

About Bali

The area of the island is only **5,632 sq km** in total, Day trips around the island are possible but I do not recommend this idea to anyone. The island measures approximately 150kms from east to west and spans 112kms from north to south.

Bali is famous for its beautiful landscape, which includes **six volcanoes** varying in height from **1350 meters to 3014 meters**, stretching from east to west.

I recommend at least one tour to any of these four suggestions. **Ubud** 35km northeast, **Uluwatu** about 20km southwest, **Candi Dasa** 75km to the east or a tour to the volcano at **Kintamani**. All four would be ideal if it is affordable and if time allows.

Once you have made the effort, you will be **rewarded** with seeing lush tropical forests, pristine lakes, fast flowing rivers, deep ravines, picturesque rice terraces and fertile fruit and vegetable growing areas. You will also notice beaches to the south consist of white sand and are gray or black volcanic sand in other parts of the island.

A large quantity of **rice** is grown on the island and is the staple diet of the Balinese people. Rice is also a major export, however in recent years tourism has overtaken agriculture as Bali's main source of income.

The climate is one very good reason why so many people flock to Bali and especially if it is cold, raining and downright miserable at home. Bali's climate is subject to a **monsoon** pattern, which means a

seasonal reversal of wind direction as summer and winter fluctuate in the north and south hemispheres.

This results in a wet season beginning **November-March**, due to moist air sweeping across the Indian Ocean. The flow is reversed from **April-October** as dry air is blown in from deserts in Australia resulting in intermittent rainfall.

Most Indonesians are **Islamic**, however Bali has retained its own unique form of **Hinduism**. During your visit, you will be delighted and amazed with the never ending colourful ceremonies and daily rituals performed by these wonderful people.

The population of Bali is in excess of three million people with the majority being **Hindus**. In addition to the number of local inhabitants, two and a half million tourists visited Bali during 2010. This number equates to an average of approximately **seven** thousand tourists arriving daily from all over the world.

In a nut-shell, the combination of some of the friendliest people on the planet, the fantastic natural attractions, the long list of things to see and do plus the fabulous year round climate, makes Bali a very special place indeed.

With weather permitting, every Sunday late afternoon and evening is beach time for young Balinese and their families. This is a sight not to be missed at Kuta and Legian beaches. Activities include kite flying, soccer, racket ball, volley ball and fishing. You will see hundreds of motorbikes lined up and hundreds of people on the beach enjoying themselves. After sunset they start heading home in all directions.

I sincerely hope you make the effort to explore some of the islands many treasures in the event you become bored from lazing around a pool everyday. The area of the island is only **5,632 sq km** in total, Day trips around the island are possible but I do not recommend this idea to anyone. The island measures approximately 150kms from east to west and spans 112kms from north to south.

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Landing in Bali

On approaching Bali's coast from the southwest for landing at **Ngurah Rai airport**, you will see to the right of the plane Jimbaran Bay, Dreamworld surf beach, Padang-Padang surf beach and the very well known Uluwatu surf beach.

To the left of the plane you will see Tuban, Kuta, Legian, Seminyak, Kerobokan and Canggu surf beach. The nose of the plane points towards Sanur, Nusa Dua and Benoa Harbour in the east. Candi Dasa is on the northeastern coast. By the way, any word that begins with (c) is pronounced with a (ch) sound, Candi Dasa and Canggu as examples become Chandi Dasa and Changgu.

The most densely populated and busiest area you can see out of the left side of the plane is Tuban and Kuta. You will be amazed with what goes on here almost twentyfour hours of every day.

Legian is the next one along and is **quieter** by comparison but caters well for a large number of accommodation choices, restaurants and shopping.

Seminyak is the "in place" at the moment so it appears, and was once a closely guarded secret of Europeans and expats wanting to distance themselves from noisy tourists from around the world.

Seminyak is now taking on a completely different look, with lots of tourists invading this area. Oh well, nothing lasts forever, does it?

The attraction in Seminyak is the nightlife, number of wonderful restaurants, villas, shopping and the beach. You really do need to make the effort to explore this area by day and night. The whole area

takes on a different look at night for the better and in particular **Jl Laksmana** and **Jl Oberoi**.

Back on the other side of the airport is **Jimbaran Bay**, a delightful beachside development of villas and hotels of a very high standard.

During your stay in Bali you should spend a few hours touring **Sanur, Benoa Harbour, Nusa Dua and Jimbaran**. They are well worth looking at and are very different from the Kuta side. Private transport is the way to go and you will have a good look around for a few hours costing about Rp350000 or \$7.00 per head for six people.

Although there are a number of other beautiful areas around the island, what I have covered here is a brief explanation of where all the action is, which attracts us to the island and what I believe are things of most interest for **first time visitors to the island**.

I hope you enjoy checking out all these areas over time, as much as I have.

Bali Currency

The everyday currency used in Bali is the Indonesian Rupiah, however most hotels and villas quote in American dollars. Restaurants and accommodation accounts show at the bottom of their accounts an additional charge from 15% up to 21% covering service fees and government tax

Some handy tips to remember:

- For credit card protection you should ring your credit card provider to advise them you will be in Bali for whatever period you plan to stay, just incase of loss or if you become the victim of a scam. Unfortunately scams can and do happen.
- Limit the number of times you carry your credit card with you.
- Always be aware of the common thief. A thief starts at an early age in Bali so beware of friendly smiling young kids in crowded places.
- Limit the amount of cash you carry on a daily basis. It's a good idea to split up all of your money and documents while travelling to avoid the possibility of loosing everything at the same time.
- Use the money changer I have recommended until you are confident with someone else
- The currency used in Bali is Indonesian Rupiah.
- Try to have a budget and stick to it.
- Remember you are a wealthy person in the eyes of the locals so don't flash your money or expensive jewellery around in front of them because you will be relieved of it if you give them the opportunity.

- Take a small calculator or money converter
- You will need a note book and pen.
- Be aware of the RP100000 note and RP10000 note. To a beginner they look very similar and they are, so be alert. Recently, a new RP10000 has been released and has more of a grey tone but there are many of the originals still in circulation.
- Always count your money after you have exchanged your currency.

Hygiene and Food

- Do not use local water to clean your teeth. Use **bottled** water for your **teeth** and also for **cleaning** the brush.
- Germs can be passed on through the lack of **hygiene** at some basic restaurants, unwashed hands, poor methods of washing plates, utensils and drinking glasses or cups. Other causes can come from bad management of meat, fish, chicken or drinking a glass of Bali water.
- All of the **recommended** restaurants with possibly the exception of some warungs in this book have their ice made from bottled spring water but you should ask the question to be really sure and in particular at a warung.
- **Spicy** food is something children should avoid anyway but sometimes adults over indulge and pay the price.
- Because you are on holiday you may tend to overeat with lots of **tropical** fruit and big **spicy** meals, which is far from the norm at home. With moderation of your food intake and drinking habits you should be fine.

Be Prepared

- Drink plenty of bottled water. Don't sip it gulp it.
- Remember if in the event of sickness or an accident you should contact the **Bali International Medical Centre**, situated near the traffic roundabout on the bypass Road in Kuta.
Phone (+62 361) 761263.

- Take good quality **slip slop slap** (sun protection) and wear a hat in the middle of the day around a pool or on the beach.
- Bali dogs run loose and can be rather intimidating at times. The best tip I can give you is to ignore them and avoid eye contact should the dog become angry because you are near their territory. Don't ever run, just walk on. In most cases, the dog will get sick of that and waddle off.
- **Rabies** has been rife in some parts of Bali so if you are unfortunate to be nipped, go to the **Bali international centre** immediately for treatment.
- If you experience **Bali belly** go to your nearest pharmacy and ask for **Imodium** or their recommendation.
- **Aqua ear** and **eardrops** are good to have on hand in the event you have a problem from swimming in the pools. Also **eye drops** if you suffer from dry eyes caused from wind and glare. An **alcohol** based hand cleanser is also a must.
- In the event you have an open wound treat it **immediately**.
- Personal **hygiene** is very important and it is good advise to wash your hands **regularly** and also to apply a hand cleanser after washing.
- Clean your teeth and the brush with **bottled water**.
- Take an effective **mosquito** repellent.

Children's Clothes

For all things kids, you will be delighted with what you will have a choice of in any of the following suggestions.

Reena, the owner of Kahuna surf kids is a long time friend of our family. You will be pleasantly surprised with her range of kids clothing. **Kahuna surf kids**, Jl Raya Seminyak. Tel 7473940

Jellyfish. Jl. Laksmana, no 2b Seminyak.

Dandelion. Jl. Raya Basangkasa no 28 Seminyak. Ph 730375

Kuta kids. Bemo Corner Kuta ph 755810

Kidsagogo, JlKayu Aya N0 29 Seminyak. Tel 736651

Indigo kids, Jl Pantai, Kuta opposite Warung Made and also Jl Melasti,Legian and also Jl Seminyak, Seminyak.

Important

- **Never** carry a handbag or shopping bag on your shoulder or in your hand while walking on the outside of a footpath alongside a busy Road like Jl. Legian, Jl. Seminyak or Jl. Raya. If you do, you could be relieved of it very quickly by two people on a motorbike. Bag snatching is becoming more common but is not a problem if you carry your bag or bags against the wall or shop front.
- Don't rush out and start spending on your first day because it could cost you **three** times more if you are not alert to this possibility.
- Be aware of what you can and cannot take back to your country of origin regarding **souviners, food, nuts and fruit.**

Family Friends

It is my pleasure to share with you some of my families Bali friends, who would love to meet you. These people have helped make our Bali visits over the years far more enjoyable than they may have been at times. I am sure you will agree with this in time should you care to meet them. Tell them Mike, Anne, Kate and Simone recommended their services to you in this guidebook for a hassle free experience.

Ketut Tamba best known as Charlie is a **local tour guide** with a modern and always clean vehicle. I have also mentioned Charlie and my relationship with him in more detail under the heading of **Transport**. I have known Charlie and his family for over twenty five years and he is my favourite driver. I personally **recommend** Charlie above all others. Mob 08155792272.

Romy and Jag Hasari – Watches, Sunglasses & Wallets

When I first met Romy twenty seven years ago, he was a small shy ten year old in a group of about eight young kids selling **copy** wrist watches outside of where the Padmar Hotel now stands.

Today, Romy is a married man with a family and successfully runs his own **copy watch and bag business** in Garlic Lane, located between Jl. Padmar and Jl. Melasti

Romy and his brother Jag also sell a big range of **sunglasses, wallets and reading glasses**. Expect to pay from RP60000 up to RP400000 for some watches and around RP35000 for sunnies.

Romy is **located at no 6 Garlic Lane**, situated between Jl Padmar and Jl Melasti. Phone 081338547657.

By the way, you will find the lane interesting with restaurants, bars and lots of market type shops to keep you busy. **Billy's bar**, serving Bali's best cold beer is a must for any bored husbands with a dry throat. The ladies will also be equally happy with this arrangement of parking you somewhere convenient, while they carry on shopping close by.

Made – Putri Clothing Shop.

If you are interested in **cheap clothes** from the market shops, here is a name to follow up if you would rather *not* barter. Made's (pronounced Marday) small shop is located in the mini market area of Legian at the beachside corner of **Garlic Lane and Jl.Malesti**. I have known Made and her husband, Nyoman and family for about twenty five years.

You are certain to love Made with her big lovely friendly face and obliging and honest character. Made's shop is more **suited** to young adults and mums wanting to clothe growing children with **beachwear** and anything summer. **Contact Made** mob phone. 08123912481 or local number for her shop phone 759847 for directions or just wander through the maze of small shops and ask for Made. If you are not able to locate Made, my friends **Romy** or **KetutTamba** (Charlie) will help you.