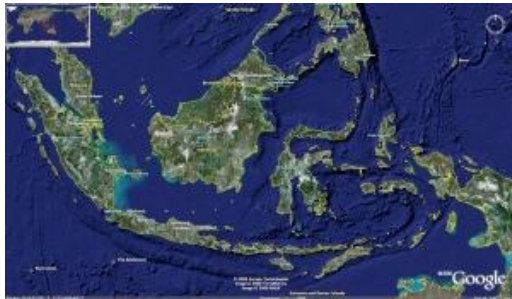




## Indonesian Embassy, Rome

### FASCINATING INDONESIA

Indonesia, which is located in South East Asia, is the world's largest archipelago with 17,508 islands. Across its many islands, distinct ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups develop a shared identity defined by a national language. Indonesia's national motto, "Unity in Diversity" means *literally*, "many, yet one". Despite its large population and densely populated regions, Indonesia has vast areas of wilderness that make it the world's second richest biodiversity. Besides, the country is richly endowed with natural resources.



Indonesia's natural heritages can boast a unique combination of a vast archipelago with the second longest shoreline in the world, and a tropical climate. The beaches in Bali, diving sites in Bunaken, and various national parks in Sumatra are just a few examples of popular scenic destinations. These natural attractions are complemented by a rich cultural heritage that reflects Indonesia's dynamic history and ethnic diversity. One fact that exemplifies this richness is that over 700 languages are used across the archipelago. The ancient Prambanan and Borobudur temples, Toraja, Yogyakarta, Minangkabau, and of course Bali, with its many Hindu festivities, are some of the popular destinations for unique cultural tourism.

Indonesia has largely tropical destinations with white sand beaches, blue sky, and cultural attractions. Beach resorts and hotels have been developed in some popular tourist destinations. At the same time, cultural tourism is considered as an integral part of Indonesia's tourism industry.

### Nature Eco-Tourism

Indonesia has a well-preserved, natural ecosystem, such as rainforests that stretch over about 57% of Indonesia's land (225 million acres) and about 2% of them are mangrove. One reason why the natural ecosystem in Indonesia is still well-preserved is because only 6,000 islands out of 17,000 are permanently inhabited. Forests in Sumatra and Java are examples of popular tourist destinations. Moreover, Indonesia's coastlines measuring 54,716 kilometres (33,999 mi), offer a number of world's exotic beaches and island resorts, such as those in southern Bali, Lombok, Bintan and Nias Island, Karimunjawa, the Togian Islands, and the Banda Islands.



### Dive sites

With more than 17,000 islands, Indonesia presents unlimited diving opportunities. Bunaken, at the northern tip of Sulawesi, claims to have seven times more genera of coral than Hawaii, and has more than 70% of all the known fish species of the Indo-Western Pacific.



There are over 3,500 species living in Indonesian waters, including sharks, dolphins, manta rays, turtles, morays, cuttlefish, octopus and scorpionfish, compared to 1,500 on the Great Barrier Reef and 600 in the Red Sea.



Other popular dive sites in Bali are at Candidasa and Menjangan. Across the Badung Strait from Bali, there are several popular dive sites on Nusa Lembongan and Nusa Penida. Lombok's three Gilis (Gili Air, Gili Meno and Gili Trawangan) are popular as Bangka. Other most famous diving sites in Indonesia are Biak off the coast of Papua and the Alor Archipelago, more remote, destinations for divers.

### Surf breaks

Surfing is also a popular water activity in Indonesia and the sites are recognized as the world class. The well-known spots are mostly located on the southern, Indian Ocean side of Indonesia, for example, the large oceanic surf breaks on southern Java.

Surf breaks can be found all the way along Sumatra, down to Nusa Tenggara, including Aceh, Bali, Banten, Java, Lombok, the Mentawai Islands, and Sumbawa. In Bali, there are about 33 surf spots, from West Bali to East Bali including four on the offshore island of Nusa Lembongan. Sumatra is the second island with the most number of surf spots, 18 altogether. The common time for surfing is around May to September with the trade winds blowing from east to south-east. From October to April, winds tend to come from the west to north-west, so the east coast breaks get the offshore winds.



Two well-known surf breaks in Indonesia are the G-Land in the Bay of Grajagan, East Java, and Lagundri Bay at the southern end of Nias island. G-Land was first identified in 1972, when a surfer saw the break from the window of a plane. Since 6 to 8 foot (Hawaiian scale) waves were

discovered by surfers at Lagundri Bay in 1975, the island has become famous worldwide for surfing.

### National parks

There are 50 national parks in Indonesia, of which six are the World Heritage listed. The largest national parks in Sumatra are the 9,500-square-kilometre (3,700 sq mi) Gunung Leuser National Park, the 13,750-square-kilometre (5,310 sq mi) Kerinci Seblat National Park and the 3,568-square-kilometre (1,378 sq mi) Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park, all three recognised as Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Other national parks on the list are Lorentz National Park in Papua, Komodo National Park in the Lesser Sunda Islands, and Ujung Kulon National Park in the west of Java.



To be noticed, different national parks offer different biodiversity, as the natural habitat in Indonesia is divided into two areas by the Wallace line. The Wallacea biogeographically distinction means the western part of Indonesia (Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan) have the same flora and fauna characteristics as the Asian continent, whilst the remaining eastern part of Indonesia has similarity with the Australian continent.

Many native species listed as endangered such as Sumatran elephants, Sumatran tigers, Sumatran rhinoceros, Javan rhinoceros and Orangutans are found in national parks and other conservation areas. Orangutans can be visited in the Bukit Lawang conservation area. The world's largest flower, rafflesia arnoldi, and the tallest flower, titan arum, can be found in Sumatra.

The east side of the Wallacea line offers the most remarkable, rarest, and exotic animals on earth. Birds of Paradise, locally known as *cenderawasih*, are plumed birds that can be found among other fauna in Papua. The largest bird in Papua is the flightless cassowary. One species of lizard, the Komodo dragon can easily be found on Komodo Island, located in the Nusa Tenggara lesser islands region. This endangered species can also be found on the islands of Rintja, Padar and Flores.



### Cultural tourism

Indonesia consists of at least 300 ethnic groups, spread over a 1.8 million km<sup>2</sup> area of 6,000 inhabited islands. This creates a cultural diversity, further compounded by Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and European colonial influences.

From the 3rd century until the 13th century, Hinduism and Buddhism shaped the culture of Indonesia. The best-preserved Buddhist shrine, which was built during the Sailendra dynasty in the 8th century, is Borobudur temple in Central Java. A few kilometers to the southeast is the Prambanan complex, a Hindu temple built during the second Mataram dynasty. Both the Borobudur and the Prambanan temple compounds have been listed in the UNESCO World Heritage list since 1991. In Bali, where most Hindus live, cultural festivals are major attractions to foreign tourists.



Islam has also contributed greatly to the cultural society in Indonesia. As of March 2010, about 88% of Indonesians are Muslim. Islamic culture is prominent in Sumatra, and a few of the remaining sultanate palaces can be seen in Medan and Pekanbaru.

Despite foreign influences, a diverse array of indigenous traditional cultures is still evident in Indonesia. The indigenous ethnic group of Toraja in South Sulawesi, which still has strong animistic beliefs, offers a unique cultural tradition, especially during funeral rituals. The Minangkabau ethnic group retain a unique matrilineal culture, despite being

devoted Muslims. Other indigenous ethnic groups include the Asmat and Dani in Papua, the Dayak in Kalimantan and the Mentawai in Sumatra, where traditional rituals are still observed.



Cultural tourism is not complete without Yogyakarta, a special province in Indonesia known as centre of the classical Javanese fine art and culture. The rise and fall of Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic kingdoms in Central Java has transformed Yogyakarta into a melting pot of Indonesian culture.

### Volcanoes

Hiking and camping in the mountains are popular adventure activities. Some mountains contain ridge rivers, offering rafting activity. Though volcanic mountains can be dangerous, they have become major tourist destinations. Popular active volcanoes are the 2,329-metre (7,641 ft) high Mount Bromo in the East Java province with its little desert, the upturned boat shaped Tangkuban Perahu on the outskirts of Bandung, the most active volcano in Java, Mount Merapi and the legendary Krakatau with its new caldera known as *anak Krakatau* (the child of Krakatau). Puncak Jaya in the Lorentz National Park, the highest mountain in Indonesia and the only mountain with ice caps, offers the opportunity of rock climbing. In Sumatra, there are the remains of a supervolcano eruption that have created the landscape of Lake Toba close to Medan in North Sumatra.

### Visa

Citizen of Italy is offered the facility of **TOURIST VISA ON ARRIVAL** for 30 days extendable for another 30 days without leaving the country. The procedure in the airport should not take more than 10 minutes.

Detailed information could be obtained through : [www.my-indonesia.info](http://www.my-indonesia.info) or [www.embassyofindonesia.it](http://www.embassyofindonesia.it) or call the Economic Section or information and cultural section of the Indonesian Embassy in Rome, phone : 39 06 4200911.