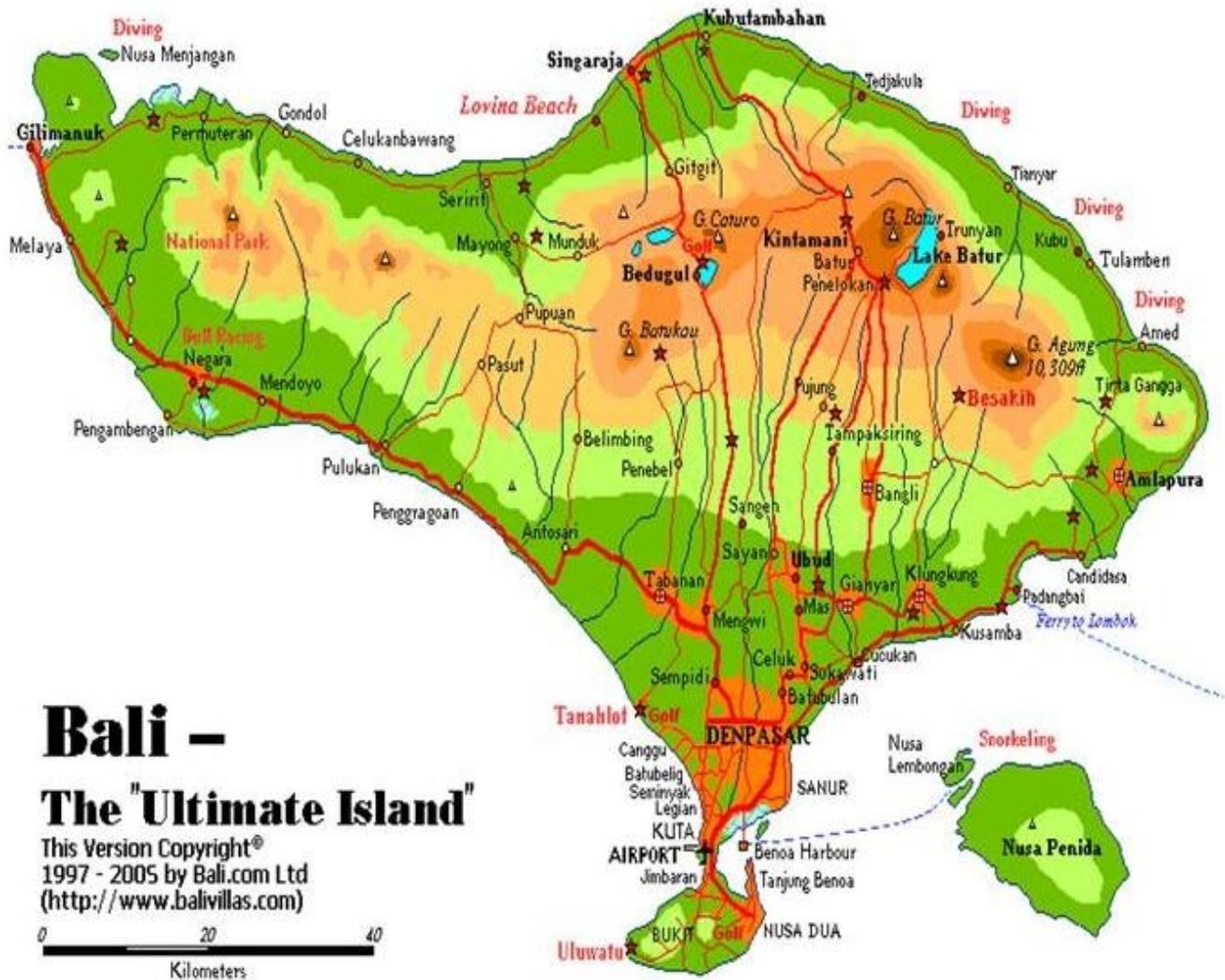


INTRODUCTION TO BALI, INDONESIA

WHERE IS BALI?

The island of Bali is part of the Republic of Indonesia and is located 8 to 9 degrees south of the equator between Java in the West and Lombok and the rest of the Lesser Sunda Islands (Sumbawa, Flores, Sumba and Timor) in the East. Flying time to Jakarta is about 1.5 hours, to Singapore and Perth (Australia) 2.5 and 3 hours, to Hong Kong about 4.5 hours, and to Sydney/Melbourne about 5.5 to 6 hours.

MAP OF BALI:



GEOGRAPHY:

The island of Bali has an area of only 5,632 square kilometers (2,175 square miles) and measures just 55 miles (90 kilometers) along the north-south axis and less than about 90 miles (140 kilometers) from East to West. Because of this it's no problem to explore the island on day tours. You can go wherever you want on the island and return to your hotel or villa in the evening.

Located only two kilometers east of Jawa, Bali's climate, flora and fauna are quite similar to its much larger neighbour. The island is famous for its beautiful landscape. A chain of six volcanoes, between 1,350 meters and 3,014 meters high, stretches from west to east. There are lush tropical forests, pristine crater lakes, fast flowing rivers and deep ravines, picturesque rice terraces, and fertile vegetable and fruit gardens. The beaches in the South consist of white sand, beaches in other parts of the island are covered with gray or black volcanic sand.

FLORA:

The wide variety of tropical plants is surprising. You'll see huge banyan trees in villages and temple grounds, tamarind trees in the North, clove trees in the highlands, acacia trees, flame trees, and mangroves in the South. In Bali grow a dozen species of coconut palms and even more varieties of bamboo.

And there are flowers, flowers everywhere. You'll see (and smell the fragrance of) hibiscus, bougainvillea, jasmine, and water lilies. Magnolia, frangipani, and a variety of orchids are found in many front yards and gardens, along roads, and in temple grounds. Flowers are also used as decorations in temples, on statues, as offerings for the gods, and during prayers. Dancers wear blossoms in their crowns, and even the flower behind the ear of your waitress seems natural in Bali.

FAUNA:

Elephants and tigers don't exist any more in Bali since early this century. Wildlife, however, includes various species of monkeys, civets, barking deer and mouse deer, and 300 species of birds including wild fowl, dollar birds, blue kingfishers, sea eagles, sandpipers, white herons and egrets, cuckoos, wood swallows, sparrows, and starlings. You can watch schools of dolphins near Lovina, Candi Dasa, and Padangbai. Divers will see many colorful coral fish and small reef fish, moray eels, and plankton eating whale sharks as well as crustaceans, sponges, and colorful coral along the east coast and around Menjangan Island near Gilimanuk.

CLIMATE:

You can expect pleasant day temperatures between 20 to 33 degrees Celsius or 68 to 93 degrees Fahrenheit year-round. From December to March, the West monsoon can bring heavy showers and high humidity, but usually days are sunny and the rains start during the night and pass quickly. From June to September the humidity is low, and it can be quite cool in the evenings. During this time of the year, you'll have hardly any rain in the coastal areas. Even when it rains in most parts of Bali you can often enjoy sunny days on the "Bukit", the hill south of Jimbaran Beach. On the other hand, in Ubud and the mountains you must expect cloudy skies and showers throughout the year (this is why the international weather reports for "Denpasar" or "Bali" mention showers and rain storms during all times of the year). In higher regions such as in Bedugul or Kintamani you'll also need either a sweater or jacket after the sun sets.

POPULATION:

Bali's population has grown to over 3 million people the overwhelming majority of which are Hindus. However, the number of Muslims is steadily increasing through immigration of people

from Java, Lombok and other areas of Indonesia who seek work in Bali.

Most people live in the coastal areas in the South, and the island's largest town and administrative center is fast growing Denpasar with a population of now over 370,000. The villages between the town of Ubud and Denpasar, Kuta (including Jimbaran, Tuban, and Legian, Seminyak, Basangkasa, etc), Sanur, and Nusa Dua are spreading rapidly in all directions, and before long the whole area from Ubud in the North to Sanur in the East, Berawa/Canggu in the West, and Nusa Dua in the South will be urbanized.

WHAT MAKES BALI SO SPECIAL:

There is the combination of the friendly people, the natural attractions, the great variety of things to see and do, the year-round pleasant climate, and the absence of security problems. And then there is Bali's special "magic", which is difficult to explain.

As soon as you step off the plane you might sense the difference. In the villages you'll notice the quietness and wisdom in old people's faces, and the interest and respect in the young's. Old men sit at the road side caressing their fighting cocks. Beautifully dressed women walk proudly through rice fields and forests carrying offerings on their heads to the next temple. There is the smell of flowers, and in the distance you hear the sound of gamelan music.

Gods and spirits have been an important part of Bali's daily life for hundreds of years. Gunung Agung – Bali's holy mountain – is internationally regarded as one of the eight "Chakra" points of the world. This may be more than a coincident. Watch out, the moment you feel the magic of this island, you're addicted for the rest of your life.

VISA REGULATIONS

The government of Indonesia has changed its visa policy for foreign tourists effective February 1st, 2004.

Visiting Indonesia Without Any Visa

Entering Indonesia without any visa is possible now only for nationals of the following 11 countries and territories: **Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Hong Kong, Macau, Malaysia, Morocco, Peru, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.**

Citizens of the above countries will be issued on arrival a stay permit for 30 days free of charge upon presentation of a passport which is valid at least for another 6 months. This stay permit cannot be extended or converted into another type of visa.

VISA on ARRIVAL (VOA)

This facility is available for nationals of the following countries: **Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, People's Republic of China, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States of America.**

Citizens of these countries will be able to apply for a VOA valid for either 7 or 30 days upon arrival by air in Bali, Jakarta and a few other international airports or by ship at a limited number of Indonesian sea ports. A 7-day visa costs US\$10 and a 30-day visa costs US\$25.

The VOA cannot be extended or converted into any other kind of visa. Also be aware that Immigration officials calculate the 30-day period as follows: your arrival day is counted as your first day, and you must leave the country on the 30th. Day!

How to Obtain the "VISA on ARRIVAL" (VOA)

Travelers from the above countries must be in possession of a passport which is valid for at least 6 months from the date of arrival and the completed embarkation/disembarkation card they received from their airline. They must also be able to prove they have sufficient funds for their stay in Indonesia.

Arriving travelers with Visa-On-Arrival status have to go first to one of the 'VOA Counters' to pay the appropriate fee and have their passports stamped with the VOA before proceeding to the Immigration Clearance Desk. An official bank is part of the VOA service counters. Payment of visa fees can only be made in US dollar bank notes, Indonesian Rupiah equivalent or by VISA or MASTERCARD.

BALI TOURS

What You Can See & Do in Bali, Indonesia

Bali's natural attractions include miles of sandy beaches (many are well-known amongst surfers), picturesque rice terraces, towering active volcanoes over 3,000 meters (10,000 ft.) high, fast flowing rivers, deep ravines, pristine crater lakes, sacred caves, and lush tropical forests full of exotic wildlife.

The island's rich cultural heritage is visible everywhere - in over 20,000 temples and palaces, in many colorful festivals and ceremonies (including tooth filings and cremations), in drama, music, and dance.

You can experience Bali on many different excursions and guided tours by coach, private car or "Big Bike", by boat or **by air plane**: seeing Bali's beaches and rice terraces, the famous Besakih Temple on the slopes of holy Mount Agung, Lake Batur and it's active volcano, Ubud, Legian, Kuta, Nusa Dua, and the temples of Tanah Lot and Ulu Watu from a helicopter is a really special experience. For helicopter tours and private charters (3 to 6 passengers) please contact the Balivillas.com Service Center at 703-060 as soon as you arrive.

Most full day tours by car (about 8 to 10 hours) cost about US\$40 to US\$60 per person, half day tours US\$25 to US\$35. These prices include a multi-lingual guide and transport in an air-conditioned private car, all entrance fees, but no meals. Which guide and driver you choose can make or break your day: be warned that those who offer very low prices tend to waste your time by showing you hardly any more than those shops which pay them a commission on your purchases.

Star Holiday Mart Pte Ltd

30 Duxton Road, Singapore 089494

Email: michael@starmart.com.sg, outbound@starmart.com.sg, outbound2@starmart.com.sg

Tel: (65) 6226 1179

Fax: (65) 6226 2776

Hunting Tel: (65) 6735 9009

Website: www.starmart.com.sg