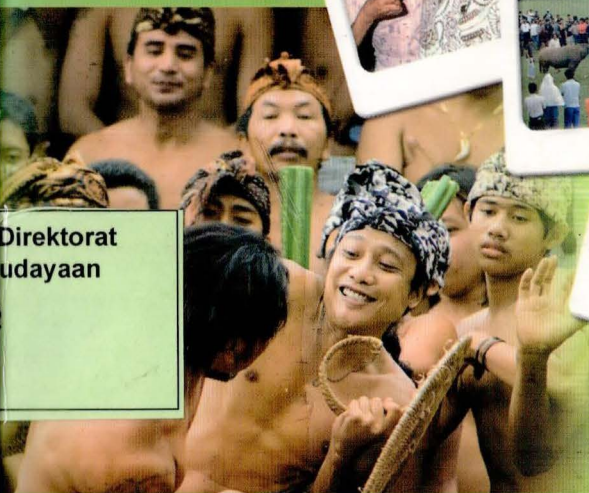


Fascinating **INDONESIA**



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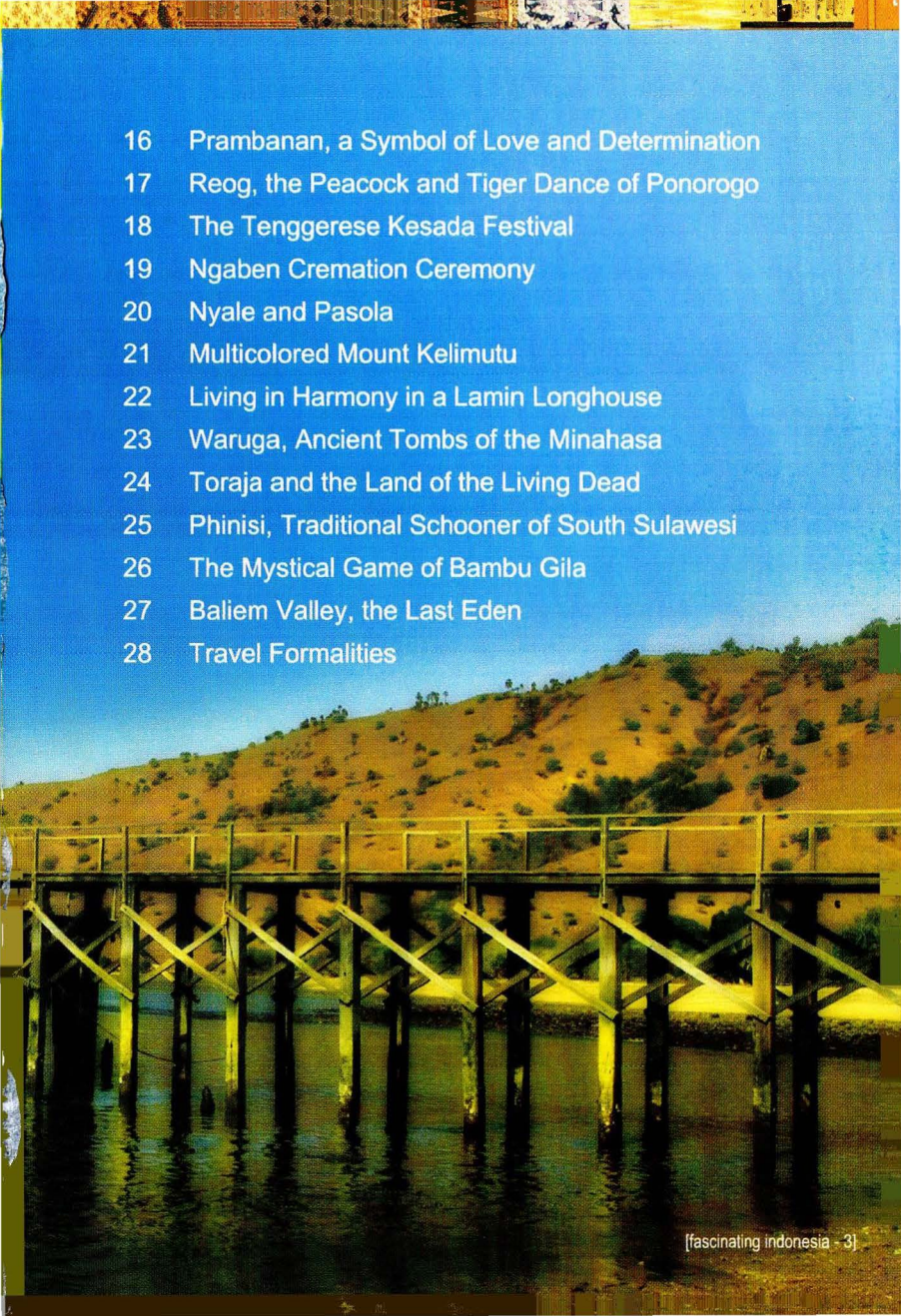
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Pacific Ocean



- 1 Indonesia Archipelago
- 2 Contents
- 4 The Asian Tsunami
- 5 Supervolcanic Lake Toba
- 6 The Megalithic Culture of Nias
- 7 'Minangkabau', the Victorious Buffalo
- 8 The Baduy of Kanekes
- 9 Ondel-ondel, Giant Effigies of the Betawi
- 10 Angklung, Creating Harmonious Melody from Nature
- 11 The Wordly Wisdom of Wayang
- 12 Charismatic Keris
- 13 Batik, the Pattern of Life
- 14 Sekaten & Grebeg Maulud
- 15 Borobudur, a Timeless Reverence



- 
- 16 Prambanan, a Symbol of Love and Determination
 - 17 Reog, the Peacock and Tiger Dance of Ponorogo
 - 18 The Tenggerese Kesada Festival
 - 19 Ngaben Cremation Ceremony
 - 20 Nyale and Pasola
 - 21 Multicolored Mount Kelimutu
 - 22 Living in Harmony in a Lamin Longhouse
 - 23 Waruga, Ancient Tombs of the Minahasa
 - 24 Toraja and the Land of the Living Dead
 - 25 Phinisi, Traditional Schooner of South Sulawesi
 - 26 The Mystical Game of Bambu Gila
 - 27 Baliem Valley, the Last Eden
 - 28 Travel Formalities

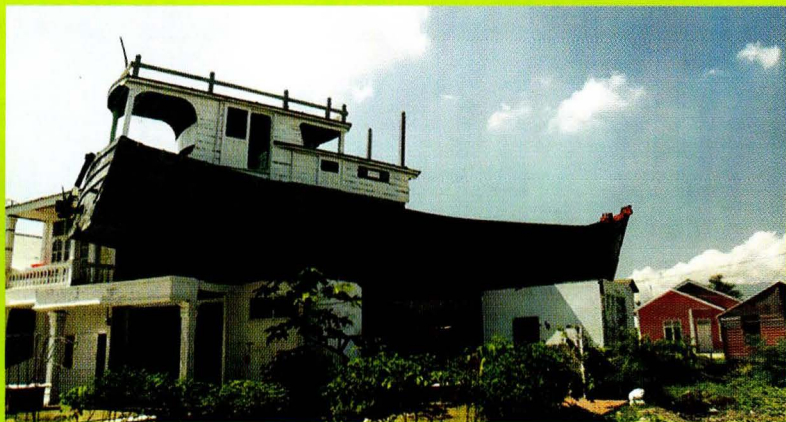
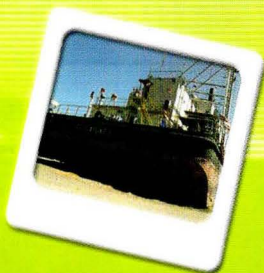
The Asian TSUNAMI

A boat is suspended on a roof of a house some kilometers inland, a grim reminder of the devastating force of the tsunami and earthquake that hit Sumatra on Boxing Day of 2004.

An undersea earthquake with a magnitude of 9.3 occurred in the Indian Ocean just north of Simeulue Island, off the western coast of northern Sumatra,

at a depth of 30 km. The earthquake triggered a series of devastating tsunamis along coasts bordering the Indian Ocean. In countries hardest hit, such as Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, and Thailand, waves were recorded up to 30 m.

One of the deadliest natural disasters in history, the tragedy was also known as the Great Sumatra-Andaman earthquake and the Boxing Day Tsunami.





Supervolcanic LAKE TOBA



Located in the middle of Sumatra at 900 m above sea-level, Lake Toba is 100 kilometers long, 30 kilometers wide, and 505 meters at its deepest point. Yet not many people know that one of Indonesia's most beautiful highland lakes is a supervolcano, the largest volcanic lake in the world, at that.

75,000 years ago, a supervolcanic eruption, the largest in the last 25 million years, created Lake Toba.

According to scientific researches, although the eruption took place in Indonesia, it deposited an ash layer approximately 15 centimeters thick over the entire Indian subcontinent; in some sites up to 9 meters thick.



The Megalithic Culture of NIAS

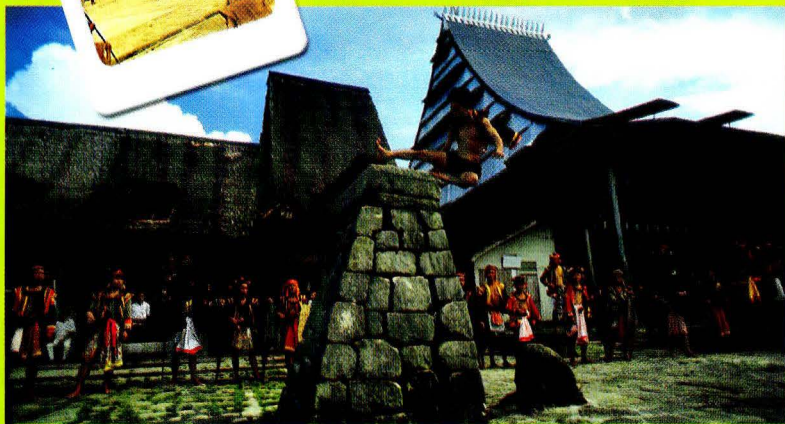
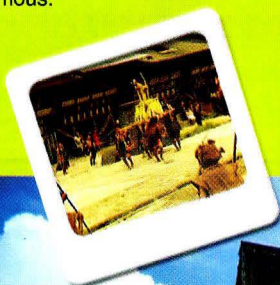
Nias Island is located more than 80 kilometers off the western coast of Sumatra. Over the centuries, the people of Nias have little interacted with the outside world. Its isolation preserving a unique megalithic tradition.

Fortified villages enclose beautiful, hundreds of years old, stilted wooden houses and carved, stone monuments, including a two meter high stone block used in the *fahombe* or stone jumping ritual of which the Nias men, in particular from the southern part of the island, are famous.



The stone-jumping ritual of *Fahombe* traditionally marks the transition from boy to manhood. Jumping practices and training begin as young as 7 years old. By the time they reach 18, young men are required to show off their skills and prove their maturity. After a successful jump, a young man will bear greater responsibilities, such as defending the village against enemy attacks.

Before a jump, the jumper must first ask the blessings of his ancestors to prevent accidents and fatal injuries.



'MINANGKABAU', the Victorious Buffalo

The Minang or Minangkabau of West Sumatra are a matriachal society, upholding a social system in which property, responsibilities, titles, clan names and traditions are handed down along the mother's side.

The name Minangkabau can be loosely translated as 'victorious buffalo'. Legend has it, the Minang were famous far and wide as resourceful and cunning people. Wanting to pit their skills against the Minang, the Javanese proposed a buffalo fight. They brought their largest and fiercest bull. The Minang on the other hand, prepared a young calf, much smaller in size than the Javanese bull, and for several days before the contest starved their calf of milk. On the day of the contest,

the Minang tied sharp knives on the calf's head and the starving animal gored the Javanese bull to death in its search for milk. Thus, the Minang came out the winner.

To this day, certain elements of their culture are connected to the buffalo. Just take a look at the women's headdress and the roof of their Rumah Gadang or traditional house.

The Minang are known to be devout Moslems and have a sharp entrepreneurial spirit, often traveling far, settling elsewhere and setting up a successful business. It's no wonder Padang food is a favorite with many people of various ethnic backgrounds throughout the archipelago.



THE BADUY of Kanekes

Inhabiting a region in Lebak, Banten, the Baduy people is a traditional and closed society that still maintains the *pikukuh* tradition of their ancestors, and embrace their ancient faith of Sunda Wiwitan.

The Baduy community resists all elements of modern culture and loyally obey all the rules imposed on them by the *pu'un*, Baduy's custom and heritage chief, who is also the head of their indigenous religion.

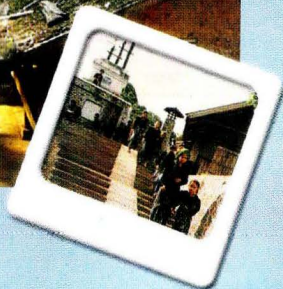
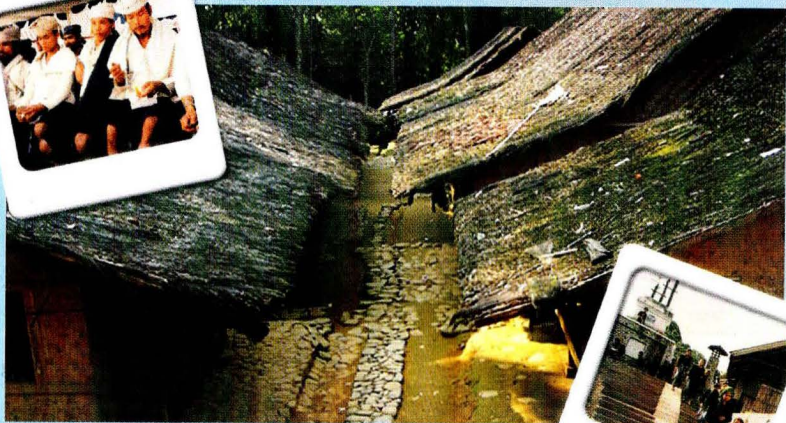
The Baduy are divided into two groups, the Baduy Dalam (Urang Tangtu) who live in the south and Baduy Luar (Urang Panamping) who live in the north.

Tangtu men are usually dressed in a white, hand-sewn, long-sleeved shirt without collars or buttons and matched

black sarongs below, while the Tangtu women wear a white *kebaya* and black sarong-like skirts.

Their Panamping male counterparts, in contrast, are clad in black, with Panamping females wearing black or dark blue blouses. Other Baduy characteristics are headdresses and daggers strapped to the waist, and no footwear. Other prohibitions include smoking, committing crimes like fighting and killing, divorce and traveling by transportation.

Although some customs of the Panamping are more lenient than the Tangtu's, any violation of prohibitions are subjected to warnings, punishments, and even total banishment from the Baduy Region.



ONDEL-ONDEL

Giant Effigies of the Betawi



For centuries, Jakarta has been a melting pot of cultures. Ethnic groups from all over the archipelago settle in Jakarta alongside the Portuguese, Dutch, Arabs and Chinese. Assimilation eventually gave birth to a unique community known as the Betawi. Their distinctive trait is the similarity certain aspects of their culture have with other cultures.

Betawi art, for example, is mostly folk art, developed by and among the people, rather than in exclusive circles as in other cultures. As such, art forms often display familiar characteristics. A popular Betawi folk performance is the *ondel-ondel*, giant effigies reaching up to 2,5 meters and a

diameter of 80 centimeters. Made from woven bamboo, and dressed, the *ondel-ondel* have masked faces, painted red for male and white for female.

During festivities, *ondel-ondels* are always put on display in pairs, a male and female, either to ward away evil or welcome guests. In parades, *ondel-ondels* come to life when worn and paraded by men to open the way for the procession and at the same time entertain the audience, accompanied by a traditional Betawi Tanjidor orchestra or *gambang kromong* music.

For the true-blue Betawi, *ondel-ondels* are more than just giant dolls. They are believed to be imbued with magical powers, and have the ability to ward away evil and plagues.

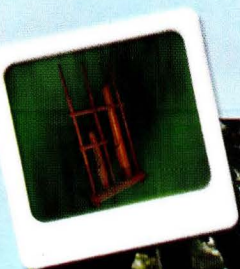


ANGKLUNG, Creating Harmonious Melody from Nature

A unique musical instrument from West Java, the *angklung* is made of two to four bamboo tubes that are suspended vertically on a bamboo frame; the lower part of the tubes are left dangling so that they can be shaken to produce the sound.

Each piece of bamboo are different sizes to create different chords; small to big *angklungs* produce low to high notes. The *angklung*'s diatonic chromatic scale, developed by Daeng Sutigna, a tutor and scout master from Kuningan, West Java, in 1938, enabled players to broaden their repertoire and move on from traditional songs.

To play the *angklung*, the left hand holds the upper part of the frame while the right hand shakes the lower right section of the instrument. *Angklung* is either played in an ensemble of 15 players with 15 pieces of *angklung* or combined with other musical instruments.



The Wordly Wisdom of the WAYANG



The term *wayang* refers to puppet theaters, and the puppet itself. In Indonesia, *wayang* plays were used in the spread of Hinduism, and later Islam. In the latter, the display of gods and human forms were prohibited thus the traditional doll-like puppets of the *wayang golek* were transformed into the 2-dimensional *wayang purwa* made from leather. Instead of showing the figure itself, this type of *wayang* only displays the shadow of the figures. This type of play later became known as *wayang kulit*.

Wayang performances generally carry a moral message filled with life philosophy and re-enact stories from the Mahabharata epic. *Wayang* characters come in many forms, from deities and humans, to giants, sages and animals. The puppets' facial features, the shape of the profile, color, and accessories reflect different characters.

In the Javanese *wayang kulit* theater, the '*dalang*' or puppeteer performs '*wayang*' shows from behind a screen illuminated by an oil lamp or '*blencong*'. Watching from the other side of the screen, the audience only sees the puppets' shadows. The '*dalang*' manipulates

the puppets as he sings and recounts stories. Besides directing the story, he also leads the *gamelan* musicians and the singers. The '*dalang*' usually masters over 20 different voice characters.

In West Java, the '*wayang golek*' is a 3-dimensional puppet made from wood with movable head, arms and body. The puppets are given costumes according to the character they represent.

Other forms of *wayang* are *wayang wong*, played by masked actors; *wayang klitik* from East Java which are similar to *wayang kulit* but made from thin pieces of wood; and *wayang beber* which are illustrated ballads on scrolls of paper or *lontar* leaves.



Charismatic KERIS

The *keris* is a distinctive, asymmetrical dagger indigenous to Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Southern Thailand and southern Philippines.

Nearly all regions in the Indonesian archipelago have their own unique form of *keris*, with their particular shapes, functions and significance.

Keris are made by master *keris* makers called '*empu*' who strictly adhere to ancient *keris*-making traditions. Fasting and praying comes before a *keris*-making process.

The Javanese *keris* is asymmetrical in the upper part of the dagger (*ganja*) and has either a straight or a wavy blade. The number of curves on a wavy blade must be odd.

Blades are sometimes considered to have special powers. Considered a sacred object, the *keris* is often attributed with special titles. The *kris* is usually a family heirloom, passed down to male members of the family. Today, the *keris* are worn only at special ceremonies as part of the traditional costume.

The most interesting part of the *keris* is its '*pamor*', a distinct pattern made of wrought metal or alloy which determines the *keris*' power and age. The handle may be made from wood, metal, ivory, silver and even gold.

For many *keris*-owners, *keris*-bathing ceremonies on the first of the Javanese Sura month ensure the powers inside in the *keris* are appeased.





BATIK, the Pattern of Life

Batik originates from the royal courts of Java. For the Javanese, beautiful hand-painted batiks are not merely pieces of cloth but carry much more significance that symbolizes life itself.

One single piece of batik may take months to finish. First, patterns are drawn on the cloth, and then traced with wax or *malam* using a special tool called the *canting*. After the patterns are all covered, the cloth is then dipped in dye. The whole process is repeated until the cloth and motifs are covered in the desired colors. Stamped *batiks* are a more modern invention and less time consuming to make.

There are two types of *batik*. The hand-drawn/painted batik (*batik tulis*) is the traditional and tedious method of drawing motifs, designing, as well as applying wax. The process is time consuming, requiring up to 2-3 months per cloth. *Batik tulis* is reversible. Stamped *batik* (*batik cap*) is an innovative method of creating *batik* patterns using copper blocks that already have the desired patterns. The process only takes 2-3 days per fabric.

Over the years, the motif, design and color of *batik* have been influenced by foreign cultures. And different regions

have their own unique style. *Batik* is generally grouped into two main groups, namely *coastal batik* from the north coast of Java is brighter and uses more color. Yellows, mauves, ochre, greens and pale blue are common and the motifs show Chinese influence, such as flowers and clouds of Batik Pekalongan and Cirebon's *megamendung* or stylized cloud motif. Court Batik is primarily from Solo and Yogya. The colors of the batik are traditionally colored blue to symbolize earth, brown to symbolize fire, and white to symbolize water and air.



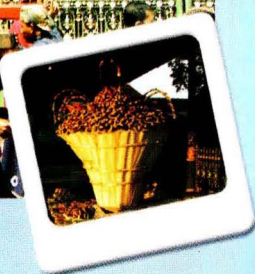
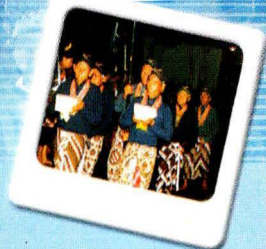
SEKATEN & GREBEG MAULUD

In the month of Maulud of the Javanese calendar, the tradition of Sekaten and Grebeg Maulud to commemorate the anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad are celebrated by the Sultanate of Yogyakarta, the Royal Palaces of Surakarta and Cirebon, with a colorful display of royal regalia that is part of the tradition.

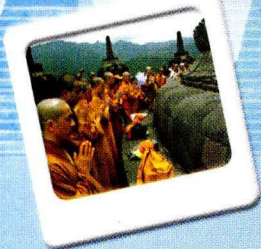
Sekaten begins with a procession of the ancient *gamelan* instruments, Kyai Guntur Madu and Kanjeng Kyai Naga Wilaga from the Sultan's court (the Kraton). The month-long night market held at the north square of Yogyakarta Palace is part of the Sekaten celebration. During the week, except on Thursday night and Friday mornings, the two sets of *gamelan* are played in turns continuously, night and day.

The tradition is followed by Grebeg Maulud, a parade of the palace Guards. The word is taken from the Javanese term meaning 'noisy' as in the sound of soldiers marching in procession behind the '*gunungan*' and the explosion from the guards' rifles.

During Grebeg Maulud, huge cones of rice are decorated with colored eggs, vegetables and carried in procession from the palace to the mosque. People are allowed to scramble and get a piece of the mounds, which they believe will bring them good luck in the coming year.



BOROBUDUR, a Timeless Reverence



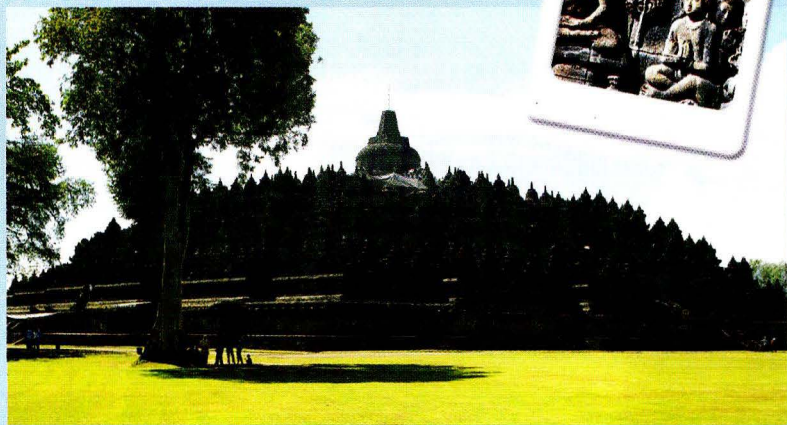
Borobudur is a 9th century Mahayana Buddhist monument in Magelang, Central Java. It is built on a hill, between two twin volcanoes, Sundoro-Sumbing and Merbabu-Merapi, and two rivers, Progo and Elo.

Borobudur is built as a single large stupa, and when viewed from above takes the form of a giant tantric Buddhist *mandala*. The monument comprises three levels, symbolizing the stages in Buddhist cosmology, namely *Kamadhatu* (the world of desire), *Rupadhatu* (the world of forms)

and *Arupadhatu* (the world of formlessness). Walls and balustrades are decorated with 2,672 relief panels, and 504 Buddha statues.

Abandoned in the 14th century, Borobudur was recovered in the largest restoration project undertaken between 1975 and 1982 by the Indonesian government and UNESCO. Since then, the monument is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Every year Buddhists in Indonesia come to Borobudur for a pilgrimage to observe Vesak, a day commemorating the birth, death, and moment when Siddhartha Gautama became the Buddha.



PRAMBANAN, a Symbol of Love and Determination

Completed in the 9th century, Prambanan is the largest Hindu Temple compound in Central Java, located approximately 18 km east of Yogyakarta.

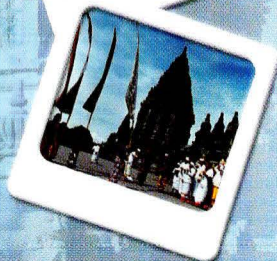
The complex consists of three zones. The central compound is the holiest with three main shrines called Trimurti or "three forms" dedicated to the three gods: Brahma (the Creator), Vishnu (the Keeper), and Shiva (the Destroyer). The bas-reliefs along the balustrades on the gallery around Shiva and Brahma Temples depict the Ramayana legend. This story is also re-enacted in a ballet that is regularly performed in full moon evenings in an open air theatre in the west side of the complex.

Inside the shrine of Shiva is a statue of Durga, his consort. The shrine of Durga is also called the Temple of *Lara Jonggrang*, after a Javanese legend of Princess Lara Jonggrang.

The legend tells of the story about Prince Bandung Bondowoso who fell in love with Princess Lara Jonggrang, the daughter of King Boko. But the princess rejected his proposal of marriage because Bandung Bondowoso had killed King Boko and ruled her kingdom. Forced to agree to a union in marriage, she posed one impossible condition, that Bandung must build her a thousand temples in one night.

The Prince then conjured up a multitude of spirits from the earth. Helped by

supernatural beings, he succeeded in building 999 temples. But the princess frustrated his nearly successful attempt by rousing villagers and commanding them to work in order to trick the prince into thinking it was already dawn. Fooled by the sounds of morning activity, the supernatural helpers disappeared. The prince was enraged and cursed Lara Jonggrang, turning her into stone.



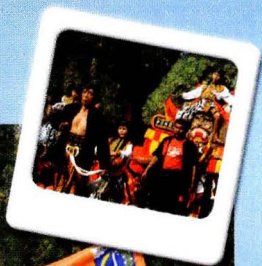
REOG, the Peacock and Tiger Dance of Ponorogo

The *Reog* dance is an icon of Ponorogo in East Java. Said to have been created in the 12th century by the King of Kediri, the classic *reog* performance re-enacts the battle between Pujangga Anom, from the court of Ponorogo, and Singa Barong, guardian spirit of the forest of Lodoyo. In one scene, Singa Barong was in rage when 150 tigers were stolen from the forest, apparently to be offered as a dowry payment for a princess of Kediri, whom the king of Ponorogo wished to marry.

The leading figure in a *reog* is the Singo Barong who bears a mask of a snarling tiger's head and a gigantic fan of peacock feathers called *Dhadhak*

Merak, that may weigh up to 50 kg. The main dancer's ability to support the mask's weight only by his teeth is said to depend upon the magical power of the leader of the dance troupe or *warok*.

Apart from Singo Barong, a typical *reog* troupe consists of masked clowns/acrobats, King Kelono Sewandono and his governor, Pujangga Anom, depicted as having an ugly face, and a mask with a red, long nose, untidy hair and tusked teeth. There are also *Jatil* and *Waroks*, with open breasts and waist bands that symbolize their magic power, as well as a number of hobby-horse dancers who represent the troops of Pujangga Anom.



The TENGGERESE KESADA Festival

The Bromo-Tengger Semeru National Park lies in the center of the Tengger Massif. The Tengger crater is 10 kilometers wide with a vast sea of sand. It's a spectacular volcanic landscape, with the Mount Bromo, Mount Batok and Mount Kursi emerging from the ancient caldera. To the south, Mount Semeru, Java's highest mountain, towers them all.

The area is home to the Tengger people known for their unique customs and tradition. The Tenggerese embrace a form of Hindu once practiced in Java until the 14th century when Hindu Majapahit fell to the Muslim Mataram and the loyalists escaped to the mountains.

Unlike the Indian and Balinese Hindu, the Tengger seldom worship in temples. Instead, offerings are made in houses, open spaces and in holy places. An open arena in the sea of sand on the slopes



of the volcano is called the *poten*. It is the most important venue for Tenggerese rituals and the site of Mandala Utama, a roofless construction where major ceremonies are held.

The biggest ceremony of the Tengger people is the Kesada festival which takes place on the fourteenth day of the month of Kesada on a full moon night. Villagers gather round the rim of Bromo's caldera and throw sacrifices of livestock and produce into the gaping hole.

The Kesada ceremony was born from the legend of a young couple who lived on the slopes of Mount Bromo, Joko Seger and Roro Anteng. Unhappy at having no heir, they meditated in a cave on Mount Batok and heard a voice saying that they will be blessed with twenty-five children if they agreed to offer the last born to the spirits of Bromo.

As time past, the parents still couldn't bring themselves to part with their child, named Ki Kusuma. One day, Ki Kusuma disappeared and his family only heard his voice from inside the crater saying that he was at peace and had one wish that on a full moon evening, on the 14th day of Kesada, they send him offerings. The village on the slopes of Bromo was eventually called Tengger, derived from the names *Anteng* and *Seger*.





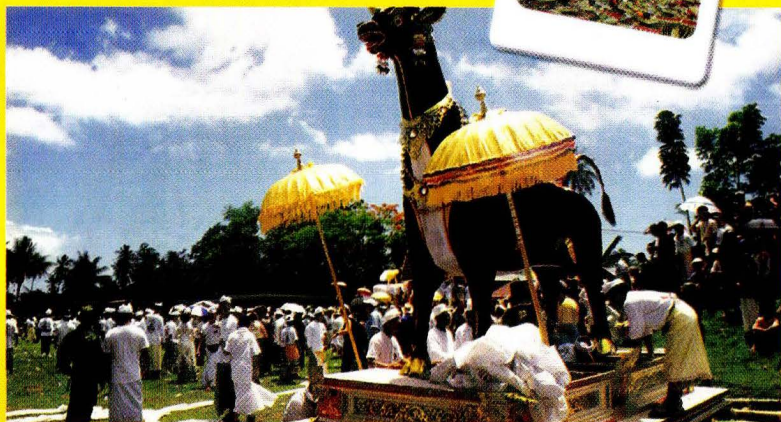
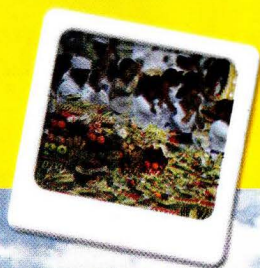
NGABEN Cremation Ceremony

In the Hindu-Bali belief, when a man dies, his soul must be cleansed from earthly impurities before it can reach *moksa*. To do this, the soul must be released from its physical confinement through a cleansing ritual, a cremation ceremony called the *ngaben*, after which the ashes are scattered into the sea or the river.

Seven days before *ngaben*, the family conducts a ritual called *mungkah*, in which the grave is dug open and the bones of the deceased cleansed and

wrapped in a white cloth. To accommodate the soul, an *adegan* or effigy is made from palmyra leaves or sandalwood.

Palebön is the climax of the ceremony. A tower and coffin in the shape of a bull, lion or elephant that will be burnt are cleaned (*pemelasasan*). They are all carried in a procession to the cremation site, accompanied by *gamelan* music. Along the way, the procession deliberately makes many turns to protect the soul from evil spirits. Upon arrival, the bones are placed in a *petulangan* and cremated.





NYALE and THE PASOLA

The Pasola of West Sumba is a colorful ritual involving hundreds of men on horseback armed with lances, spears and wearing traditional costume. Even though the men use blunt spears during the mock-up battle, fatal injuries do occur occasionally. Blood drawn in the ritual signals its success.

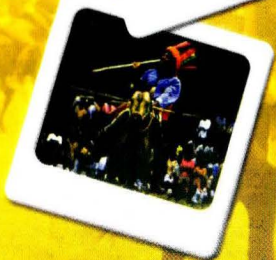
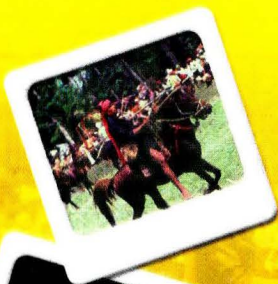
Pasola is derived from the word Sola or Hola meaning a long wooden stick used as spears in the mock war.

The ceremony is usually held in February several days after the full moon, coinciding with the appearance of the *nyale*, strange multi-colored sea worms, on the shore. *Ratos*, or tribal elders, go down to the sea shore and collect the *nyale*. They then bring the *nyale* to the

council of elders to be examined. Fat and colorful *nyale* ensures a bountiful harvest, whereas thin and fragile worms spell disaster. Only after they have been examined do the *rato* declare the opening of the *pasola* and allow the people to catch *nyale*. These strange sea worms only come out for three days each year. Without *nyale*, there would be no *pasola*.

The *nyale* itself is linked to a popular folktale of a beautiful princess, Putri Mandalika, who willingly sacrificed herself by jumping into the sea and promising to return once a year in the form of the *nyale*.

A great crowd gatherer, the *pasola* means holidays and festivities for the whole village. In a large clearing, traditionally dressed riders take up battle positions at opposing ends of the arena. The horsemen balance themselves bareback without saddle or stirrups as spears flew. The battle will continue for several hours and ends when one side is proclaimed the winner. Without armor or protection there would be a fair amount of bleeding. Although fatal wounds seldom occur, death in a *pasola* is considered an honor.





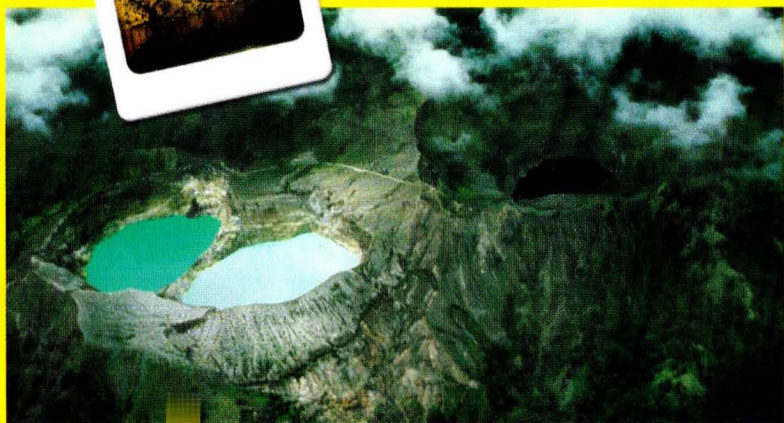
Multicolored MOUNT KELIMUTU

The multicolored volcanic lakes of Mount Kelimutu are considered to be East Nusa Tenggara's most amazing sight. Located at 1.640 meters, the lakes' colors are constantly changing, from blue, turquoise, green, burgundy to black.

While there are still no scientific explanation for this natural occurrence, locals believe the lakes are where souls of the dead dwell. Souls of sinners will

enter the black colored lake, *Tiwu Ata Polo* (the Lake of Evil), those of virgins and infants go to the blue green lake, *Tiwu Ko'o Fai Nuwa* (the Lake of Youth), while souls of the elderly will stay in the brown/burgundy lake, *Tiwu Ata Bupu* (the Lake of the Old).

There are many theories governing the cause of the change in color. One explanation is due to geological and chemical process going on in the bottom and wall of the lake. Another say it is the result of changes in bacteria and micro-organism populations due to changes in temperature. Yet, according to villagers, it's all just an optical illusion!



Living in Harmony in a LAMIN LONGHOUSE

The *lamin* longhouse is the traditional house of the Dayak Kenyah in East Kalimantan. Raised on stilts three meters off the ground, the *lamin* may be built up to 250 meters long, providing ample space for up to thirty families.

A distinct characteristic of the *lamin* are the dragon head carvings on each end of the roof, symbols of greatness, nobleness and heroism. In the front yard, Blontang statues represent guardian spirits of the house or village.

A single tree serves as steps in the centre of the *lamin*. A longhouse may have sixty rooms, of which those located in the center of the longhouse are reserved for the nobility. The interior of these noble apartments may be decorated with motifs of tiger and human, and display the dominant Kenyah colors of red, black, yellow and white.





WARUGA Ancient Tombs of the Minahasa

Of the 2000 warugas found throughout Minahasa land, North Sulawesi, 144 of them are located in the Sawangan area in Airmadidi. Warugas are pre-Christian stone tombs believed to have magic and supranatural powers. Based on the stone inscriptions, warugas were still in use until the 19th century by the Northern Minahasans.

A waruga consists of a lid shaped like the roof of a traditional Minahasan house. Patterns and motifs carved on the stone lid are usually of geometric designs, plants and animals. There are various explanations concerning these designs. Some are of the opinion the pictures

describe the afterlife, some say it reveals how the occupant died or how he lived.

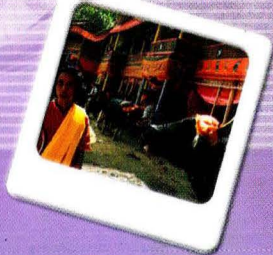
Not all Minahasans had warugas. They were reserved only for the upper class of the society. The custom of burying the dead in warugas eventually stopped when cholera and typhoid became an epidemic and suspicions of the cause pointed to the rotting corpses inside the warugas.

One waruga may contain several members of one family, as well as personal valuables of the deceased. The body is put into the waruga in an upright position so that it can be reunited with its family. One waruga in Sawangan has twelve bodies in it. Part of the mystery is the fact that Minahasan ancestors were believed to be big and strong, so how can one fit into the 1,5 x 1,5 tombs, let alone twelve?



THE TORAJA and the Land of the Living Dead

Tana Toraja is located in the rugged mountains and fertile plateaus of South Central Sulawesi. The name literally means 'land of the kings'. The Toraja people still retain their ancestral belief of *aluk to dolo*. Extended families live in a series of houses called '*tongkonan*'. The roofs of '*tongkonan*' rise at both ends like the bow and stern of a ship. According to ritual chants, these shapes are symbols of the vessel that brought their ancestors to the area. One of the most visited Torajan Village is Ke'te Kesu, a living museum of the Torajan way of life and their unique architecture.



For the Torajans, death is the most important part in man's cycle of life. The Torajan funerals are grand ceremonies to pave the way for the dead so that they may enter the afterworld. It's a time of both joy and sadness. At the end of the ceremony, the dead are laid to rest in cliff-side stone crypts and are guarded by wooden effigies or *tau-tau*.

Funerals of noblemen may last for several days and involve hundreds of guests and the sacrifice of many buffaloes, pigs and chickens. In addition to solemn processions, singing, feasting, dancing, singing, cock-fighting, *sisemba* (kick boxing) and buffalo fights also take place.



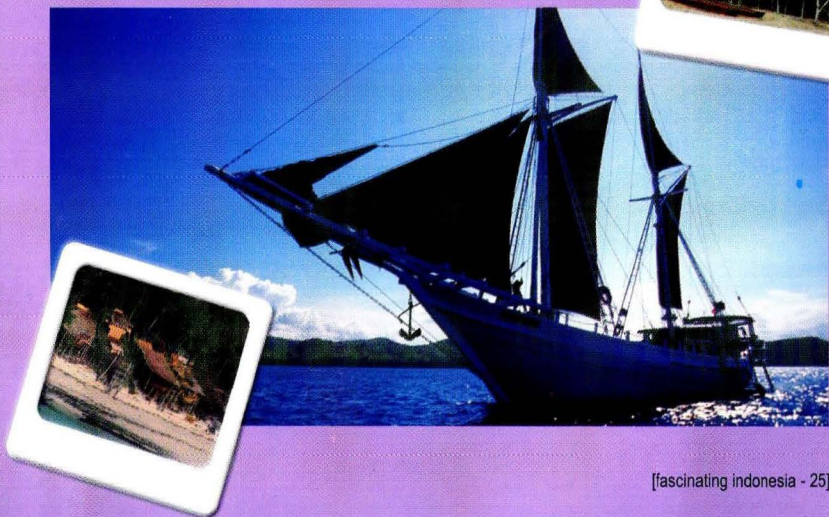
PHINISIQ

Traditional Schooner of South Sulawesi

Tanah Beru in Bulukumba is the center of the *phinisi* ship-building industry. The traditional way is still religiously followed under the guidance of a *punggawa* or master shipbuilder, according to centuries old methods that combine exact calculations and mystical beliefs.

From the outset, the *punggawa* is responsible for the *phinisi's* success as a seaworthy vessel. In every stage of construction, the *punggawa* consults the spirits. Indeed, according to local maritime history, no *phinisi* has ever gone down.

Sulawesi's ties to the sea have always been strong and deep. In the south of the island, formidable shipbuilders and seamen have long reached the African continent, sailing to Madagascar and even as far away as Cape Town, in traditional schooners called '*phinisi*'. They are the Bugis and the Konjo.



The Mystical Game of BAMBU GILA

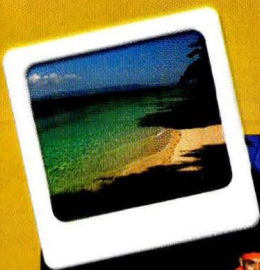
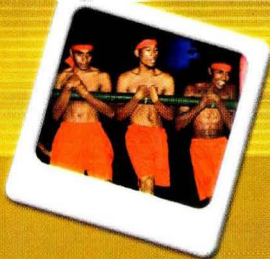
While strolling along a beach in Maluku, one might chance upon an unusual attraction called Bambu Gila or Crazy Bamboo. Seven able-bodied young men carry a 2,5 meter bamboo pole with a diameter of eight to nine centimeters, while another, a shaman, stands and murmurs mantra in Tanah, an ancient local language. Accompanied by the continuous drumming of a *tifa*, traditional Malukunese drum, he blows smoke from a bowl of coconut shell into one end of the bamboo pole, and rubs on seven slices of ginger on seven joints of the bamboo. Suddenly, the bamboo moves wildly at its own accord, flinging

its bearers in all directions, as they struggle to keep hold of the pole.

It is said, no one has ever been able to 'conquer' a *bambu gila*. Only after the sound of the *tifa* has stopped and the bearers lay exhausted, does the bamboo revert to its natural condition, inert just like an ordinary piece of bamboo.

According to local belief, the shaman enlists the help of supernatural powers, inviting spirits to enter the bamboo and make it move.

Mysticism or just plain entertainment, Bambu Gila is a ritual that has been a part of the people of North Maluku for a long time, even before the arrival of Christianity and Islam in Maluku.





BALIEM VALLEY, the Last Eden

Shadowed by the snow-capped Trikora mountain range and bordered by dense jungle, Baliem Valley is one of Papua's most beautiful and unforgettable sights. At 2000 m above sea-level, the valley stretches over 80 km from end to end, and is less than 20 km across. Its most important urban town is Wamena.

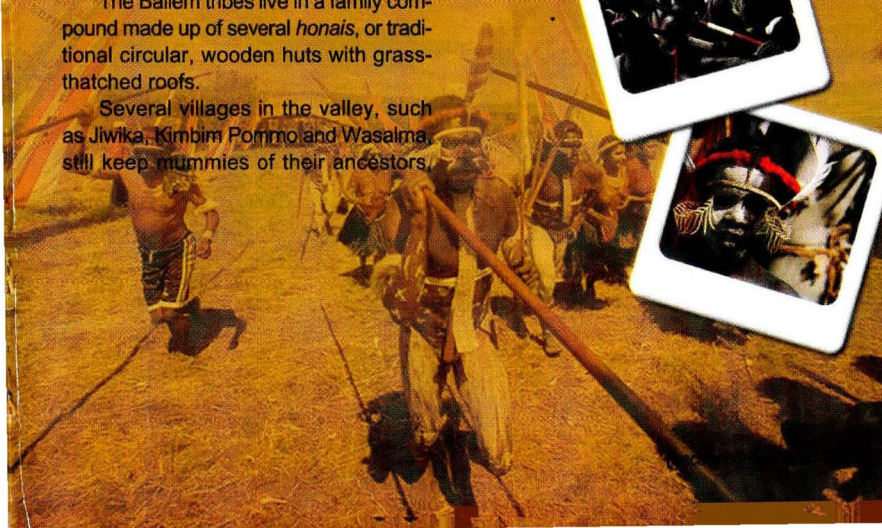
Baliem Valley, home to the Dani, Lani and Yali tribes, who still cling to primitive traditions and way of life that are reminiscent of a "stone age" culture. Local markets, such as Jibama and Nayak are interesting places to get a glimpse of the everyday lives of these unique tribes. The market offers an array of interesting produce and handicrafts, such as bows and arrows, *koteka* or penis sheaths (still worn by the tribes), stone axes and cowry shells.

The Baliem tribes live in a family compound made up of several *honais*, or traditional circular, wooden huts with grass-thatched roofs.

Several villages in the valley, such as Jiwika, Kimbim Pommo and Wasalma, still keep mummies of their ancestors.

tribal leaders and powerful war chiefs. A special ointment and a long, slow smoking process preserve and mummify the bodies.

Every year, the village of Wosilion in Kurulu, Wamena, becomes a beehive of activity, as drums pound to an ancient rhythm and shiny spears dazzle in the sunlight. The annual Baliem Festival brings together three main tribes in the valley and features friendly archery contests, pig races, traditional musical performances, and a stone-baking feast. The event is aimed at promoting peace among the tribes who in the past were often involved in tribal wars with each other.



Travel Formalities

Indonesia is the world's largest archipelago, consisting of more than 17,000 islands. Spread across 5,120 km of ocean and positioned between Asia and Australia, this country is as wide as the European continent. Four-fifths of the area is sea, with the major islands being Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Papua.

Unity in Diversity

As the world's 14th largest nation, Indonesia's population totals over 200 million, comprising 250-300 ethnic groups that have their own language and dialects but are united with Bahasa Indonesia, the national language spoken throughout the archipelago.

The majority of Indonesians are Moslem, with Christians, Catholics, Hindus, Buddhists and followers of Confucianism making up the rest. Since 2001 the Chinese culture has experienced a welcomed revival that served to enrich the country's cultural diversity.

The Nature

Indonesia's flora and fauna is diversely rich as its land and people. Orangutans, tigers, one horned rhinos, elephants, dugongs, *anoas*, komodo dragons are the pride of Indonesia. The seas around the archipelago also hold the country's treasures, a rich marine environment that holds a myriad of species, from fish, corals and marine mammals. National parks around the archipelago serve to preserve this rich natural heritage.

Immigration

All travelers to Indonesia must be in possession of passport valid for at least six months from date of arrival and have proof (tickets) of onward or return passage. Immigration authorities provide Free Tourist Visas for a period of 30 days to nationals from 12 countries only on the basis of reciprocity. These countries are Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, the Philippines, Hong Kong SAR, Macao SAR, Chile, Morocco, Peru, Vietnam and Ecuador.

Moreover, Visa On Arrival has been given to nationals from 63 countries. These are Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Czech, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Laos PDR, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, People's Republic of China, Poland, Portugal, Oman, Qatar, Rumania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, South Africa, South Korea, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, USA. Visa On Arrival is valid for 30 days and may be extended under the permission of Indonesian Immigration with the conditions as follows: natural disaster occurs in the place visited by the tourist; the traveler is taken ill or meets with an accident during their visit. Other nationals

must apply for visa at Indonesian Embassies or Consulates in their home country. In addition, the visa cannot be replaced with any other forms of immigration letters.

Entry ports where Visa On Arrival may be issued are the Soekarno-Hatta Airport in Jakarta, Ngurah Rai Airport in Bali, Polonia Airport in Medan, Sultan Syarif Kasim Airport in Pekanbaru, Minang Kabau Airport in Padang, Juanda Airport in Surabaya and Sam Ratulangi Airport in Manado.

While authorized seaports are at Batam, Sekupang, Batuampar, Nongsa and Marina, Teluk Senimba, Bandar Bintan, Talani Lagoi and Bandar Sri Udana Labon in Riau archipelago, Sri Bintan Pura in Tanjung Pinang, Belawan Port and Sibolga in North Sumatra, Yos Sudarso in Ambon, Tanjung Perak in Surabaya, Teluk Bayur in Padang, Tanjung Priok in Jakarta, Padang Bai and Benoa in Bali, the Port of Jayapura, Bitung in Manado, Tanjung Balai Karimun, Tanjung Mas in Central Java, Tenau and Maumere in East Nusa Tenggara, Pare-pare and Soekarno-Hatta Port in South Sulawesi.

Climate

Climate-wise, Indonesia is distinctly tropical. The east monsoon from June to September brings dry weather while the west monsoon from December to March is moisture-laden bringing rain. Temperatures range from 21°C (70°F) to 33°C (90°F), except at higher altitudes which are much cooler.

Health

Valid international certificates of small-pox, cholera and yellow vaccinations are required only from travelers coming from infected areas.

Customs

Customs allow on entry a maximum of one liter of alcoholic beverages, 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 100 grams of tobacco and a reasonable amount of perfume per adult. Cameras, video cameras, portable radios, cassette recorders, binoculars and sport equipment are admitted provided they are taken out on departure. They must be declared to Customs. Prohibited are firearms, narcotics drugs, pornography, transceivers and cordless telephones. Chinese traditional medicines must be registered by the Ministry of Health. Films, pre-recorded video tapes and laser disks must be screened by the Censor Board. There is no restriction on import or export of foreign currencies and travelers cheques. However, the import and export of Indonesian currency exceeding Rp. 100 million is prohibited.

Airport Tax

An airport tax of Rp. 100.000,- is levied by the airport authority for travelers on international routes and Rp. 30.000, for those on domestic routes.



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