

NATURAL BALI

Bedugul cool mountain air and lush green forests

Travelling north into the centre of the island, Bali's level coastal landscapes give way to dramatic mountain scenery. Forest-clad volcanoes dominate gorges carved by fast flowing rivers. Bedugul town is the starting point for exploring this area of great natural beauty where three towering mountains – Pohon, Lesong and Catur – loom over three crater lakes – Bratan, Buyan and Tamblingan. The altitude is over 700 metres with the tallest peaks above 2,000 metres so while it's steamy on the coast, it can be comparatively chilly here. The fresh climate led to the development of the Bali Botanical Gardens, which opened in 1959 and are now the largest in Indonesia with specimens including orchids, roses, medicinal plants and palm trees. It is also the source of many of the delicious fruits and vegetables you will see in many of the markets scattered throughout Bali.



JATI LUWIH



COFFE PLANTATION



BALI BOTANICAL GARDEN



PURA ULUN DANU



TAMAN AYUN TEMPLE



PURA TANAH LOT

ROYAL BALI

Karangasem the beginnings of Balinese royalty

The royal families of east Bali first emerged in the mid-1300s when rulers from Java's Majapahit Empire asked a priest to help bring the Balinese into line. The priest sent his grandson who established a court on the east coast, known as the Karangasem kingdom. After his descendants moved their palace to Klungkung, the dynasty became regarded as the island's highest royal authority. However, in 1908 in a protest against Dutch colonization, the royal family committed 'puputan,' a mass ritual suicide. The surviving members of the family were exiled and their palaces mostly destroyed. The Dutch invasions triggered an international uproar, which ironically, led to the island opening to tourism, contributing to the preservation of Bali's culture and the return of the royal family.



THE KERTAGOSA PAVILION



GOA LAWAH



VIRGIN BEACH



TIRTA GANGGA



TAMAN UJUNG



BUKIT ASAH

NATURAL BALI

Kintamani scaling Bali heights

The northern regions of Bali were sculpted by their fierce geological formation as part of the Pacific Rim of Fire. Mount Batur, in the north-east is an active volcano that has erupted around 24 times since 1800. The eruptions affect the villages that nestle above the caldera lake – Kintamani, Penelokan and Batur – and Toya Bungkah village, which sits right on the lake edge. Life in the area revolves around the mountain activity and often involves moving buildings like temples and altars, repairing the village and changing traditions. Lake Batur in the crater is the biggest lake in Bali and provides water to all the surrounding farms and villages. At about 1,500m above sea level, the vistas are a mecca if you are a photographer and nature lover.



TEGALALANG VILLAGE



BANGLI COFFE PLANTATION



KINTAMANI



PURA ULUN DANU BATUR



TOYA BUNGKAH



TIRTA EMPUL

ANCIENT BALI

Penglipuran a traditional Balinese village

High in the cool mountains of Bangli Regency is a small hidden village of just 700 or so residents who live their lives much as they did centuries ago. The village name is thought to derive from Pengeling Pura, meaning to remember an ancestor. In former times, Bali's kings were said to visit here, as the beautiful environment was peaceful and inspirational. Historical records also suggest that the name meant 'entertainer', another attraction for the royal families. The village is a rare find due to the style of its architecture – long tidy rows of houses lie opposite each other. They are small but tall with thatched roofs and are orientated towards the northeast and mighty Mount Agung. Each house is equal in size and form and each is approached through a traditional entrance gate. The village is also known for its 75-hectare bamboo forest, which is cared for by a community whose philosophy is dedicated to respecting the land.



TUKAD CEPUNG



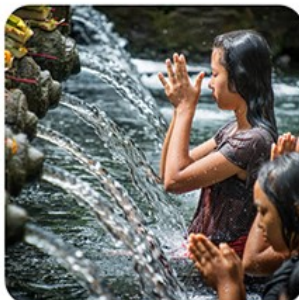
PURA KEHEN



PENGLIPURAN



KINTAMANI



TIRTA EMPUL



GUA GAJAH

NATURAL BALI

Tanah Lot sunset over an iconic landmark

Without doubt, one of Bali's most famous temples, a visit to Tanah Lot is an unmissable experience. Perched on a rocky outcrop and surrounded on all sides by the Indian Ocean surf, this temple is both a dramatic spectacle and a place of scared pilgrimage to the Balinese. The temple dates back to the 15th Century and is said to be the work of revered Hindu priest, Nirartha. The temple is only accessible at low tide but the views from the opposite shore leave an indelible impression in your memory, especially at sunset when the dying rays of light throw the building into a stark silhouette against an orange sky.



TAMAN AYUN ROYAL TEMPLE



ALAS KEDATON



TANAH LOT

ANCIENT BALI

Tenganan home to the indigenous Bali Aga people

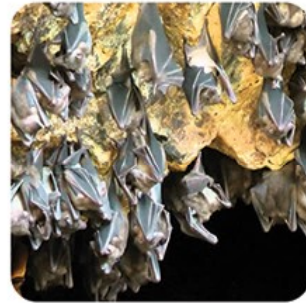
The first known occupants of Bali were a unique ethnic group known to file and blacken their teeth. They lived in clans ruled by a council of elders who also acted as priests. They worshipped the forces of nature and the power of their dead family ancestors. The descendants of these people call themselves Bali Aga, meaning original Balinese. Tenganan in East Bali is home to the most conservative of the remaining Bali Aga. Ancient traditions are fiercely guarded and the village remains isolated socially and economically from the rest of the island. A stone wall encloses Tenganan with houses arranged in rows on each side of paved avenues. The village operates as a commune in which individual ownership of property is not recognized.



LEMPUYANG TEMPLE



THE KERTAGOSA PAVILION



GOA LAWAH



TENGANAN VILLAGE



TAMAN UJUNG



TIRTA GANGGA

SPIRITUAL BALI

Tirta Yatra a ritual journey and a tragic love story

The concept of the Tirtha Yatra pilgrimage involves visiting temples or sacred sites to find redemption from sin. The Hindu priest will explain the rituals to visitors who must wear a traditional sash and sarong inside the temple. To symbolize purification, the priest supplies water to drink and wash with and will offer a bottle of sacred water to take back to the family temple as an offering. A pilgrimage of a different kind is to the Jaya Prana Grave, one of the most famous legends in Bali. Jaya Prana was in love with Layon Sari. One day the king of Singaraja heard of Layon Sari's beauty and wanted her as his wife. He instructed a servant to kill Jaya Prana but when Layon Sari found out, she committed suicide.



RAMBUT SIWI TEMPLE



THE JAYA PRANA GRAVE



MELANTING TEMPLE



PULAKI TEMPLE

ARTISTIC BALI

Ubud the cultural heart of the island

The beautiful town of Ubud is regarded as the cultural heart of Bali, the centre for fine arts and crafts, traditional dance and music, ancient architecture and modern museums. Nestling in the foothills of the mountains, Ubud is full of countless shops and art galleries, which demonstrate the skills of the Balinese people. The road that leads from to the coast passes through a series small villages, each specializing in the production of a particular art or craft. Exquisite carvings, paintings and other works of art line the roadside making the journey feel like it is passing through an outdoor art gallery.



BARONG DANCE



TOHPATI BATIK



BATUAN



CELUK VILLAGE



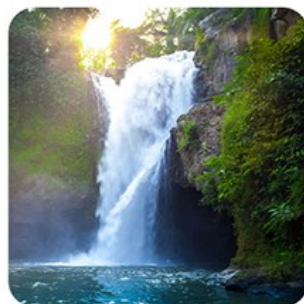
MAS



TEGALALANG



MONKEY FOREST



TEGENUNGAN WATERFALL



UBUD MARKET

ROYAL BALI

Ubud Bali royalty past and present

The history of Bali's royal ruling families goes as far back as the 10th century but it wasn't until the 1300's that they became historically renown. In 1343, the Majapahit Empire took hold after the Javanese king defeated the Balinese king. Their rule marked the arrival of Javanese Hindu culture, which is still evident today in architecture, the arts, literature, dance and the theatre. A few Balinese villages remained aloof from this change, however, with the rise of Islam across Indonesia, the Majapahit Empire finally fell and Bali became independent at the end of the 15th century. Many of the Javanese aristocracy and key members of the creative society took refuge on the island and the period became known as Bali's Golden Age.



GUA GAJAH TEMPLE



TIRTA EMPUL



BATUAN



UBUD ROYAL PALACE



GUNUNG KAWI



MONKEY FOREST



UBUD ART MARKET



TEGALALANG VILLAGE



COFFEE LUWAK