdraw it at the airport upon arrival. While foreign currency exchange is possible in Indonesia, the exchange rate may not be favorable. When using certain ATM machines, your bank card may be dispensed at the end of the transaction, so don't forget to bring it with you. The maximum withdrawal amount is usually between IDR 1,000,000 and IDR 2,000,000 depending on the machine, but you can get more money by making multiple transactions.



Tipping

In a country where many people have an income of less than € 200 per month, tipping for good service is very much appreciated. People working in the hospitality business are also getting more and more used to this custom.

For example,

- You can tip a hotel porter carrying your bag IDR 10.000-20.000 / bag. If you arrange a porter for example in the airports or harbours, you have to agree on the price beforehand (usually IDR 30,000- Rp. 50,000 per bag).
- At a restaurant or a hotel 5-10% of the bill, unless there is already a service charge included to your bill
- Also a guide and a driver will be happy with a little extra. A reasonable amount for a driver is IDR 75.000 – 100.000 / day and for a guide around IDR 100.000 / day.

Note that these are just general guidelines for the amounts.

Donations

If you wish to make a donation in money or materials to children, poor families, or the elderly, for example, we advise you to discuss this with your guide or your hotel. They can best advise you on how donations can be directed to the right places and how donations can be fairly distributed.



Bargaining

It is still possible to bargain in markets, stalls, or small shops in Indonesia, although it's becoming less common in many hotels, tour agencies, and transportation companies where fixed prices are more prevalent. When bargaining, it's essential to establish a price that is fair for both you and the seller. Here are some tips to help you navigate the bargaining process.

- Approach bargaining with a friendly and positive attitude. A smile can go a long way in setting a good tone for negotiations.
- Before bargaining, try to ascertain the value of the item. You can seek advice from your accommodation or tour guide to get an idea of the reasonable price range.
- Start bargaining with a price significantly lower than what you're willing to pay. Vendors will likely counter with a higher price, and you can gradually work your way towards a mutually agreeable price.
- Don't hesitate to walk away if the price doesn't meet your expectations. Vendors may lower their prices when they see that you're serious about leaving.
- Bargaining may take time, so be patient and persistent.

Remember, the goal is not just to get the lowest price possible, but to engage in a friendly and respectful exchange that benefits both parties.



Cultural differences

Handle situations in Indonesia with a respectful approach. Always show respect to elderly and official authorities. Always ask before taking a picture of local people. "Yes" is a common word used in Indonesian, but keep in mind that it even can mean "no" or if they don't understand you because, in their opinion, it is not acceptable to say no. So always ensure if they truly mean yes. If you want to say no, say it with a smile. Take off your shoes whenever you enter someone's room or house. Do not sniff your food, as people will liken this to behavior of dogs or pigs. Use only your right hand to give or take something, to wave, or to eat with. Using your left hand is considered inappropriate. When closely passing a group of sitting people, always bend forward slightly to show respect and excuse yourself as you move ahead of them.

Dress code

Appropriate clothing is highly valued when visiting Indonesia. When exploring cities or towns, especially outside of beach areas, it's important to avoid overly revealing attire such as bikinis, short shorts, or low-cut tops. Instead, opt for lightweight, breathable fabrics that provide coverage for the shoulders and knees, allowing you to remain comfortable in the tropical climate while respecting local sensitivities. When visiting temples, mosques, or other religious sites, dressing respectfully is crucial. Both men and women should wear clothing that covers their shoulders and knees. For women, this may entail wearing a sarong or a long skirt paired with a blouse or t-shirt that covers the shoulders. Men can opt for long pants paired with a collared shirt. Some temples may offer sarongs or scarves for visitors to borrow if needed. While it's acceptable to wear swimwear at beach resorts or designated beach areas, it's important to be mindful that locals may also be present and to respect their cultural norms by wearing appropriate beach attire.



Time difference

Indonesia has three main time zones:

- Western Indonesia Time (WIB/UTC+7)
- Central Indonesia Time (WITA/UTC+8)
- Eastern Indonesia Time (WIT/UTC+9)

If you travel between these regions, you may encounter time differences.

The time difference between Jakarta, Indonesia, and e.g. Amsterdam, Netherlands, usually varies depending on the time of year. In the winter months, Jakarta is usually 6 hours ahead of Amsterdam, while during the summer months, Jakarta is 5 hours ahead of Amsterdam.

Business hours

Banks, post- and public offices are usually open from Monday till Friday from 08.00 – 15.00. Shops are usually open daily until 21.00. Some shops close their doors for siesta in the afternoon or are closed on Sunday.

Time (Jam karet)

Locals call it; Jam Karet, translated elastically time. It refers to a flexible or relaxed approach to time, where appointments or activities may not start exactly on time and there's a tendency for delays or flexibility in scheduling. If your guide agrees to meet you at 09.00, there's a significant chance he/she may be late.



Electricity

In Indonesia, the standard voltage is 230 V, and the frequency is 50 Hz. If the standard voltage in your country falls within the range of 220 - 240 V, you can use your electric appliances in Indonesia without the need for a voltage converter. Power plugs and sockets in Indonesia are of types C and F, with type C being the standard "Euro" plug.

It's important to note that power shutdowns are common throughout Indonesia. While most hotels have generators to mitigate these interruptions, it's possible that you may experience a few hours without electricity during your stay in Indonesia. Therefore, it's advisable to be prepared by carrying portable chargers for electronic devices.

Tourist sim card

Many accommodations and restaurants offer free Wi-Fi connections, but the network and data coverage can be weak, especially in remote areas where Wi-Fi may not be available at all. Additionally, when you are outdoors, it's easy to access the internet on your phone.

Upon arriving in Indonesia, you can purchase a XL or Telkomsel SIM card at the airport. For around €15, you'll receive 15 GB of data. Alternatively, you can pre-order an Indonesian eSIM card online to arrive prepared. In fact, ordering an eSIM card online is even cheaper, starting from just €5.

You can always top up your internet data without buying a new SIM card. However, keep in mind that sometimes the provider offers local data, which may not work in other regions. For example, data purchased in Java may not work in Bali, so you may need to buy a new internet data package.



Indonesian food

Indonesian cuisine is famous for its diversity of flavors, with influences from various regions. Each dish offers a unique taste. Some of Indonesia's most iconic dishes include nasi goreng (fried rice), rendang (slow-cooked beef stew), sate (grilled skewers), and gado-gado (vegetable salad with peanut sauce).

Rice is a staple food in Indonesian cuisine and accompanies almost every meal. Tourists will encounter various rice dishes, including nasi goreng, nasi uduk (coconut rice), and nasi kuning (yellow rice), each prepared with distinct flavors and ingredients. Vegetarians may enjoy soy-based dishes like tofu and tempeh. Indonesian cuisine relies heavily on a range of spices and herbs.

Indonesia boasts a vibrant street food culture, with bustling markets and food stalls offering a range of affordable and delicious snacks and meals. Tourists can taste local delicacies such as martabak (stuffed pancake), bakso (meatball soup), and pempek (fish cakes).

Compared to Europe, the service in Indonesian restaurants may vary. More and more restaurants are starting to include Western dishes on their menu. In hotels, you can expect a nice combination of Indonesian and Western dishes. Indonesian restaurants and local warungs (food stalls) may have a more laid-back approach and expect a slow service. Tourists should be prepared for a relaxed pace of service and may need to be proactive in catching the attention of waitstaff.

Don't expect all dishes to come out of the kitchen at the same time. Often, the dishes will be served one by one. "Selamat makan" (enjoy your meal)



Medical care

Medical care in Indonesia is moderate, but may not be readily available when traveling to remote areas. However, there are steps you can take to reduce the chances of getting sick. It's important to consult with the health service in your country 6 to 8 weeks before departure to get well informed about possible health risks when traveling to Indonesia.

Vaccinations for Hepatitis A, DTP, and Typhoid, as well as malaria prophylaxis (depending on your destination), are strongly recommended. There is a vaccine against Dengue fever but not available to everyone (check health service in your country), so precaution is important. We recommend bringing mosquito repellent with a high concentration of DEET from your home country.

Here are some additional tips:

- Cover your legs and arms with long clothing, especially during sunrise and sunset when mosquitoes are most active. Always use mosquito repellent, as malaria and dengue are common in Indonesia.
- Remember to drink enough water, especially in the tropics. Never drink tap water; always buy bottled drinking water. Ensure that ice cubes are made from mineral water instead of tap water.
- Protect your skin from the sun and use sufficient sunscreen with a high SPF, as the sun is much stronger near the equator in Indonesia.
- Maintain personal hygiene and wash your hands regularly.
- Wear a hat or cap when outside in the sun.



Transportation

Transportation in Indonesia offers various options to travelers. One popular choice to travel through cities is Grab. You can easily book rides by using the Grab app. Grab is not available in remote area's. Grab is based on availability, so there may be instances where you need to wait longer before your car arrives. If you're on a tight schedule, it's advisable to pre-book a car through your accommodation or tour agency. This ensures that you have your transportation available when you need it, without the uncertainty of waiting for a Grab car.

Taxis are widely available. Metered fares are common, but it's essential to ensure the meter is used or negotiate a fare before starting the trip.

It's important to note that transportation by car in Indonesia may take longer than indicated on Google Maps. Traffic jam, road conditions, and unforeseen delays can affect travel times, so it's advisable to factor in extra time when planning journeys by car.

For longer distances, domestic flights and trains are excellent options. Websites like [Tiket.com](https://www.tiket.com) and [Traveloka.com](https://www.traveloka.com) offer convenient platforms for booking flights and train tickets.



Visa

To enter Indonesia, you are required to obtain a visa on arrival (VOA). This visa is valid for 30 days and is only for the purpose of tourism. You can request it directly at the airport upon your arrival in Indonesia. However, to avoid long queues at the airport, you also have the option to arrange an e-visa online in advance. You can apply for the e-visa yourself on the official Molina website. The price of the visa on the airport as well as the e-visa is IDR 500,000 per person. [Click here to access the website](#)

Important information:

- The e-visa is valid for 90 days from the date of issuance for entry into Indonesia.
- You have the option to extend this visa for an additional 30 days.
- Staying in Indonesia beyond the initial 30 days may result in fines of IDR 1,000,000 per day, deportation, and/or other legal charges.
- Working in Indonesia is strictly prohibited.
- The visa will be processed after full payment has been made.
- Your e-visa will be send to you by email. Print the document and present it at the immigration office upon your arrival in Indonesia.

Insurance

We advice you to organize your own travel insurance. Travel insurance provides essential coverage for unforeseen circumstances including medical emergencies, trip cancellations or interruptions, lost or stolen luggage, and emergency evacuation.