

Java



Of all the 17,000 islands that make up Indonesia, Java is king. It may not have the beaches of Bali, the jungles of Kalimantan, or the remoteness of Papua, but it's the heart of the country, a heart with more drive and energy than any other island in this vast archipelago. With 120 million people crammed into an area half the size of Great Britain, Java is one of the most populated places on Earth. And with such unfathomable human resources, it's no wonder that the nation's political and economic past, present and future are decided within its shores. For many, Indonesia quite simply begins and ends with Java.

Jakarta, the capital, is a colossal metropolis with all the problems of a city vastly overstretched; it won't grab your attention for long unless you're a mad shopper or über-urbanite. But the rest of the island has offerings that shouldn't be ignored.

A string of volcanoes lace the island like fiery rubies. Some are docile giants, while others blow their top at the drop of a Javanese fez; Gunung Bromo is a must for any visitor. Pounding the southern coast is the Indian Ocean; a magical sight, but it can be dangerous for swimming. There are, however, some fine beach enclaves, such as Pangandaran, Java's premier beach resort, and world-class surf breaks at Ujung Kulon and Alas Purwo National Parks. Java's calmer northern side hides less-developed tropical islands. Inspired by such natural beauty, and influenced by Hindu-Buddhist, Muslim and Western invaders, the Javanese have over the centuries created temples and *kraton* (palaces) of unique splendour. The Buddhist temple Borobudur is an architectural wonder and its nearby Hindu counterpart, Prambanan, shines almost as brightly. Cultural Yogyakarta and Solo are perfect places to sample Javanese art.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Catching the sunrise at **Borobudur** (p167), Indonesia's eternal Buddhist temple
- Climbing 253 steps to **Bromo's** (p244) summit for unearthly vistas
- Overnighting at a coffee plantation before climbing sulphur-belching **Kawah Ijen** (p249)
- Time-travelling to Java's golden age in the cultural capitals of **Yogyakarta** (p171) and **Solo** (p194)
- Discovering Java's untouched corners at **Ujung Kulon** (p128), **Meru Betiri** (p252), **Alas Purwo** (p261) and **Baluran** (p264) National Parks



- POPULATION: 120 MILLION
- LAND AREA: 132,007 SQ KM
- HIGHEST PEAK: GUNUNG SEMERU (3676M)

HISTORY

Java has a history of epic proportions and a record of human habitation that extends back 1.7 million years to when 'Java Man' (p204) roamed the river banks of Sungai Bengawan Solo in Central Java. Waves of migrants followed, moving down through Southeast Asia.

Early Javanese Kingdoms

The island's exceptional fertility allowed the development of an intensive *sawah* (wet rice) agriculture, which in turn required close cooperation between villages. Out of village alliances, small kingdoms developed, including that of King Purnawarman of Taruma (p134), but the first major principality was that of King Sanjaya, who founded the Mataram kingdom at the beginning of the 8th century. Mataram's religion centred on the Hindu god Shiva, and produced some of Java's earliest Hindu temples on the Dieng Plateau (p165).

The Sailendra dynasty followed, overseeing Buddhism's heyday and the building of Borobudur (p167). But Hinduism and Buddhism continued to coexist and the massive Hindu Prambanan complex (p190) was constructed within a century of Borobudur.

Mataram eventually fell, perhaps at the hands of the Sumatra-based Sriwijaya kingdom, which invaded Java in the 11th century. However, Javanese power began its revival in 1019 under King Airlangga, a semi-legendary figure who formed the first royal link between the island and Bali. Despite his role as a unifier, Airlangga later split the kingdom between his two sons, creating Janggala to the east and Kediri to the west.

It was only a matter of time before the balance of power was to change once again. Early in the 13th century the commoner Ken Angrok usurped the throne of Singosari (a part of the Janggala kingdom), defeated Kediri and brought Janggala under his control. The new kingdom ended in 1292 with the murder of its last king, Kertanegara, but in its short 70 years Javanese culture flourished and some of the island's most striking temples were built (p236). Shivaism and Buddhism evolved during this time into the new religion Shiva-Buddhism, which is still worshipped in Java and Bali today.

Majapahit Kingdom

The fall of the Singosari kingdom made room for one of Java's most famous early kingdoms, the Majapahit kingdom. Ruling from its capital at Trowulan (p226), it established the first Javanese commercial empire by taking control of ports and shipping lanes. Its rulers skilfully brokered trading relations with Cambodia, Siam, Burma and Vietnam – and even sent missions to China – and claimed sovereignty over the entire Indonesian archipelago (which probably amounted to Java, Madura and Bali).

As the Majapahit kingdom went into decline in the late 1300s, Islam moved to fill the vacuum.

Islamic Kingdoms

Islam broke over Java like a wave, converting many among the island's elite, and by the 15th and 16th centuries the Islamic kingdoms such as Demak (p213), Cirebon (p157) and Banten (p121) were on the ascent.

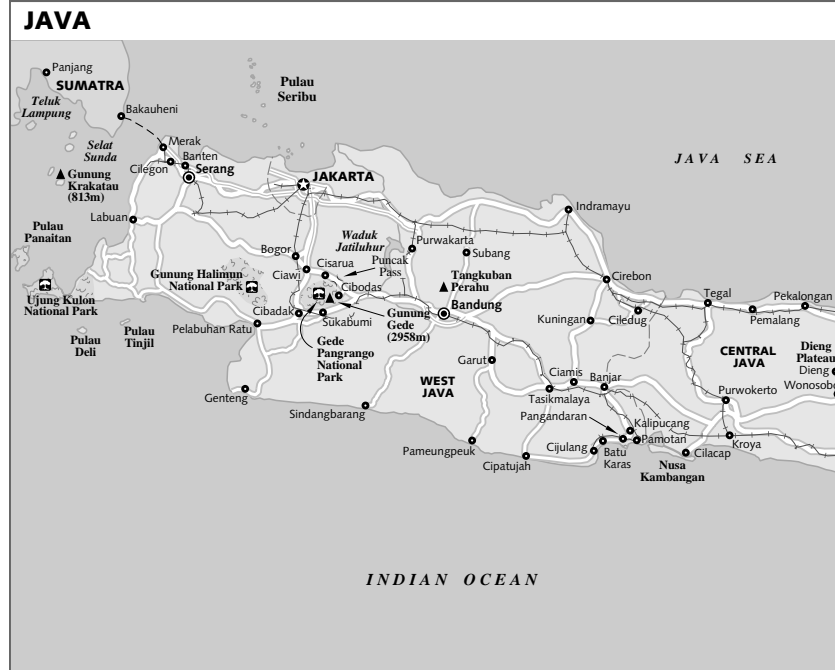
The Muslim state of Demak was the first to make military inroads into Java, raiding much of East Java and forcing many Hindu-Buddhists eastwards to Bali. Some, however, stayed put; the Tengerese people of Bromo (p246) can trace their history back to Majapahit. Soon Demak was flexing its muscles in West Java, and in 1524 it took the port of Banten and then Sunda Kelapa (now Jakarta), before later overrunning Cirebon.

Demak's rule was not to last long. By the end of the 16th century the Muslim kingdom of Mataram (p176) had risen to take control of huge swathes of Central and East Java. Banten still remained independent, however, and grew to become a powerful maritime capital holding sway over much of West Java. By the 17th century, Mataram and Banten were the only two powers in Java left to face the arrival of the Dutch.

Dutch Period

The arrival of the Dutch and their eventual domination of Java is summarised in the History chapter (p38); a snapshot of Javanese resistance to the new invaders (and the royal houses' internal bickering) follows.

As the Dutch set up camp in what was to become Jakarta, Banten remained a powerful ruling house and a harbour for foreign competitors. An impressive trading network was set up under Banten's greatest



ruler, Sultan Agung, but unfortunately civil war within the house led to Dutch intervention and its eventual collapse.

The Mataram kingdom was another matter. As the power of the Dutch grew, the empire began to disintegrate, and by the 18th century infighting was taking its toll. The first two Javanese Wars of Succession were fought but fortunately resolved by the treaty of 1743; the ruler Pakubuwono II was restored to his battered court, but the price of concessions to the colonial power was high.

Obviously needing a fresh start, Pakubuwono II abandoned his old capital at Kartosuro and established a new court at Solo (Surakarta; p194). However, rivalry within the court soon reared its ugly head again, resulting in the Third Javanese War of Succession in 1746. The Dutch rapidly lost patience and split the kingdom in three, creating the royal houses of Solo and Yogyakarta (p172), and the smaller domain of Mangkunegaran (p197) within Solo.

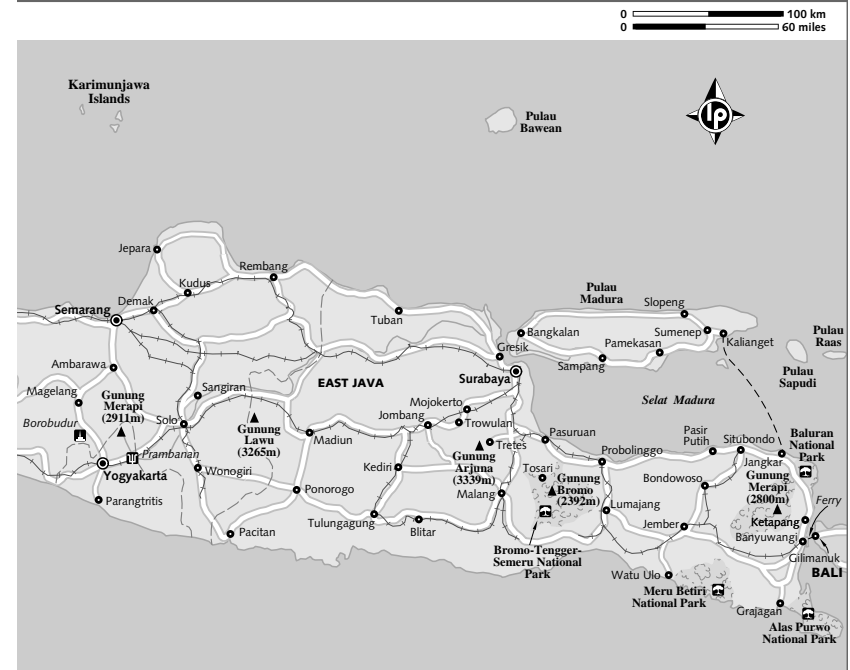
Yogyakarta's founder, Hamengkubuwono I, was a most able ruler, but within 40 years of his death his successor had all but soured

relations with the Dutch and his rivals in Solo. In 1812 European troops, supported by the sultan's ambitious brother and Mangkunegara, plundered the court of Yogyakarta and the sultan was exiled to Penang, to be replaced by his son.

Into this turbulent picture stepped one of the most famous figures of Indonesian history, Prince Pangeran Diponegoro, who subsequently launched the anti-Dutch Java War of 1825–30. At the end of this guerilla war, the Dutch held sway over all the royal courts, which soon became ritual establishments with a Dutch *residen* (head of a residency during colonial administration) exercising control. With no real room or will for political manoeuvre, the courts turned their energies to traditional court ceremonies and artistic patronage, thus creating the rich cultural cities we see today.

Java Today

For Java's, and Indonesia's, struggle for independence from the Dutch and its subsequent growing pains, see the History chapter (p38).



Java still rules the roost when it comes to political and economic life in Indonesia. It has the bulk of the country's industry, is easily the most developed island in Indonesia, and has over the years received the lion's share of foreign investment.

That doesn't mean it comes up smelling of roses, though. The economic crisis of the late '90s hit hard, and huge numbers of urban workers lost their jobs. Rising prices have caused unrest across the island, and disturbances, although sporadic, have remained a constant threat. The year 1998 saw the worst riots in the country's recent history, with Chinese communities targeted in Solo (p194) and Jakarta (p99).

In the current century, terrorist targeting of foreign investments in Jakarta (p99) and the Bali bombings of 2002 and 2005 have left Indonesia's leading island reeling. Tourism is struggling to survive, and the capture of suspected terrorist Muslim cleric Abu Bakar Ba'asyir from a Solo hospital in 2002, and the killing of Jemaah Islamiyah member Azahari Husin in Batu in 2005, has raised questions about the island's links with radical Islam.

But as the seat of government and with the bulk of the nation's resources behind it, Java will also be one of the first islands to recover.

CULTURE

Java has three main ethnic groups, each speaking their own language: the Javanese of Central and East Java; the Sundanese of West Java; and the Madurese from Pulau Madura. In general the Central and East Javanese are more refined than their Maduran cousins, who are known for their blunt, proud demeanour. The Sundanese are a more relaxed people. The divisions, however, are blurred – the Madurese have settled across East Java and further afield, and Indonesians from all over the archipelago have come to seek work in the cities. Smaller pockets of pre-Islamic peoples also remain, and even metropolitan Jakarta identifies its own polyglot tradition in the Betawi, the name for the original inhabitants of the city.

Today, the Javanese are Muslim, and the stronghold of Islam can be found along the

TOP FIVE READS

Armchair travellers and those who like to read up on background knowledge before travelling should consider picking up one or more of the following:

- *Jakarta Inside Out* by Daniel Ziv. A collection of humorous short stories tackling the vibrant underbelly of Indonesia's capital.
- *Krakatoa* by Simon Winchester. An excellent, if a tad exhausting, historical account of the build-up to the largest bang ever recorded on planet Earth.
- *Java Man* by Garniss Curtis, Carl Swisher and Roger Lewin. One of the most thorough offerings on the continuing debate over the prehistoric skulls found in Central Java in 1936.
- *The Religion of Java* by Clifford Geertz. A classic book on Javanese religion, culture and values. It's slightly dated (it was based on research done in the 1950s) but is nonetheless fascinating reading.
- *Javanese Culture* by Koentjaraningrat. One of the most comprehensive studies of Javanese society, history, culture and beliefs. This excellent reference book covers everything from Javanese toilet training to kinship lines.

island's north coast. Though most are *santri* (devout) Muslim, and Java is slowly becoming more orthodox, Javanese culture owes much to pre-Islamic animism and Hinduism. Pockets of Hinduism still survive in East Java; the most well-known group is the Tenggerese of the Bromo area, who are descended from Hindu commoners left behind when the Majapahit elite fled to Bali.

The Javanese cosmos is composed of different levels of belief stemming from older and more accommodating mysticism, the Hindu court culture and a very real belief in ghosts and numerous benevolent and malevolent spirits. Underneath the unifying code of Islam, magic power is concentrated in amulets and heirlooms (especially the Javanese dagger known as the kris), in parts of the human body, such as the nails and the hair, and in sacred musical instruments. The *dukun* (faith healer and herbal doctor or mystic) is still consulted when illness strikes.

Halus (refined) Javanese is part of the Hindu court tradition, which still exists in the heartland of Central Java. In contrast to Islam, the court tradition has a hierarchical world-view, based on privilege and often guided by the gods or nature spirits. Refinement and politeness are highly regarded, and loud displays of emotion and flamboyant behaviour are considered *kasar* (bad manners).

Indirectness is a Javanese trait that stems from an unwillingness to make others feel

uncomfortable. It is impolite to point out mistakes and sensitivities, or to directly criticise authority.

Arts

Javanese culture is a cocktail of pre-Hindu, Hindu and Islamic influences.

WAYANG

Javanese *wayang* (puppet) theatre has been a major way of preserving the Hindu-Buddhist heritage in Java.

Wayang Kulit

Wayang kulit is the art of theatre performances using shadow puppets. Perforated leather figures are manipulated behind an illuminated cotton screen to retell stories, usually based on the Hindu epics the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Unsurprisingly, *wayang kulit* owes much to Indian tradition.

In a traditional performance, a whole night might be devoted to just one *lakon* (drama). Many *wayang kulit* figures and stories have a specific mystical function; certain stories are performed to protect a crop, a village or even individuals.

By the 11th century, *wayang* performances with leather puppets flourished in Java, and by the end of the 18th century *wayang kulit* had developed most of the details we see today. The standardisation of the puppet designs is traditionally attributed to King Raden Patah of Demak, a 16th-century Islamic king.

The creation of a puppet is an art form in itself. First, an outline is cut using a knife, then the fine details are carved out using small chisels and a hammer. When the carving is finished, the movable arms are attached and the puppet is painted. Lines are drawn in and accentuated with black ink before the *centurit*, the stick of horn used to hold the puppet upright, is attached.

The leaf-shaped *kayon* represents the 'tree' or 'mountain of life', and is used to end scenes or to symbolise wind, mountains, obstacles, clouds or the sea.

The characters in *wayang* are brought to life by a single *dalang* (puppeteer), who might manipulate dozens of figures during a performance. The *dalang* must be a lin-

guist, capable of speaking both the language of the audience and the ancient Kawi language of the aristocratic protagonists of the play. He must also be able to reproduce the different voices of the characters, and direct the accompanying gamelan orchestra.

Wayang Golek

Three-dimensional wooden puppets, *wayang golek* have movable heads and arms, and are manipulated in the same way as shadow puppets. They are most popular in West Java.

First used in north-coast towns for Muslim propaganda, *wayang golek* was Islamic in nature and a popular, robust parody of the stylised aristocratic *wayang kulit* play.

MAHABHARATA & RAMAYANA

Ancient India, like ancient Greece, produced two great epics. The Ramayana describes the adventures of a banished prince who wanders for many years in the wilderness, while the Mahabharata is based on the legends of a great war. The first story is reminiscent of *The Odyssey*, which relates the adventures of Odysseus as he struggles to return home from Troy; the second has much in common with *The Iliad*, which deals with the mythical clash between Greeks and Trojans.

When Hinduism came to Java, so did the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The Javanese shifted the locale to Java, Javanese children were named after the protagonists, and the kings of Java became the descendants of the epic heroes.

The Mahabharata and the Ramayana are the basis of the most important *wayang* stories in Java and Bali. Both are essentially morality tales and have played a large part in establishing traditional Javanese values.

Mahabharata

The great war portrayed in the Mahabharata is believed to have been fought in northern India around the 13th or 14th century BC. The war became the focus of legends, songs and poems, which were finally brought together in the 'Epic of the Bharata Nation (India)' – the Mahabharata. Over the following centuries it grew to become seven times the size of *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* combined.

The central theme of the Mahabharata is the power struggle between the Kaurava brothers and their cousins, the Pandavas. After years of intrigue, infighting and exile, the Pandavas conclude that there is no alternative but war and the blood-letting begins.

It is at this time that the Pandava warrior Arjuna becomes despondent at the thought of fighting his own kin, prompting Krishna, his charioteer, to explain the duties of the warrior in the well-known song known as the 'Bhagavad Gita'.

During the course of the war, many of the great heroes from both sides are slain, but it is the Pandavas who prevail as the curtains fall.

Ramayana

The Ramayana, the story of Prince Rama, is thought to have been written after the Mahabharata. Rama is an incarnation of the god Vishnu, and it is his destiny to kill the ogre king Rawana.

Due to scheming in the palace, Rama and his beautiful wife Sita are exiled to the forest, where Sita is abducted by Rawana and carried off to his island kingdom of Lanka.

Rama begins his search for Sita and is joined by the monkey god Hanuman and the monkey king Sugriwa. Eventually a full-scale assault is launched on the evil king and Sita is rescued.

In the early 19th century, a Sundanese prince of Sumedang had a set of wooden puppets made to correspond exactly to the *wayang kulit* puppets of the Javanese courts and was therefore able to perform the Hindu epics.

Wayang golek uses the same stories as the *wayang kulit*, but also has its own set, inspired by Islamic myths.

Sometimes a *wayang golek* puppet is used at the end of a *wayang kulit* play to symbolise the transition back from the world of two dimensions.

Other Wayang

Wayang klitik or *kerucil* is popular in East Java and uses flat wooden puppets carved in low relief. This type of *wayang* is performed without a shadow screen. *Wayang orang* (also known as *wayang wong*) is a dance-drama in which real people dance the part of the *wayang* characters.

Wayang topeng is similar to *wayang orang*, only dancers don masks.

GAMELAN

A gamelan is a traditional orchestra of some 60 to 80 musical instruments, consisting of a large percussion section – which includes bronze 'kettle drums', xylophones, and gongs – accompanied by spike fiddles and bamboo flutes.

The sound produced by a gamelan can range from harmonious to eerie (but always hypnotic), with the tempo and intensity of sound undulating on a regular basis. Expect to hear powerful waves of music one minute and a single instrument holding court the next.

More often than not gamelan music can be heard at *wayang* performances, but gamelan concerts are also quite common throughout Java.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

Jakarta (p116) is Indonesia's busiest entrance point for international airlines and is the best place to shop around for cheap air tickets. Two of the most popular short-hop international connections are the Jakarta–Singapore and Jakarta–Kuala Lumpur runs, which can cost as little as US\$75. Surabaya (p225) has a few international flights, as does Solo (p201).

Sea

Jakarta is the main hub for Pelni passenger ships (see p116) that run all over Indonesia, but no international connections exist. The most direct connection from Singapore is to take a ferry from Singapore to Tanjung Pinang on Pulau Bintan in the Riau archipelago off the Sumatran coast and then take a ship to Jakarta (see p379).

BALI

Ferries run round the clock between Banyuwangi/Ketapang harbour in East Java (p263) and Gilimanuk in Bali. From Ketapang, numerous buses and trains travel to the rest of Java. An easier alternative is to take a through-bus from Denpasar to any major city in Java – these buses include the ferry journey.

SUMATRA

Ferries shuttle between the Javanese port of Merak (p123) and Bakauheni in southern Sumatra, 24 hours a day. From both ports, regular buses head for the main centres of their respective islands. The easy options are the long-distance buses that run from Jakarta (p117) straight through to the main Sumatran destinations such as Medan (48 hours).

The long bus journeys in Sumatra can take their toll, and as most points of interest are in North Sumatra, many travellers prefer to take a Pelni boat.

GETTING AROUND

Most travellers going through Java follow the well-worn route of Jakarta–Bogor–Bandung–Pangandaran–Yogyakarta–Solo–Surabaya–Gunung Bromo, and on to Bali, with short diversions from points along that route.

Air

If time is short, domestic flights can be a good option, but Java is small enough to get around using trains and buses. Plus, by taking land or sea transport you'll be minimising damage to the environment through carbon emission. Flight information is listed throughout the chapter and in the Transport chapter (p869).

Note that Jakarta (p116) is the hub of the domestic airline network.

WAYANG CHARACTERS

The *wayang* characters are often based on figures from the Mahabharata and Ramayana. In the Mahabharata, the Kauravas are essentially the forces of greed and evil, while the Pandavas represent refinement and enlightenment.

At a *wayang* or dance performance the *halus* (refined) characters tend to be smaller and more elegant in proportion; their legs are slender, and their heads are tilted downwards, representing humility. The *kasar* (coarse) characters are often muscular and hairy, with upturned heads.

Colour is also of great significance. Red often indicates aggressiveness, greed or anger. Black and blue indicate calm, spiritual awareness and maturity. Gold and yellow are reserved for the highest nobles and white symbolises virtue.

Mahabharata Characters

Bima is the second-eldest of the Pandavas. He is big, burly and aggressive. He is able to fly and is the most powerful warrior on the battlefield, but he also has infinite kindness and a firm adherence to principle.

The svelte figure of Arjuna is a fitting representative of the noble class, with good looks and a keen sense of virtue. He can be fickle, but he remains *halus* – refined in manner. Arjuna's chariot-ear is Krishna, an incarnation of the god Vishnu, who plays the dual role of spiritual adviser and ruthless, Machiavellian politician.

The dwarf clown Semar is an incarnation of a god. He is a great source of wisdom and advice to Arjuna – but his body is squat with an enormous posterior, bulging belly and a predisposition for explosive farting.

Gareng, Petruk and Bagong are Semar's three sons and are awkward, comic figures. Despite their ungainly appearances, they are the mouthpieces of truth and wisdom.

On the Kaurava side, Duryudana is the handsome, powerful leader, too easily influenced by the evil designs of his uncle, Sangkuni. Karna is actually a Pandava, brought up by the rival family but, adhering to the code of the warrior, he stands by his king and so dies tragically at the hands of Arjuna.

Ramayana Characters

The characters of the Ramayana are a little more clear-cut. Like Arjuna, Rama is the ideal man and his wife Sita (or sometimes Shinta) is the ideal wife. Rawana's warrior brother, Kumbakarna, however, is more complex. He knows that Rawana is evil but is bound by the ethics of the Ksatria warrior to support his brother to the extremely grisly end.

Boat

Ferries ply the water between Java and Madura (p231) and to the island groups Pulau Seribu (p120) and Karimunjawa (p217). There is also a ferry linking Cilacap and Malingklak (p155), and a few random excursion spots, such as Krakatau (p126), can be reached by boat.

Bus

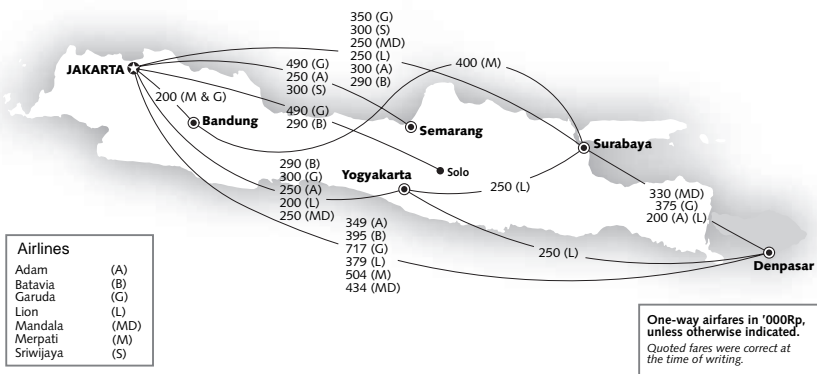
Buses are the main form of transport in Java. The normal practice is simply to front up at a bus terminal and catch the first one out; you shouldn't have to wait more than half an hour for services between cities and towns. Services range from public, economy-class buses to super-luxury coaches.

Tickets for buses are purchased on board, although tickets for *patas* (express) and luxury buses can be bought in advance at bus terminals, bus agents in the city centres, and sometimes hotels.

Small minibuses that cover shorter routes and back runs are commonly called Colts (after the Mitsubishi Colt) and shouldn't be confused with door-to-door minibuses (*travel*). The latter are (usually) air-con minibuses that travel all over Java and pick you up at your hotel and drop you off wherever you want to go in the destination city.

Note that many terminals (in Jakarta, Surabaya and Bandung for instance) are located a long way from the centre of town. In these cities, the train is a better alternative.

JAVA AIRFARES



Car & Motorcycle

Driving in Java is not for the faint-hearted; most big cities are constantly *macet* (grid-locked) and main routes can be hellishly clogged. Accidents often result in large pay-offs or pricey lawsuits and a number of drivers are killed every year by angry crowds exacting mob justice following an accident.

If you're still keen, self-drive cars can be hired in most of the major cities, with rates hovering around 930,000Rp per day. Another option is to hire a car and driver, which can save a lot of headache and money. Private operators can be as low as 350,000Rp per day, but the average price is 500,000Rp (petrol may or may not be included). This is also a good option for taking in the best of a city in one day.

Scooters are the favoured mode of transport for the Javanese, and hiring one yourself can be a good idea for the island's quieter corners. Rental prices start at around 30,000Rp per day, and should include a proper helmet (not the illegal horse-riding variety normally handed out). Note that Java's roads are no place to try your hand at riding for the first time.

Train

Java has a good rail service running right across the island. It connects with the ferry to Bali (Ketapang/Banyuwangi) and with the ferry to Sumatra (Merak). The service is well maintained and while long overruns

do occur, they're fast becoming a thing of the past.

A complete train timetable to Java, the *InfoKA*, is supposedly available from the larger train stations, but we've never seen one. A better option is to check timetables online at www.infoka.kereta-api.com (Bahasa Indonesia only). Timetables are displayed on boards at stations and printed *jadwal* (timetables) are available at main stations (for that station).

It's an idea to select a train that begins in the city you are departing from, thus guaranteeing a seat; obtaining a seat on through-trains can sometimes prove difficult.

CLASSES

Java's most popular class with the masses is economy (*ekonomi*). Cheap, basic, slow, excessively crowded, and a riot of livestock, hawkers, musicians and all manner of produce, these chicken trains move the country around and halt at *every* stop (except, quite often, a city's central one). Seats on these trains are hard (literally) to get and cannot be booked. Some, however, have been upgraded – designated 'economy plus' – and are limited express with padded seats that can be booked.

One giant step up from economy are the express trains, which offer business-class (*bisnis*) and executive-class (*eksekutif*) carriages. Comfortable seats with plenty of leg room are guaranteed in both, but while business class has fans, executive class of-

fers air-con, reclining seats, video (maybe) and a snack.

Top of the range are the fast luxury trains that operate from Jakarta. Usually indicated by *Argo* at the head of the name, they have everything an executive-class carriage offers, plus business services.

RESERVATIONS

Purchasing tickets at ticket windows is usually straightforward, but sometimes queues become mosh pits, especially for economy trains. The bigger cities have helpful information desks; otherwise, information is usually handed out with authority by the *kepala stasiun* (station master) or one of his cohorts.

For basic economy-class trains, tickets go on sale an hour before departure – just front up, buy a ticket and hope that you can get a seat. The better economy-class services can be booked up to a week in advance for a small extra fee.

Business- and executive-class trains can be booked weeks in advance at the appropriate ticket window, and a few travel agencies and hotels may also buy tickets for you.

Note that though it's often possible to get a ticket in any class on the day of departure, seats are hard to get on weekends and during holiday periods when enterprising *calo* (scalpers) buy large numbers of tickets and fob them off to desperate passengers at a hefty mark-up. It's best to book a few days in advance during these times. Avoid planning a trip during the Idul Fitri public holiday, when the entire island is on the move and tickets are as rare as an honest Yogyakarta batik seller.

JAKARTA

% 021 / pop 8.75 million

Whether you love it or hate it, there is no escaping Jakarta, Indonesia's overweight capital. This 'Big Durian' is filled with all the good and bad of Indonesian life.

At first glance, this hot, smoggy city, which sprawls for miles over a featureless plain, feels like nothing more than a waiting lounge for the millions queuing up to make their fortune. Jakarta's infamous *macet* chokes its freeways, town planning is

anathema and all attempts to forge a central focal point for the city have stuttered and ultimately failed. The first – or only – thought on most travellers' minds is how quickly the city and its polluted streets can be left behind.

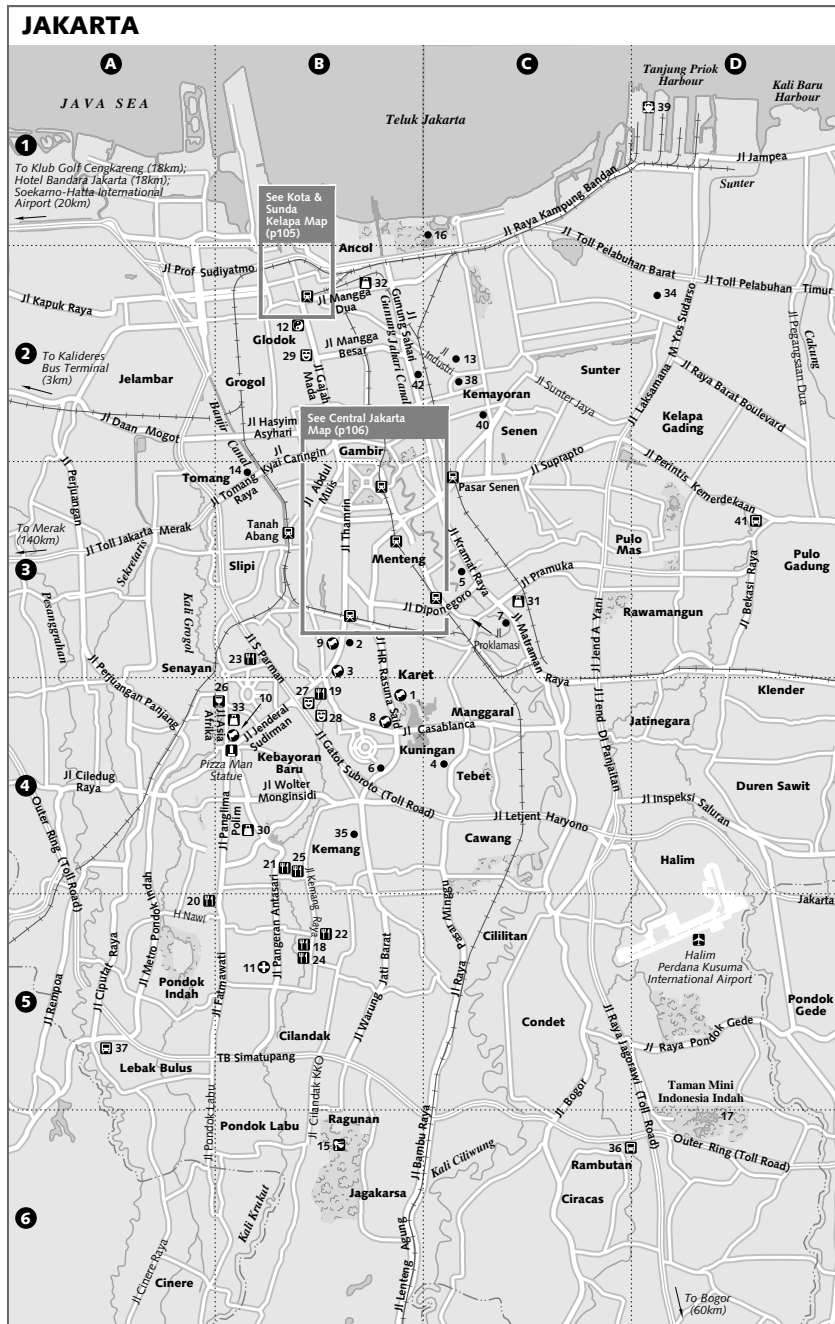
Beneath the veneer of glass fascias, concrete slabs and shabby slums, however, this is a city of surprises and a city of many faces. From the steamy, richly scented streets of Chinatown to the city's thumping, decadent nightlife, Jakarta is a Pandora's box, filled with unexpected gems. Here it's possible to rub shoulders with Indonesia's future leaders, artists, thinkers, movers and shakers, and to see first hand the deep-seated desire so many Indonesians have to rise above the poverty they were born into. Populated by Bataks from Sumatra, Ambonese from Maluku, Balinese, Madurese and Timorese, Jakarta is also a vast cultural melting pot in which the larger Indonesian identity is forged; it is Indonesia in a nutshell.

Jakarta certainly isn't a primary tourist destination, but parts of the old city (Kota) offer an interesting insight into the capital's long history, and there are a handful of good museums scattered about. But if you want to get under the skin of Indonesia, a visit to this mammoth city is an absolute must.

HISTORY

Jakarta's earliest history centres on the port of Sunda Kelapa, in the north of the modern city. When the Portuguese arrived in 1522, Sunda Kelapa was a bustling port of the Pajajaran dynasty, the last Hindu kingdom of West Java. By 1527 the Portuguese had gained a foothold in the city, but were driven out by Sunan Gunungjati, the Muslim saint and leader of Demak. He renamed the city Jayakarta, meaning 'victorious city', and it became a fiefdom of the Banten sultanate.

At the beginning of the 17th century the Dutch and English jostled for power in the city, and in late 1618 the Jayakartans, backed by the British, besieged the Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC) fortress. The Dutch managed to fend off the attackers until May 1619 when, under the command of Jan Pieterszoon Coen, reinforcements stormed the town and reduced it to ashes. A stronger shoreline fortress was built and the town was renamed



INFORMATION

- Australian Cultural Centre.....(see 1)
- British Council.....2 B3
- Canadian Embassy.....3 B3
- Central Immigration Office.....4 C4
- Centre Culture Français.....5 C3
- Erasmus Huis.....6 B4
- Goethe Institut.....7 C3
- Malaysian Embassy.....8 B4
- Netherlands Embassy.....(see 6)
- New Zealand Embassy.....9 B3
- Papua New Guinea Embassy.....10 B4
- QB World Books.....(see 33)
- Singapore Embassy.....(see 6)
- SOS Medika Klinik.....11 B5

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

- Ancol Marina.....(see 16)
- Bersih Sehat.....(see 9)
- Dharma Jaya Temple & Dharma Bhakti Temple.....12 B2
- Jakarta Fair Grounds.....13 C2
- PT Pulau Sepa Permal.....14 B3
- Ragunan Zoo.....15 B6
- Taman Impian Jaya Ancol.....16 C1
- Taman Mini Indonesia Indah.....17 D6
- Viany Tour & Travel.....(see 16)

EATING

- Anatolia.....18 B5
- Blowfish.....19 B4
- Java Bleu.....20 A5
- Kem Chicks Supermarket.....21 B4
- Kinara.....22 B5
- Payon.....(see 25)
- Taman Ria Senayan.....23 B3
- Toscana.....24 B5
- WWWok.....25 B4

DRINKING

- Bugils.....(see 23)
- CJ's Bar.....26 B4
- Red Square.....(see 33)

ENTERTAINMENT

- Centro.....27 B4
- Embassy.....(see 23)
- Retro.....28 B4
- Stadium.....29 B2

SHOPPING

- Blok M Mall.....30 B4
- Mangga Dua Mall.....(see 32)
- Pasar Burung.....31 C3
- Pasar Pagi Mangga Dua.....32 B2
- Pasar Seni.....(see 16)
- Pasaraya Department Store.....(see 30)
- Plaza Senayan.....33 B4

TRANSPORT

- Astra.....34 D2
- Block M Bus Terminal.....(see 30)
- Bluebird.....35 B4
- Kampung Rambutan Bus Terminal.....36 C6
- Lebak Bulus Bus Terminal.....37 A5
- Merpati Nusantara Airlines.....38 C2
- Pelni Passenger Terminal.....39 D1
- Pelni Ticketing Office.....40 C2
- Pulo Gadung Bus Terminal.....41 D3
- Sriwijaya Airlines.....42 B2

'Batavia' after a tribe that once occupied parts of the Netherlands in Roman times. It soon became the capital of the Dutch East Indies.

Within the walls of Batavia the prosperous Dutch built tall houses and pestilential canals in an attempt to create an Amsterdam in the tropics. By the early 18th century, the city's population had swelled, boosted by both Indonesians and Chinese eager to take advantage of Batavia's commercial prospects.

By 1740 ethnic unrest in the Chinese quarters had grown to dangerous levels and on 9 October violence broke out on Batavia's streets; around 5000 Chinese were massacred. A year later Chinese inhabitants were moved to Glodok, outside the city walls. Other Batavians, discouraged by the severe epidemics between 1735 and 1780, also moved, and the city began to spread far south of the port.

Dutch colonial rule came to an end with the Japanese occupation in 1942 and the name 'Jakarta' was restored, but it wasn't until 1950 that Jakarta officially became the capital of the new republic.

Over the next four decades, the capital struggled under the weight of an ever-increasing population of poor migrants, but by the 1990s Jakarta's economic situation had turned around. This all changed, however, with the start of an economic collapse at the end of 1997. The capital quickly became a political battleground and protests demanding longtime leader Soeharto's resignation increased in intensity in early 1998.

After months of tension the floodgates opened on 12 May 1998 when the army fired live ammunition into a group of students at Trisakti University; four were killed. Jakarta erupted in three days of rioting as thousands took to the streets. The Chinese were hardest hit, with shocking tales of rape and murder emerging after the riots.

Over the past few years Jakarta has braved a spate of natural and unnatural disasters. In August 2003 the US-owned Marriott Hotel was bombed and in September 2004 Australia's embassy experienced a similar fate; both nations were targeted for their involvement in the Afghanistan and Iraq occupations. Flooding disabled many parts of the city in 2002, 2003 and 2006, causing massive

damage to homes and public services, and bringing more misery to the abject poor.

However, the biggest problem facing the city may still be its ability to handle protesters. A proposed increase in fuel and utility prices in January 2003 caused thousands to hit the streets and forced the government to backtrack on its plans. However in October 2005 it went through with fuel increases amid widespread protests; fortunately military intervention was not required to maintain calm, but if fuel prices are raised once more violence could easily erupt on the streets of the capital.

ORIENTATION

Jakarta sprawls more than 25km from the docks to the suburbs of south Jakarta, covering 661 sq km. The city centre fans out from around Merdeka Sq, which contains the central landmark of Soekarno's towering gold-tipped National Monument. Merdeka Sq, however, isn't really the city's central focal point; rather it has a number of centres, separated by vast traffic jams and sweltering heat.

For most visitors, Jakarta revolves around the modern part of the city to the south of the monument. Jl Thamrin runs from the southwestern corner of Merdeka Sq down to the Welcome Monument roundabout and is the main thoroughfare, containing many of the big hotels and a couple of major shopping centres.

To the south, Jl Thamrin becomes Jl Jenderal Sudirman, which is home to more hotels, large banks and office blocks. Further south are the affluent suburban areas of Kebayoran Baru, Pondok Indah and Kemang, with their own centres and busy shopping districts. Kemang, in particular, is swamped with top-notch bars, restaurants and shops, but accommodation options are limited.

Just east of Jl Thamrin and south of the National Monument is Jl Jaksa, the main backpacker centre.

North of the National Monument, you will find the old city of Kota, Jakarta's main tourist attraction, while nearby is the schooner harbour of Sunda Kelapa. The modern harbour, Tanjung Priok, is several kilometres along the coast to the east, past the Taman Impian Jaya Ancol recreation park.

The main train station, Gambir, is just to the east of the National Monument. The intercity bus terminals – Kalideres in the west, Kampung Rambutan in the south and Pulo Gadung in the east – are on the outskirts of Jakarta.

Maps

Jakarta's visitor information office (opposite) provides a free map of the city that highlights Jl Thamrin, Jl Jenderal Sudirman and Kota and should satisfy most tourists' needs.

INFORMATION

Bookshops

Gramedia and Gunung Agung are the two big Indonesian chains, with shops all over town.

QB World Books (Map pp100-1; ☎ 5725267; Level 3, Plaza Senayan, Jl Asia Afrika 8) Large bookshop in one of Jakarta's top plazas.

Sarinah department store (Map p110; Jl Thamrin) Has a good travel book and map section.

Cultural Centres

The various foreign cultural centres have libraries and/or regular exhibits, films and lectures:

Australian Cultural Centre (Map pp100-1; ☎ 25505555; Jl HR Rasuna Said Kav C15-16)

British Council (Map pp100-1; ☎ 2524115; www.britishcouncil.org/indonesia.htm; Widjoyo Centre, Jl Jenderal Sudirman 71)

Erasmus Huis (Map pp100-1; ☎ 5241069; www.erasmushuis.or.id; Jl HR Rasuna Said Kav S-3) Regular cultural events are listed on its website.

Emergency

Tourist Police (Map p110; ☎ 566000; Jl Wahid Hasyim) On the 2nd floor of the Jakarta Theatre.

Immigration Office

Central Immigration Office (Map pp100-1; ☎ 6541209; Jl Merpati Kemayoran 3) Provides information on visa extensions and renewals.

Internet Access

Internet cafés are scattered all over town and generally charge around 10,000Rp per hour; the following cafés are convenient to the Jl Jaksa area:

Duta Perdana Raya Travel (Map p110; Jl Jaksa 15A; per hr 10,000Rp; 11am-11pm)

Top Internet (Map p110; Jl Wahid Hasyim 110; per hr 10,000Rp; 11am-10pm)

Internet Resources

www. expat. or. id Caters to longer-term visitors and boasts everything from language guides to chatrooms.

www. jakarta. go. id The Jakarta City Government Tourism Office's official site; offers a host of info on where to go and what to see – when it loads.

www. jakweb. com Lists cultural events in the capital and provides links to international newspaper articles on Indonesia.

Media

Djakarta! (20,000Rp) Published monthly and with youth-oriented stories in English and Bahasa Indonesia, as well as an invaluable restaurant and entertainment reviews section.

Jakarta Kini (www. jakartajavakini. com; 20,000Rp) Monthly English publication that features restaurant and entertainment reviews alongside lifestyle articles; usually free in many of the bigger hotels.

Jakarta Post (www. thejakartapost. com; from street vendors 5000Rp) Excellent English-language daily with news, views and cultural happenings.

Medical Services

Cikini Hospital (Map p106; ☎ 23550180; Jl Raden Saleh Raya) Caters to foreigners.

SOS Medika Klinik (Map pp100-1; ☎ 7505973; Jl Puri Sakti 10, Kemang; 11am-24hr) Offers English-speaking GP appointments, as well as the full range of emergency and specialist healthcare services.

Money

Jakarta is crawling with banks offering the best exchange rates nesia, although it usually pays to shop around. There are ATMs galore at the main post office near the National Monument and at Plaza Indonesia.

BCA bank ATM (Bank Central Asia; Map p110; Jl Haji Agus Salim) A stone's throw from the Jakarta Visitor Information Office.

BII bank (Bank Internasional Indonesia; Map p106; Jl Thamrin) With ATM; in the basement level of Plaza Indonesia.

BNI bank (Bank Negara Indonesia; Map p110; Jl Kebon Sirih Raya) Near Jl Jaksa, with ATM for MasterCard withdrawals.

Lippo Bank (Map p110; Jl Kebon Sirih Raya) Also with ATM for MasterCard withdrawals.

Post

Main post office (Map p106; Jl Gedung Kesenian 1; 11am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat) Occupying an octagonal building near Lapangan Banteng. Also offers a poste restante service.

Telephone & Fax

Faxes can be sent from most wartel and all major hotels. Wartel are found throughout the city and are usually open daily from around 7am until midnight, but are sometimes open 24 hours. As a rule, wartel don't offer a collect-call service. Convenient ones for those staying around Jl Jaksa include the following:

Duta Perdana Raya Travel (opposite)
Top Internet (opposite)

Tourist Information

Jakarta Visitor Information Office (Map p110; ☎ 3154094, 3161293; www. jakarta. go. id; Jl Wahid Hasyim 9; 11am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) In the Jakarta Theatre building opposite the Sarinah department store. Staff can answer most queries and hand out a number of excellent leaflets and publications. It also has a desk at the airport.

Travel Agencies

Travel agencies on Jl Jaksa are convenient places to start looking for international flights and long-haul bus tickets. Domestic air tickets usually cost the same from a travel agency as from the airline, but discounts are sometimes available.

Global Travel Service (Map p110; ☎ 3143932; globalid@indo.net.id; Jl Jaksa 49) One of the most professional outfits in the Jl Jaksa area.

Indotel (☎ 5502787) In the arrivals terminal of Soekarno-Hatta international airport; can sometimes slash as much as a third off posted rates.

Robertu Kencana Travel (Map p110; ☎ 3142926; Jl Jaksa 20B) Good deals available.

Smiling Tours (www. mysmailing. com) Jl Majapahit 28 (Map p106; ☎ 3800022; Jl Majapahit 28); Jl Thamrin 9 (Map p110; ☎ 31931994; Jl Thamrin 9) Offices all over town. The Jl Majapahit branch is one of Jakarta's biggest travel agencies and the Jl Thamrin office is in the Skyline building just next to the tourist office.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

For such a huge city with obvious social problems and an unhealthy reputation, Jakarta is surprisingly safe. It does, however, remain the most crime-prone city in Indonesia. Violent crime is not unknown, but tourists are rarely targeted. It's best to take the usual precautions though – avoid disreputable areas (Glodok and Kota can be unsafe in the early hours of the morning), don't walk the streets alone at night and move out of the way quickly if violence

does break out. Attacks by taxi drivers have been known to take place, so always opt for reputable firms at night, such as the citywide Bluebird group.

Jakarta's buses and trains tend to be hopelessly crowded, particularly during rush hours. Pickpockets are notoriously adept and many locals will warn you against such thieves.

Following the Bali and Jakarta bombings, many foreign embassies have warned against travel to Indonesia and especially Jakarta. Attacks against foreign interests have occurred and protests, although often peaceful, may still become violent with little warning. Continued conflict in the Middle East, or developments in the case against those responsible for the bombings, may provoke further unrest. While such warnings are often manically overcautious, once you're in the country, it's always wise to check the current situation with your embassy.

SIGHTS Kota

The old town of Batavia, now known as Kota, was once the hub of Dutch colonial Indonesia. Much of the one-time grandeur has now rotted, crumbled or been bulldozed away, but Taman Fatahillah, Kota's central cobblestone square, is still reminiscent of the area's heyday.

A block west of the square is Kali Besar, the great canal along Sungai Ciliwung. This was once a high-class residential area and on the west bank of the river are the last of the homes that date from the early 18th century. **Toko Merah** (Red Shop; Map p105; Jl Kali Besar Barat) was formerly the home of Governor General van Imhoff and at the northern end of Kali Besar is the last remaining Dutch drawbridge, the **Chicken Market Bridge**, which dates from the 17th century.

To reach Taman Fatahillah, you can either take the Korridor I bus from Blok M or Jl Thamrin to Kota train station and walk, or take a city train from Gondangdia, near Jl Jaksa, to the train station. A taxi will cost around 15,000Rp from Jl Thamrin.

MUSEUM WAYANG

This **Puppet Museum** (Map p105; ☎ 6929560; Taman Fatahillah; admission 2000Rp; 11 9am-1.30pm Tue-Fri & Sun, 9am-12.30pm Sat) has one of the best collections of *wayang* puppets in Java and its

dusty cabinets are lined with a multitude of characters once used for performances. The collection not only includes puppets from Indonesia but also China, Malaysia, India and Cambodia.

Formerly the Museum of Old Batavia, the building itself dates from 1912. In the downstairs courtyard, there are memorials to Dutch governors general who were once buried here, including Jan Pieterszoon Coen, founder of Batavia, who died of cholera in 1629 during the siege by Mataram.

MUSEUM SEJARAH JAKARTA

The **Jakarta History Museum** (Map p105; Taman Fatahillah; admission 2000Rp; 11 9am-3pm Tue-Sun) is housed in the old town hall of Batavia, and is probably one of the most solid reminders of Dutch rule within Indonesia. This bell-towered hall, built in 1627, served the administration of the city. It was also used by the city law courts, and its dungeons were the main prison compound of Batavia.

Today it contains lots of heavy, carved furniture and other memorabilia from the Dutch period. Among the more interesting exhibits are early pictures of Batavia and a series of dour portraits of Dutch governors general.

In the back courtyard is a strange memorial stone to Pieter Erbeveldt, put to death in 1722 for allegedly conspiring to massacre the Dutch inhabitants of Batavia, and the huge bronze **Cannon Si Jagur** that once graced Taman Fatahillah. This Portuguese cannon, brought to Batavia as a trophy of war after the fall of Melaka in 1641, tapers at one end into a large clenched fist, with the thumb protruding between the index and middle fingers. This suggestive fist is a sexual symbol in Indonesia, and childless women would offer flowers and sit astride the cannon in the hope of gaining children.

BALAI SENI RUPA

Built between 1866 and 1870, the former Palace of Justice building is now a **Fine Arts Museum** (Map p105; Taman Fatahillah; admission 2000Rp; 11 9am-1.30pm Tue-Fri & Sun, 9am-12.30pm Sat). It houses contemporary paintings with works by prominent painters, including Affandi, Raden Saleh and Ida Bagus Made. Part of the building is also a ceramics museum, with Chinese ceramics and Majapahit terracottas.

GEREJA SION

Near the Kota train station, this church (Map p105; Jl Pangeran Jayakarta) dates from 1695 and is the oldest remaining church in Jakarta. Also known as **Gereja Portugis** (Portuguese Church), it was built just outside the old city walls for the so-called 'black Portuguese' – the Eurasians and natives captured from Portuguese trading ports in India and Malaya and brought to Batavia as slaves.

The exterior of the church is very plain, but inside there are copper chandeliers, a baroque pulpit and the original organ. Although more than 2000 people were buried in the graveyard during 1790 alone, very few tombs remain.

Sunda Kelapa

Just a 10-minute walk north of Taman Fatahillah, the old port of **Sunda Kelapa** (Map p105; admission 1000Rp) has many magnificent Makassar schooners (*pinisi*). These brightly painted sailing ships are one of Jakarta's more unusual sights, although the port itself is run down and a good deal less photogenic.

MUSEUM BAHARI

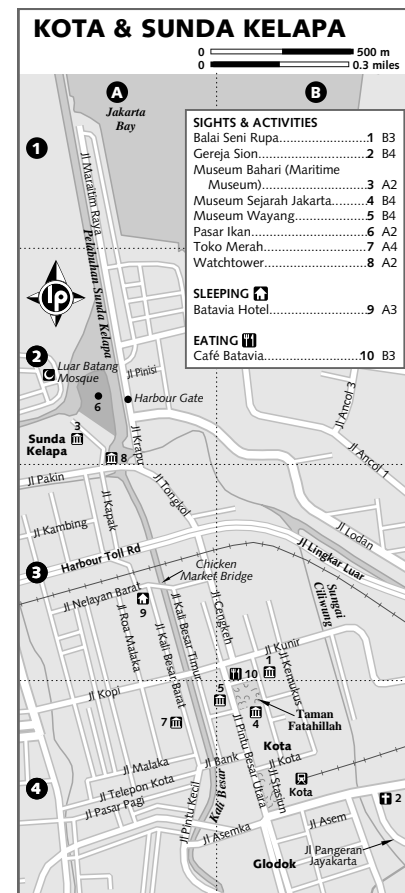
Near the entrance to Sunda Kelapa, an old VOC warehouse built in 1645 is now a **Maritime Museum** (Map p105; admission 2000Rp; 11 9am-1.30pm Tue-Fri & Sun, 9am-2.30pm Sat). It exhibits crafts from around Indonesia and has an interesting collection of old photographs re-creating the voyage to Jakarta from Europe via Aden, Ceylon and Singapore. The building itself is worth a visit and the sentry posts outside are part of the old city wall.

Just before the entrance to the museum is the old **watchtower** (Map p105; admission 2000Rp). It was built in 1839 to sight and direct traffic to the port. There are good views over the harbour, but opening hours are haphazard – ask for the caretaker if it is closed.

Further along the same street from the museum is the early-morning **Pasar Ikan** (fish market; Map p105). It's an intense, colourful scene of busy crowds around dawn, when the day's catch is sold. Later in the day it sells household items and a growing collection of souvenirs.

Glodok

The neighbourhood of Glodok, the traditional enclave of the Chinese, is a bustling, rundown part of town with fading mar-



kets and a decadent nightlife (it's wise to be careful here after dark). It was also the sight of the terrible riots of May and November 1998, which reduced huge swathes of the area to ash and rubble. Much of the legislation that had discriminated against the Chinese and their language for decades was lifted in 2000, but it will be years before the scars are fully erased and the last of the burnt buildings rebuilt.

Glodok is bounded to the east by Jl Gajah Mada, a busy commercial thoroughfare, but if you walk in from Jl Pancoran, old Glodok still consists of winding lanes, narrow crooked houses with balconies, slanting red-tiled roofs and tiny obscure shops. There is also a market here selling

**INFORMATION**

Bill Bank.....	(see 37)
Brunei Embassy.....	1 B6
Cikini Hospital.....	2 D5
French Embassy.....	3 B4
German Embassy.....	4 B5
Japanese Embassy.....	5 B5
Main Post Office.....	6 C2
Myanmar Embassy.....	7 B5
Philippines Embassy.....	8 C6
Smiling Tours.....	9 A2
Thailand Embassy.....	10 B5
UK Embassy.....	11 B5
US Embassy.....	12 C3
Vietnamese Embassy.....	13 C5

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Catholic Cathedral.....	14 C2
Emanuel Church.....	15 C3
Gedung Pancasila.....	16 C2
Mahkamah Agung.....	17 D2
Mesjid Istiqlal.....	18 C2
Ministry of Finance Building.....	19 D2
Museum Nasional.....	20 B3
National Monument (Monas).....	21 B3
Taman Prasasti Museum.....	22 A2

SLEEPING

Borobudur Inter-Continental Jakarta.....	23 D2
Gondia International Guesthouse.....	24 C4
Grand Hyatt Jakarta.....	25 B5
Hotel Marcopolo.....	26 D5
Yannie International Guesthouse.....	27 D5

EATING

Cinnabar.....	28 B5
Hazara.....	(see 30)
Kafe Pisa.....	29 B4
Lan Na Thai.....	30 B5
Lara Djonggrang.....	31 D5
Night Warung.....	32 B1

DRINKING

Burgundy.....	(see 25)
Face Bar.....	(see 30)

ENTERTAINMENT

BB'S.....	33 C5
Gedung Kesenian Jakarta.....	34 C1
Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM).....	35 D5

SHOPPING

Flea Market.....	36 D6
Plaza Indonesia.....	37 B5

TRANSPORT

Avis.....	38 D6
Batavia Air.....	39 B1
Garuda Indonesia.....	40 B3
Harmoni Bus Terminal.....	41 A1
Kerta Jaya.....	42 C2
Lion Air.....	43 A1
Menara Buana Surya.....	44 C4

everything from live bugs to pirate CDs. Just south of Jl Pancoran are the Chinese Dharma Jaya Temple and Dharma Bhakti Temple, from the 17th century.

Central Jakarta

If a centre for this sprawling city had to be chosen, then Lapangan Merdeka (Merdeka Sq) would be it. This huge, almost barren square is home to Soekarno's monument to the nation, and is surrounded by a couple of the capital's more inviting museums and colonial buildings.

MUSEUM NASIONAL

On the western side of Merdeka Sq, the **National Museum** (Map p106; adult/child 750/250Rp; 8.30am-2.30pm Tue-Thu & Sun, 8.30-11.30am Fri, 8.30-11.30am Sat), built in 1862, is the best of its kind in Indonesia and one of the finest in Southeast Asia.

It has an enormous collection of cultural objects of the various ethnic groups around the country – costumes, musical instruments, model houses and so on – and numerous fine bronzes from the Hindu-Javanese period, as well as many interesting stone pieces salvaged from the Central Javanese and other temples. There's also a superb display of Chinese ceramics dating back to the Han dynasty (300 BC to AD 220), which was almost entirely amassed in Indonesia.

Just outside the museum is a bronze elephant that was presented by the King of Thailand in 1871; thus the museum building is popularly known as the Gedung Gajah (Elephant House). Next door is the museum's sleek new building, used for temporary exhibitions; entry is included in the admission fee.

The Indonesian Heritage Society (% 5725870) organises free English tours of the museum at 9.30am every Tuesday and Thursday and 10.30am every second Saturday and last Sunday in the month; French tours take place at 9.30am every third Wednesday of the month.

MONAS

Ingloriously dubbed 'Soekarno's final erection', this 132m-high **National Monument** (Monumen Nasional or Monas; Map p106; 8.30am-5pm, closed last Mon of every month), towering over Merdeka Sq, is both Jakarta's principal landmark and the most famous architectural extravagance of the former dictator. Begun in 1961, this typically masculine column was not completed until 1975, when it was officially opened by Soeharto. The

National Monument is allegedly constructed 'entirely of Italian marble', and is topped with a sculpted flame, gilded with 35kg of gold leaf.

In the base of the National Monument, the **National History Museum** (adult/child 1500/500Rp) tells the story of Indonesia's independence struggle in 48 dioramas using *Thunderbird*-like models. The numerous uprisings against the Dutch are overstated but interesting; Soekarno is barely mentioned and the events surrounding the 1965 coup are a whitewash.

The highlight of a visit are the smoggy views of Jakarta from the top of the monument (adult/child 5000/2500Rp). Avoid Sunday and holidays, when the queues for the lift are long.

TAMAN PRASASTI

To the northwest of the National Museum is the so-called **Park of Inscription** (Map p106; Jl Tanah Abang; admission 2000Rp; 11am-3pm Tue-Thu & Sun, 9am-2.30pm Fri, 9am-12.30pm Sat), which is actually the Kebon Jahe Cemetery; important figures from the colonial era are buried here.

LAPANGAN BANTENG

Just east of Merdeka Sq, in front of the Borobudur Inter-Continental Jakarta hotel, **Lapangan Banteng** (Banteng Square, formerly the Waterlooplein; Map p106) was laid out by the Dutch in the 19th century, and the area has some of Jakarta's best colonial architecture.

The **Catholic cathedral** (Map p106) has twin spires and was built in 1901 to replace an earlier church. Facing the cathedral is Jakarta's principal place of Muslim worship, the modernistic **Mesjid Istiqlal** (Map p106), which was constructed under Soekarno and is reputedly the largest mosque in Southeast Asia.

To the east of Lapangan Banteng is the **Mahkamah Agung** (Supreme Court; Map p106), built in 1848, and next door is the **Ministry of Finance Building** (Map p106), formerly the Witte Huis (White House). This grand government complex was built by Daendels in 1809 as the administrative centre for the Dutch government.

To the southwest is **Gedung Pancasila** (Map p106; Jl Pejambon), which is an imposing neo-classical building built in 1830 as the Dutch army commander's residence. It later be-

came the meeting hall of the Volksraad (People's Council), but is best known as the place where Soekarno made his famous Pancasila speech in 1945, laying the foundation for Indonesia's constitution. Just west along Jl Pejambon from Gedung Pancasila is the **Emanuel Church** (Map p106), another classic building dating from 1893.

Southern Jakarta

In the southern reaches of the city reside a couple of attractions that require a day trip to fully enjoy.

TAMAN MINI INDONESIA INDAH

In the city's southeast, near Kampung Rambutan, **Taman Mini Indonesia Indah** (Map pp100-1; 5454545; Jl Raya Pondok Gede; adult/child 6000/4000Rp; 11am-5pm) is one of those 'whole country in one park' collections popular in Asia. Conceived by Madame Tien Soeharto in 1971, the park was opened in 1975 after the families inhabiting the land were cleared out and an estimated US\$26 million was spent on the project.

This 100-hectare park has a full-scale traditional house for each of Indonesia's provinces, with displays of regional handicrafts and clothing, and even a mini-scale Borobudur. Museums, theatres and restaurants are scattered throughout, and free cultural performances are staged in selected regional houses (usually around 10am); Sunday is the big day for cultural events but shows are also held during the week.

You can walk or drive your own car around Taman Mini. Free shuttle buses operate regularly, or you can take the monorail or the cable car that goes from one end of the park to the other. Taman Mini is about 18km from the city centre; allow about 1½ hours to get there and at least three hours to look around. Take any bus to the Kampung Rambutan terminal (air-con, *patas* buses 9, 10 and 11 run from Jl Thamrin) and then a T15 metro-mini to the park entrance. A taxi is much quicker and will cost around 35,000Rp from central Jakarta, plus the tolls.

RAGUNAN ZOO

Jakarta's **Ragunan Zoo** (Map pp100-1; 7806623; Jl Harsono RM 1; adult/child 4000/3000Rp; 11am-6pm) is 16km south of the city centre in the Pasar Minggu area. As home to 4000 animals, this

large zoo has a good collection of Indonesian wildlife including Komodo dragons. It's not world class (some of the enclosures are depressingly small), but this is by far the best zoo in Indonesia, and its new primate enclosure, featuring orang-utans and gorillas, is a highlight. From Jl Thamrin take bus 19.

ACTIVITIES

Golf

Jakarta has some of the best-value golf in Asia, with 38 courses within and around the city. **Klub Golf Cengkareng** (55911111; Taman Niaga Soewarna G, Lot 1-2), near the airport, is one of the priciest, but remains the residents' favourite, with stunning fairways and a top-notch bar at the 19th. It is members only at the weekend, but 18 holes during the week costs 300,000Rp.

Massage

Jakarta has an abundance of massage establishments, some of which are simply fronts for brothels. **Bersih Sehat** (Map pp100-1; 5704444; Hotel Sahid Jaya, Jl Jenderal Sudirman 86; 1hr massage 100,000Rp) certainly doesn't fall into that category, but rather has a reputation for quality, expertise and professionalism.

JAKARTA FOR CHILDREN

Taman Impian Jaya Ancol

Along the bay front, between Kota and Tanjung Priok, the people's **'Dreamland'** (Map pp100-1; 64710497; basic admission 10,000Rp, includes entry to Pasar Seni; 11am-24hr) is built on land reclaimed in 1962. This 300-hectare landscaped recreation park, providing nonstop entertainment, has hotels, nightclubs, theatres and a variety of sporting facilities. It's easily the city's best entertainment for kids in the city.

Taman Impian Jaya Ancol's prime attractions include **Pasar Seni** (Art Market), which has sidewalk cafés, a host of craft shops, art exhibitions, and live music every Friday and Saturday night, and the water-themed **Seaworld** aquarium and **Gelanggang Samudra** (6406677; admission Mon-Fri/Sat & Sun 35,000/45,000Rp; 11am-6pm Mon-Thu, 2-8pm Fri, 11am-8pm Sat & Sun), with a boat ride and dolphin shows.

Swimmers have the option of the **Gelanggang Renang** (6406677; Mon-Fri 40,000Rp, Sat & Sun 50,000Rp; 11am-6pm Mon-Thu, 2-8pm Fri, 11am-8pm

Sat & Sun) complex, which includes a wave pool and slide pool, or **Ancol Beach**; the latter isn't the greatest place to swim, but boat trips to some of the Pulau Seribu islands (p120) leave from here.

The biggest draw card in the larger Ancol recreation park is **Dunia Fantasi** (Fantasy Land; 64712000; Mon-Fri 60,000Rp, Sat & Sun 80,000Rp; 11am-6pm Mon-Thu, 2-8pm Fri, 11am-8pm Sat & Sun), a fun park that must have raised eyebrows at the Disney legal department. Similarities to Disneyland start at the 'main street' entrance and extend to the Puppet Castle, a straight 'it's a small world' replica.

The park can be very crowded on weekends, but on weekdays it's fairly quiet. Take a bus or city train to Kota train station, then bus 64, 65, 125 or *mikrolet* (small taxi) 51. A taxi will cost around 30,000Rp from Jl Thamrin.

TOURS

Numerous travel agencies offer daily tours of Jakarta. Bookings can be made through the tourist office and major hotels.

Gray Line (630 8105) Offers a 24-hour booking line for tours to Batavia (US\$20), Bogor's Kebun Raya (Botanical Gardens), Puncak and Taman Safari Indonesia (US\$40) and both day (US\$60) and overnight (US\$110 including accommodation) trips to Pulau Seribu.

Indonesian Heritage Society Located at Museum Nasional. Offers city tours for 100,000Rp; see p107.

Wanawisata Alamhayati (5710392) Has tours to Krakatau (p126) and Ujung Kulon National Park (p128).

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

June/July

Jakarta Anniversary On 22 June, this marks the establishment of the city by Gunungjati back in 1527, and is celebrated with fireworks and the Jakarta Fair (fairground event held at the Jakarta Fairgrounds, Map pp100-1, from late June until mid-July).

August

Independence Day Indonesia's independence is celebrated on 17 August and the parades in Jakarta are the biggest in the country.

Jalan Jaksa Street Fair Features Betawi dance, theatre and music, as well as popular modern performances. Street stalls sell food and souvenirs, and art and photography exhibits are also staged. It is held for one week in August.

December

JiFFest (Jakarta International Film Festival; www.jiffest.org) Indonesia's only film festival takes place in the second

week of December; check the website for details, as lack of funding may force it out of business.

SLEEPING

Jakarta is the most expensive city in Indonesia for hotels, but economic meltdown and a drop in tourism have seen big discounts, especially at midrange and top-end hotels. Conversely, falling visitor numbers have seen standards slip in many of the traditional backpacker haunts, and while hostels remain cheap, few have much character.

Jalan Jaksa Area

Cheap hotels and restaurants are the mainstay of this budget accommodation area, but it also has a smattering of midrange options.

It's conveniently located near Jakarta's main drag, Jl Thamrin, and is a 10- to 15-minute walk from Gambir train station.

BUDGET

Bloem Steen Homestay (Map p110; % 31925389; Gang 1 173; r 30,000Rp, with mandi 50,000Rp; i) With a quiet, mellow ambience, simple yet good clean rooms, a small library of English novels and welcoming staff, Bloem Steen rates as one of Jakarta's best budget options.

Kresna Homestay (Map p110; % 31925403; Gang 1 175; r 40,000Rp, with mandi 50,000Rp) For budget options in Jl Jaksa, Kresna plays second fiddle only to Bloem Steen next door. Rooms are cramped, but as clean and as cosy as you'll get for 40,000Rp, and the owner is amiable.

Wisma Delima (Map p110; % 3923850; Jl Jaksa 5; r with mandi 40,000Rp) The original guesthouse on Jl Jaksa, Delima is now rather scruffy and has very basic rooms, but the entire place exudes a homely feel.

Hotel Tator (Map p110; % 31923940; Jl Jaksa 37; r with shower & toilet 70,000Rp, r with hot water/air-con & telephone 85,000-100,000Rp; a) Tator is perched on the cusp of budget and midrange, but is let down by dim light bulbs and spartan rooms (rooms on the top floor are your best bet). It does have the advantage of a good little café, though, and breakfast is included with the more expensive rooms.

Hotel Margot (Map p110; % 3913830; Jl Jaksa 15; r from 150,000Rp; a) This hotel has slightly scruffy rooms with weak air-con but they're reasonably clean and staff are willing and able. There's also a café-bar downstairs that attracts backpackers.

MIDRANGE

Hotel Bumi Johar (Map p110; % 3145746; Jl Johar 17-19; r 270,000-305,000Rp; a) This is a small hotel with a Japanese restaurant; rooms have a subdued air due to lack of strong light bulbs, but they're in good shape and discounts are readily available.

Hotel Cipta (Map p110; % 31930424; cipta1@cbn.net.id; Jl Wahid Hasyim 53; r 275,000-330,000Rp plus 21% tax; a) Rooms at the Cipta are plain but cosy, and considerably brighter than most hotels. There's a restaurant on the ground floor and staff will often drop the 21% service tax to snag your business.

Hotel Paragon (Map p110; % 3917070; Jl Wahid Hasyim 29; r from 295,000Rp; a) Paragon is a strangely designed, multistorey hotel with rooms fronting onto open corridors. Rooms are, however, immaculate – if slightly musty – and very quiet.

Cemara Hotel (Map p110; % 3908215; cemara@centrin.net.id; Jl Cemara 1; r 350,000-550,000Rp plus 21% tax; a i) On the corner of busy Jl Wahid Hasyim, Cemara is a glossy and well-maintained hotel with attentive staff and rooms that are spacious, though a little dark.

Jl Wahid Hasyim has a string of midrange options, including two Ibis hotels, **Ibis Arcadia** (Map p110; % 2300050; hotelarcadia@speed.net.id; Jl Wahid Hasyim 114; r from 333,000Rp; a i) and **Ibis Tamarind** (Map p110; % 3912323; ibistam@indosat.net.id; Jl Wahid Hasyim 77; r 350,000Rp; a s). Both have comfortable rooms, but Arcadia comes up trumps with more stylish décor.

Cikini

Cikini is east of Jl Thamrin and has a selection of midrange hotels and good guesthouses, but doesn't have the travellers resources of Jl Jaksa.

BUDGET

Gondia International Guesthouse (Map p106; % 3909221; gondia@rad.net.id; Jl Gondangdia Kecil 22; r with breakfast 120,000Rp; a) In a quiet side street off Jl Soeroso, Gondia is just like granny's house, with comfortable rooms, a homy ambience and a small garden area.

Yanni International Guesthouse (Map p106; % 3140012; ygh@cbn.net.id; Jl Raden Saleh Raya 35; s/d 120,000/150,000Rp; a) Yanni is a good-value and deservedly popular guesthouse, with clean rooms, hot water and friendly staff. There is no sign, just a 'Y' out front.

MIDRANGE

Hotel Marcopolo (Map p106; % 2301777; mcpolojkt@telkom.net; Jl Teuku Cik Ditiro 19; r from 240,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s) Marcopolo may not be the most salubrious hotel in the city, but it is great value for money. This high-rise hotel in the heart of suburbia offers a range of enormous rooms (all of which are kept in top condition), with sport baths and balconies. A fine buffet breakfast is available in its ground-floor restaurant, and staff couldn't be more friendly or helpful.

Airport

BUDGET

Hotel Bandara Jakarta (% 6191964; Jl Jurumudi, Km 2.5, Cengkareng; s/d with air-con & bath from 180,000/200,000Rp; a) This is the cheapest hotel near the airport. While there's nothing fancy about it, it does have a 24-hour coffee shop and usually has a representative at the airport hotel booths offering free transport.

TOP END

Quality Hotel Aspac (% 5590008; fax 5590018; r from US\$80; a i) For transit visitors, Aspac is handily located right in the international terminal at the airport, upstairs in the departure area. It has a small bar and restaurant, but no other facilities.

Other Areas

MIDRANGE

Batavia Hotel (Map p105; % 6904118; www.batavia-hotel.com; Jl Kali Besar Barat 44-46; r 363,000-510,000Rp;



a) The Batavia may be in the middle of nowhere in the north of Kota, but its rooms, which are surprisingly plush, make up for it. Service is excellent, and it's also a lot closer to the airport than most hotels. Discounts are available for 12-hour stays.

TOP END

Borobudur Inter-Continental Jakarta (Map p106; % 3805555; www.hotelborobudur.com; Jl Bengteng Selatan; r from US\$130; a i s) This is one of the older generation of luxury hotels, with style, grace, refurbished rooms and a large range of sporting facilities. It's on the southern side of Lapangan Bengteng.

Grand Hyatt Jakarta (Map p106; % 3901234; <http://jakarta.grand.hyatt.com>; Jl Thamrin; r from US\$160 plus 21% tax; a i s) The Hyatt is the city centre's most salubrious hotel, rising above Plaza Indonesia. It attracts the great, the good and the just plain beautiful to its top-notch bars and restaurants. You'll find it with its high-rise friends overlooking Welcome Monument on Jl Thamrin.

EATING

Jakarta has the best selection of restaurants in Indonesia, offering everything from top international restaurants to street fare and monkey meat on the streets of Glodok. Eateries are expensive by Indonesian standards, though.

Jalan Jaksa Area

Jl Jaksa's cafés are convivial meeting places dishing out standard travellers fare. They are certainly cheap and the breakfasts are very good value. Food is quasi-European or bland Indonesian.

BUDGET

Holland Bakery (Map p110; Jl Hali Agus Salim; cakes & cookies from 2000Rp; h breakfast & lunch) Just across the road from Popeye's, Holland Bakery sells a menagerie of sticky buns and cakes from beneath its trademark rotating windmill.

Sabang Food Court (Map p110; Jl Hali Agus Salim 49; mains around 15,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Sabang is a stripped-back food court popular with locals for its wide selection of regional Indonesian cuisine.

Pappa Kafe (Map p110; Jl Jaksa 41; mains 20,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) Most travellers holed up in Jl Jaksa tend to gravitate to Pappa at

least once during their stay, which creates a lively and convivial place to be. The food isn't the best, but there are outdoor tables and a varied menu.

Memories (Map p110; Jl Jaksa 17; mains 20,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) Memories is another of Jl Jaksa's backpacker and expat haunts, with a remarkably similar menu to the Pappa Kafe and plenty of folk willing to swap a story or two.

Popeye's (Map p110; cnr Jl Hali Agus Salim & Jl Kebon Sirih Raya; mains 20,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) At the northern end of Jl Sabang, this place flies the flag for junk-food fetishists, serving an assortment of deep-fried fish and chicken.

Ya Udah (Map p110; % 3144121; Jl Jaksa 49; mains 20,000-40,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) This popular airy hang-out serves breakfasts, Western dishes and even a wide selection of pies. It's by far the best place in the Jl Jaksa area for a cheap bite to eat.

MIDRANGE

Sate Khas Senayan (Map p110; Jl Kebon Sirih Raya 31A; mains 20,000-50,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) At the northern end of Jl Jaksa, this smarter air-con restaurant serves a variety of superb sate, *gado gado*, *rawon buntut* (oxtail stew) and other classic Indonesian dishes.

At the southern end of Jl Jaksa, Jl Wahid Hasyim is home to a number of midrange restaurants:

Paprika (Map p110; % 3144113; Jl Wahid Hasyim 55; mains 40,000-80,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) The best of the bunch here, with a varied menu, sparkling glassware and a decent wine list.

Tony Roma's (Map p110; Jl Wahid Hasyim 49; mains 50,000-90,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Has belly-extending, melt-in-the-mouth ribs for 165,000Rp, or half portions.

Other Areas

Quality restaurants are scattered the length and breadth of this busy city, which is great for choice, but it may mean travelling an hour just to dine.

There are, however, areas where fine restaurants like company: Jl Kemang Raya, the main drag of the affluent, southern suburb of Kemang, is inundated with top-notch Western-style eateries and bars, and the Menteng neighbourhood, just south of Jl Jaksa, chimes in with its fair share of top-notch eating options.

BUDGET

Street food is found throughout the city, but is particularly plentiful on Jl Pecenongan (Map p106), about 500m north of the National Monument, where numerous night warungs set up shop.

MIDRANGE

Payon (Map pp100-1; % 7194826; Jl Kemang Raya 17; mains 30,000-80,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) With its open pagoda setting, calming ambience, army of attentive staff and excellent authentic Indonesian cuisine, Payon is an inviting option. Just remember to bring some bug spray.

WWWok (Map pp100-1; % 7193928; Jl Kemang Raya 9 J-K; mains 30,000-100,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) WWWok is the place to mix dining and internet surfing; it offers plenty of internet terminals and oodles of noodles in hip, lively surroundings.

Kinara (Map pp100-1; % 7192677; Jl Kemang Raya 78B; mains 40,000-100,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) The mock medieval doors guarding Kinara lead to a stylish and sophisticated interior populated with some of the finest Indian dishes in Jakarta. Watch as Jakartans alternate between mouthfuls of hot curry and cooling gulps of water.

Lara Djonggrang (Map p106; % 3153252; Jl Teuku Cik Ditiro 4; mains 40,000-150,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) An attractive selection of dishes from around the archipelago, a stunning décor that mixes traditional Indonesian flair with North African charm, subdued lighting, and lazy to uplifting tunes all make Lara Djonggrang one of the most pleasant spots to dine in the city.

Café Batavia (Map p105; % 6915531; Jl Pintu Besar Utara 14; mains 50,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch dinner) In the heart of historic Kota on Taman Fatahillah is Batavia, an establishment barely changed since Dutch traders sipped coffee here in white linen suits. The restaurant is housed in a tastefully renovated Dutch building. The food is a triumph of form over content, but there is no better place to spend cocktail hour.

Cinnabar (Map p106; % 3903615; Plaza Gani Djemat, Jl Imam Bonjol 76-78; mains 50,000-150,000Rp; h dinner) Cinnabar serves excellent West-meets-East fusion food and cocktails in elegant, contemporary Asian surrounds.

Anatolia (Map pp100-1; % 7194658; Jl Kemang Raya 110A; mains 50,000-150,000Rp; h dinner) At the

southern end of Kemang Raya this is one of the most authentic Turkish restaurants in the city, with a menu featuring kebabs and excellent coffee and *chai* (spiced tea).

Also worth trying: **Kem Chicks Supermarket** (Map pp100-1; Jl Kemang Raya 3-5; h breakfast & lunch) The place to find everything, including the ever-elusive Marmite, Vegemite and peanut butter.

Kafe Pisa (Map p106; % 3100149; Jl Gereja Theresia 1; mains 40,000-120,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Rustic Mediterranean décor, an outside area, and decent pasta, pizza and ice cream.

TOP END

Lan Na Thai/Hazara (Map p106; % 3150424; Jl Kusuma Atmaja 85; mains 60,000-100,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) This three-in-one place (Face Bar, p114, is also located here) is for those who just can't make a decision; upstairs, Lan Na Thai offers exquisite Thai, while downstairs Hazara's kitchen produces divine North Indian cuisine.

Blowfish (Map pp100-1; % 57991678; Menara Bank Danamon Penthouse 29-F, Jl Prof Dr Satrio; mains 60,000-200,000Rp; h dinner) This slick Japanese restaurant has one of the best views of smoggy Jakarta; it resides on the 35th floor of the Menara Bank Danamon tower. The food is also highly rated and it's a grand spot for a cocktail.

Toscana (Map pp100-1; % 7181216; Jl Kemang Raya 120; mains 70,000-150,000Rp; h dinner) Toscana is an overly upmarket pizzeria (something you'll never see in Tuscany) that saves itself with lovely pizzas, a romantic atmosphere and a good selection of Tuscan wines.

Java Bleu (Map pp100-1; % 7697291; Kompleks D'Best, Jl Fatmawati 15, Blok E31; dinner for 2 400,000-600,000Rp; h dinner Tue-Sat) Java Bleu is arguably one of Jakarta's finest restaurants. It only opens for three hours a day and it only has space for 20, but the French menu, incorporating Indonesia's finest foie gras, is excellent. Bookings are essential.

DRINKING

Like so many other aspects of this gigantic city, Jakarta's bar scene is spread far and wide. You'll find plenty of places to drop in for a drink (and a quick karaoke). Only a handful of the more established drinking holes are listed here. If you're looking for a concentration of bars, however, try in and around Blok M; www.jakartablokm.com can

provide you with a list of places favoured by expats and locals alike.

Note that most bars stay open till around 1am or 2am, sometimes later on weekends, and all establishments listed under Live Music (right) rank highly as drinking spots.

Bugils (Map pp100-1; ☎ 5747777; www.bartele.com; Taman Ria Senayan, Jl Gatot Subroto) Bugils is one of the most famous bars among expats, and everyone has heard of its owner, Bartele. The bar itself appears modelled on an Amsterdam brown café, and the atmosphere is generally relaxed and convivial, except on weekends when it's rowdy and good natured.

Red Square (Map pp100-1; ☎ 57901281; PT Segiempat Merah Prima Plaza Senayan Arcadia, Unit X-105; Jl New Delhi, Pintu I Senayan) If you love vodka, you'll love this place. Dubbed Jakarta's first vodka bar, Red Square has more of Russia's standard drink than you can drown your sorrows in; it even has a walk-in freezer for knocking back slammers. The interior is modern and chic, as is the clientele.

Burgundy (Map p106; ☎ 3901234; Grand Hyatt Hotel, Jl Thamrin) This is Jakarta's most salubrious drinking haunt, with spectacularly expensive cocktails, avant-garde décor, a ceiling-high cigar humidor and more beautiful people than you can shake a daiquiri at.

Restaurants can also be perfect places for a drink only:

Blowfish (Map pp100-1; ☎ 57991678; Menara Bank Danamon Penthouse 29-F, Jl Prof Dr Satrio) Attracts a 'too cool for school' crowd eager to sip cocktails from such an elevated position.

Cinnabar (Map p106; ☎ 3903615; Plaza Gani Djemat, Jl Imam Bonjol 76-78) Another restaurant-bar frequented by Jakarta's upwardly mobile crowd: great cocktails.

Café Batavia (Map p105; ☎ 6915531; Jl Pintu Besar Utara 14) Historic spot with a touch of colonial living in modern Jakarta.

Face Bar (p113) Modern Southeast Asian bar with plenty of subdued reds and dark woods.

ENTERTAINMENT

Jakarta is Indonesia's most broad-minded, sophisticated and decadent city, with the nightlife to match. Hundreds of bars, discos, karaoke lounges and nightclubs fill the city, and range from sleazy to refined. Some sections of Jakarta still have plenty of money and people partying till dawn in spite of, or perhaps because of, the ongoing economic uncertainty. Bands start around 10pm or 11pm, and continue until 2am or

3am, sometimes later on weekends. During the week many places close at 1am.

Many venues don't have cover charges, though sometimes a first drink cover charge applies in the discos. A beer or a mixed drink costs from 30,000Rp, more in exclusive hotel bars.

Check the entertainment pages of the *Jakarta Post* or *Jakarta Kini* for films, concerts and special events.

Cultural Performances

Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM; Map p106; ☎ 31937325; pkj_tim@cbn.net.id; Jl Cikini Raya 73) TIM is Jakarta's cultural showcase; there is a performance almost every night and you might see anything from Balinese dancing to poetry readings and gamelan concerts. The TIM monthly programme is available from the tourist office, the TIM office and major hotels. Events are also listed in the *Jakarta Post*.

Gedung Kesenian Jakarta (Map p106; ☎ 3808282; Jl Gedung Kesenian 1) Gedung Kesenian has a regular programme of traditional dance and theatre, as well as European classical music and dance. The Jakarta Visitor Information Office (p103) can provide further information.

Museum Wayang (Map p105; ☎ 6929560; Taman Fatahillah; admission 2000Rp) *Wayang kulit* and *golek* performances are regularly held on Sunday between 10am and 2pm at this museum (p104).

Erasmus Huis (Map pp100-1; ☎ 5241069; www.erasmushuis.or.id; Jl HR Rasuna Said Kav S-3) This cultural centre, along with others in the city, holds regular events; consult its website for more information.

Live Music

West Pacific (Map p110; ☎ 3912025; Jl Thamrin 12) West Pacific is a haunt for those with a thirst for indie/alternative music but are not interested in getting all grunged up. It's also a fine spot to mingle with Jakarta's young movers and shakers.

BB's (Map p106; Jl Cokroaminoto) This blues bar in the heart of Menteng is a good place to catch live bands and meet local students and expats. Drinks are marginally cheaper here than most places.

Jaya Pub (Map p110; Jl Thamrin 12) This Jakarta institution has been around for more than 30 years and isn't showing signs of slowing down. Expect an older crowd and live performers most evenings.

Kafe Pisa (Map p106; ☎ 3100149; Jl Gereja Theresia 1) This eatery-bar has 'daggy' bands (as one expat put it) on weekends, which only add to its lively atmosphere. See also p113.

Nightclubs

Jakarta has some of the biggest clubs in Southeast Asia, with high-tech lighting, massive sound systems and pumping dance music. The clubs open around 9pm, but they don't really get going until midnight, when the bars close. On weekends they are open to 4am or later. Cover charges range from 25,000Rp to 60,000Rp and Wednesday is Ladies' Night, when ladies gain free entry.

Embassy (Map pp100-1; ☎ 5742047; Taman Ria Senayan, Jl Gatot Subroto) Embassy is one of the biggest clubs in the city, with a massive dance floor and plenty of fashionable Jakartans grooving the night away.

Centro (Map pp100-1; ☎ 72780800; Jl Dharmawangsa IX) Another of Jakarta's huge clubs, and one that attracts international DJs on a regular basis.

Retro (Map pp100-1; ☎ 52962828; Crown Plaza Hotel, Jl Gatot Subroto Kav 2-3) This hotel club draws a young, hip crowd at the weekends with a superb sound and light show.

Stadium (Map pp100-1; ☎ 6263323; Jl Hayum Waruk 111 FF-JJ) Glodok's Stadium represents the seediest side of Jakartan clubbing, with sex and dark corners aplenty – most weekends the music pumps nonstop from Friday night until Sunday afternoon.

SHOPPING

Shopping is one of Jakarta's biggest attractions. Clothes, shoes, bags and electrical goods (including DVDs) are very cheap, especially those that are locally made. Brand-name goods are available in profusion, but the genuine ones are rarely any cheaper than you could get them at home. Jakarta has handicrafts from almost everywhere in Indonesia, and while prices are higher than in the places of origin, it's a good opportunity to get an idea of prices if you have just arrived, or to make last-minute purchases if you are just leaving.

Arts & Handicrafts

Flea market (Map p106; Jl Surabaya) Jakarta's famous flea market is in Menteng. It has woodcarvings, furniture, brassware, jewellery, batik, oddities such as old typewriters

and many (often instant) antiques. It is always fun to browse, but bargain like crazy – prices may be up to 10 times the value of the goods.

Jl Kebon Sirih Timur (Map p110), the street east of Jl Jaksa, has a number of shops that sell antiques and curios. The quality is high, but so are the prices. **Jl Palatehan 1** is just to the north of the Blok M bus terminal (Map pp100-1), and has some interesting antique and craft shops.

Pasar Seni (Map pp100-1; Taman Impian Jaya Ancol) In north Jakarta, this is a good place to look for regional handicrafts and to see many of them being made.

Pasaraya department store (Map pp100-1; Jl Iskandarsyah II/2) Opposite Blok M Mall, Pasaraya has two huge floors that seem to go on forever and are devoted to batik and handicrafts from throughout the archipelago.

Sarinah department store (Map p110; Jl Thamrin) The 3rd floor of this store has a similar range of batik and handicrafts as Pasaraya.

Shopping Centres

Jakarta has more shopping centres than you could spend a month of Sundays in, and the general rule in the capital is, the bigger, the better.

Pasar Pagi Mangga Dua (Map pp100-1; Jl Mangga Dua) This is an enormous wholesale market with some of Jakarta's cheapest clothes, accessories and shoes, as well as a host of other goods. Quality can be a problem, though.

Mangga Dua Mall (Map pp100-1; Jl Mangga Dua) Across the road from Pasar Pagi Mangga Dua, this is the place for computers, electronics and super-cheap DVDs and CDs. The surrounding area has other shopping centres, making it Southeast Asia's biggest shopping precinct.

Blok M (Map pp100-1; Kebayoran Baru) The Blok M Mall, above the large bus terminal, has scores of small, reasonably priced shops offering clothes, shoes, CDs and DVDs. Most goods are of a better standard than those found in Mangga Dua, but only just.

Plaza Indonesia (Map p106; Jl Thamrin) Exclusive and expensive, Plaza Indonesia tops Jakarta's A list for shopping centres, with dozens of designer stores.

Plaza Senayan (Map pp100-1; Jl Asia Afrika) Number two in the shopping centre

popularity stakes, this huge plaza has everything from Marks & Spencer to Starbucks. Unfortunately, its designer stores are even more expensive than back home.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Jakarta is the main international gateway to Indonesia; for details on arriving here from overseas, see Transport (p865). Jakarta is also a major centre for domestic travel, with extensive bus, train, air and boat connections.

Air

International and domestic flights operate from the modern, efficient Soekarno-Hatta international airport; only domestic flights are handled out of the little-used Halim airport. For information on departure tax and international airlines, see p866 and p865 respectively.

Domestic airline offices in Jakarta include the following:

Adam Air (☎ 5507505, 6909999; www.adamair.co.id; Soekarno-Hatta international airport)

Batavia Air (Map p106; ☎ 3840888; www.batavia-air.co.id, in Indonesian only; Jl Ir H Juanda 15)

Garuda (Map p106; ☎ 2311801, 0807 1807807; www.garuda-indonesia.com; Garuda Bldg, Jl Merdeka Selatan 13)

Lion Air (Map p106; ☎ 6326039; www.lionair.co.id; Jl Gajah Mada 7)

Mandala (Map p110; ☎ 3144838; www.mandalaair.com; Jl Wahid Hasyim 84-88)

Merpati Nusantara Airlines (Map pp100-1; ☎ 6548888; www.merpati.co.id; Jl Angkasa Blok B/15 Kav 2-3, Kemayoran)

Sriwijaya Airlines (Map pp100-1; ☎ 6405566; Jl Gunung Sahari)

For information on prices, see the Java Airfares map (p98).

Boat

See p872 for information on the Pelni shipping services that operate on a regular two-week schedule to ports all over the archipelago. The **Pelni ticketing office** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 4212893; www.pelni.com; Jl Angkasa 18) is northeast of the city centre in Kemayoran. Tickets plus commission can also be bought from designated Pelni agents: **Menara Buana Surya** (Map p106; ☎ 3142464; Jl Menteng Raya 29), in the Tedja Buana building, 500m east of Jl Jaksa; or **Kerta Jaya** (Map p106; ☎ 3451518; Jl Veteran 1 27), opposite Mesjid Istiqlal.

Direct Pelni destinations from Jakarta include Padang, Tanjung Pandan (Pulau Belitung), Surabaya, Semarang, Muntok (Pulau Bangka), Belawan, Kijang (Pulau Bintan) and Batam. Services on the *Lambelu* to Padang and the *Kelud* to Batam (near Singapore) are of most interest to travellers. To Kalimantan, the *Lawit* goes via Tanjung Pandan to Pontianak. A number of Pelni boats go to Makassar (Sulawesi) via Semarang or Surabaya, but there are no direct services.

Pelni ships all arrive at and depart from Pelabuhan Satu (Dock No 1) at Tanjung Priok, 13km northeast of the city centre. Take bus 1 from Jl Thamrin, opposite Sariinah department store (Map p110); allow at least an hour. The bus terminal is at the old Tanjung Priok train station, from where it is a 1km walk to the dock or 5000Rp by *ojek* (motorcycle that takes passengers). A taxi to Jl Jaksa will cost around 35,000Rp. The information centre (☎ 4367487) at the front of the Dock No 1 arrival hall can be helpful, or try the nearby **Pelni Information Office** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 4301260; Jl Palmas 2), though you can't buy tickets here!

Other passenger ships also go from Dock No 1 to Pulau Bintan and Pulau Batam, from where it is just a short ferry ride to Singapore. The *Samudera Jaya* is a small but reasonably comfortable air-con hydrofoil that seats up to 300 passengers. It leaves Tanjung Priok on Saturday at noon and sails to Tanjung Pandan (150,000Rp, 12 hours) on Pulau Belitung, before continuing on to Tanjung Pinang (200,000Rp) and Batam (200,000Rp). Count on a 24-hour trip to Batam. In the reverse direction it leaves Thursday.

Bus

Jakarta's four major bus terminals – Kalideres, Kampung Rambutan, Pulo Gadung and Lebak Bulus – are all a long way from the city centre. In some cases it can take longer getting to the bus terminal than the bus journey itself, making the trains a better alternative for arriving in or leaving Jakarta.

Tickets (some including travel to the terminals) for the better buses can be bought from agencies (p103).

KALIDERES

Buses to the west of Jakarta go from here, about 15km northwest of Merdeka Sq. Fre-

quent buses run to Merak (11,000Rp, three hours) and Labuan (35,000Rp, 3½ hours). A few buses go through to Sumatra from Kalideres, but most Sumatra buses leave from Pulo Gadung bus terminal.

KAMPUNG RAMBUTAN

Buses that travel to areas south and southwest of Jakarta leave from this big bus terminal (Map pp100-1), some 18km south of the centre. It was designed to carry much of Jakarta's intercity bus traffic, but it mostly handles buses to West Java, including Bogor (normal/air-con 7000/10,000Rp, 40 minutes) and Bandung (20,000Rp to 45,000Rp, 4½ hours). Note that it is quicker to take the train to Bogor or Bandung.

PULO GADUNG

Twelve kilometres east of the city centre, Pulo Gadung (Map pp100-1) has buses to Cirebon, Central and East Java, Sumatra and Bali. Many of the air-con, deluxe buses operate from here. This wild bus terminal is the busiest in Indonesia.

The terminal is divided into two sections: one for buses to Sumatra and the other for all buses to the east. Most buses to Sumatra leave between 10am and 3pm, and you can catch a bus right through to Aceh if you are crazy enough. Destinations and fares from here include Bengkulu (150,000Rp to 200,000Rp), Palembang (140,000Rp to 180,000Rp) and also Padang and Bukittinggi (155,000Rp to 220,000Rp). Prices listed are for air-con deluxe buses with reclining seats and toilets – well worth it for those long hauls through Sumatra.

To the east, frequent buses go to Central and East Java and on to Bali. Destinations include Cirebon (23,000Rp to 35,000Rp, four hours) and Yogyakarta (85,000Rp to 115,000Rp, 12 hours).

LEBAK BULUS

This terminal (Map pp100-1) is 16km south of the city centre, and is another departure point for the long-distance deluxe buses to Yogyakarta, Surabaya and Bali. Most bus departures are scheduled for the late afternoon or evening.

Car & Motorcycle

See p119 for details on car hire in Jakarta.

Minibus

Door-to-door *travel* minibuses are not a good option in Jakarta because it can take hours to pick up or drop off passengers in the traffic jams. Some travel agencies book them, but you may have to go to a depot on the city outskirts.

Global Travel Service (Map p110; ☎ 3143932; globalid@indo.net.id; Jl Jaksa 49) Operates direct minibuses to Yogyakarta (150,000Rp).

Media Taxis (Map p110; ☎ 3909010; Jl Johar 15) Has minibuses to Bandung (60,000Rp).

Train

Jakarta's four main train stations are quite central, making trains the easiest way out of the city into Java. The most convenient and important is Gambir station (Map p106), on the eastern side of Merdeka Sq, a 15-minute walk from Jl Jaksa. Gambir handles express trains to Bogor, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Solo, Semarang and Surabaya. Some Gambir trains also stop at Kota (Map p105), the train station in the old city area in the north. The Pasar Senen train station (Map pp100-1) is to the east and mostly has economy-class trains. Tanah Abang (Map pp100-1) train station has economy trains to the west.

For express trains, tickets can be bought in advance at the booking offices at the northern end of Gambir train station, while the ticket windows at the southern end are for tickets bought on the day of departure. You can call for schedules and departure times (☎ 3842777, 3523790) or consult the helpful staff at the station's information office (☎ 6929194; h 24hr).

To get to Jl Jaksa, avoid the taxi booking desk inside Gambir station and head outside to the long line of taxis, or make your way to the main road and hail a *bajaj* (motorised three-wheeler taxi); the fare will be around 20,000Rp or 10,000Rp respectively.

If you need a hotel, there is an **Indohotel** (☎ 345080) desk inside the station.

BOGOR

No-frills, economy-class trains from Gambir to Bogor are part of the city rail network and can be horribly crowded during rush hours (watch your gear), but at other times they are quite tolerable and provide an efficient service. They can also be boarded at Gondangdia train station (Map p110),

only a short stroll from Jl Jaksa. They leave Gondangdia every 20 minutes from 7am until 9.13pm and cost 2500Rp for the 90-minute journey. Better *Pakuan Express* trains (10,000Rp, one hour) leave from Gambir much more infrequently.

BANDUNG

The easiest way to get to Bandung is by train. The journey is very scenic as the train climbs into the hills before Bandung. It is best to book in advance and essential on weekends and public holidays.

The efficient and comfortable *Parahyangan* service departs from Gambir train station heading for Bandung (business/executive 45,000/65,000Rp, three hours) roughly every hour between 4.40am and 10.15pm. The more luxurious *Argo Gede* (executive 75,000Rp, 2½ hours) departs approximately every two hours from 6.20am to 7.30pm.

CIREBON

Most trains that run along the north coast or to Yogyakarta go through Cirebon. One of the best services is the *Cirebon Express* (business/executive 50,000/65,000Rp, 3½ hours) departing from Gambir train station at 5.55am, 9.40am, 10.45am, 1.45pm and 6.15pm.

YOGYAKARTA & SOLO

The most luxurious trains are the *Argo Lawu* (210,000Rp, seven hours) departing at 8pm, and the *Argo Dwipangga* (210,000Rp, eight hours) departing at 8am. These trains go to Solo and stop at Yogyakarta, 45 minutes before Solo, but cost the same to either destination.

Cheaper services from the Pasar Senen train station to Yogyakarta are the *Fajar Utama Yogya* (business 100,000Rp, eight hours), departing at 6.20am; and the *Senja Utama Yogya* (100,000Rp, nine hours) at 7.30pm. The *Senja Utama Solo* goes to Solo (100,000Rp, 10 hours) at 8.25pm and also stops in Yogyakarta.

SURABAYA

Most trains between Jakarta and Surabaya take the shorter northern route via Semarang, though a few take the longer southern route via Yogyakarta. Express trains range from the *Jayabaya Selatan* (business

120,000Rp, 12 hours), that departs from Kota at 2pm and travels via Yogyakarta and Solo, to the luxurious *Argo Bromo Anggrek* (special executive class from 200,000Rp, nine hours), which departs from Gambir at 8.05am, 9.15am, 3.50pm and 9.15pm.

GETTING AROUND To/From the Airport

Jakarta's Soekarno-Hatta international airport is 35km west of the city centre. A toll road links the airport to the city and the journey takes about an hour (longer during rush hours).

Damri (☎ 4603708, 5501290) airport buses (15,000Rp) depart every 30 minutes starting around 5am and continuing till 6.30pm between the airport and Gambir train station (near Jl Jaksa) in central Jakarta. From Gambir train station to Jl Jaksa, take a *bajaj* (10,000Rp or less with bargaining) or taxi (25,000Rp from the overpriced taxi desk), or walk (it is just under 1km).

Taxis from the airport to Jl Thamrin/Jl Jaksa cost about 150,000Rp if booked from one of the taxi desks or 100,000Rp on the meter. On top of the metered fare, you have to pay around 10,000Rp in toll-road charges. Take metered taxis from the booth outside the arrival area, *not* the private drivers that assail you.

Bajaj & Other Local Transport

Bajaj (pronounced 'ba-jai') are nothing more than Indian auto-rickshaws: orange three-wheelers that carry two passengers (three if you're tiny) and sputter around on noisy two-stroke engines. They are pretty much open to the elements – locals joke that they also offer *AC alam* (natural air-con) as standard. Short trips such as Jl Jaksa to the main post office will cost about 10,000Rp. They're good value, especially during rush hours, but hard bargaining is required. Always agree on the price beforehand. *Bajaj* are not allowed along main streets such as Jl Thamrin, so make sure they don't simply drop you off at the border.

Jakarta has some other weird and wonderful means of getting around. Bemos are the original three-wheelers from the 1960s that still operate around Glodok and other parts of Jakarta. In the back streets of Kota, pushbikes with a padded 'kiddy carrier' on the back will take you for a ride!

The *helicak*, cousin to the *bajaj*, is a green motorcycle contraption with a passenger car mounted on the front. Jakarta also has *ojeks*, which are motorcycles that take pillion passengers. Weaving in and out of Jakarta's traffic on the back of an *ojek* is decidedly risky. Becak (bicycle-rickshaws) have been banned from the city and only a few tourist becak remain at Ancol.

Bus

Jakarta has a comprehensive city bus network. Around town at least a dozen bus companies run a knot of routes. Big, regular city buses charge a fixed 2000Rp fare. The big express *patas* buses also charge 2000Rp and the air-con *transjakarta* buses cost 3500Rp; these are usually less crowded and are the best option. At the time of writing, only three *transjakarta* lines were in operation but another 15 were planned for the coming years.

These services are supplemented by orange toy-sized buses and, in a few areas, by pale-blue *mikrolet* buses that cost 2000Rp. The main terminal for *mikrolet* and the numerous red and blue Metro Mini buses is at the Pasar Senen station. Note that the crowded buses have their fair share of pickpockets and bag slashers; the more expensive buses are generally safer, as well as being more comfortable.

The tourist office can provide a little information on buses around Jakarta. Some useful buses:

ACB1 Blok M to Kota via Jl Sudirman and Jl Thamrin.

Korridor I Blok M to Kota via Jl Sudirman and Jl Thamrin.

Korridor II Harmoni bus terminal to Pulo Gadung.

Korridor III Harmoni to Kalideres bus terminal.

P38 Blok M to Tanjung Priok via Jl Gatot Subroto.

P125 Blok M to Tanjung Priok via Jl Jenderal Sudirman.

S77 Blok M to Ragunan via Kemang.

Car

Jakarta has branches of the major car-rental operators, including **Avis** (Map p106; ☎ 3142900; Jl Diponegoro 25), **Bluebird** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 7941234; Jl Mampang Prapatan Raya 6) and **Astra** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 6508919; Jl Gaya Motor 1/10). Alternatively, inquire at the cheaper travel agencies, as a vehicle with driver may be the most economical option.

A number of the 'transport' guys who hang out on Jl Jaksa can offer some of the best deals if you negotiate directly with

them, avoiding hotel or travel agency commission.

The big operators charge about 500,000Rp per day with a driver (400,000Rp without), while private operators may ask for around 10% less.

Taxi

Taxis in Jakarta are metered and cost 5000Rp for the first kilometre and 250Rp for each subsequent 100m. Make sure the meter (*argo*) is used. Many taxi drivers provide a good service, but Jakarta has enough rogues to give its taxis a bad reputation and a number of travellers have complained about pushy drivers. Tipping is expected, if not demanded, but not obligatory. It is customary to round the fare up to the next 1000Rp. Carry plenty of small notes – Jakarta taxi drivers rarely give change.

Bluebird cabs (☎ 7941234, 7981001) are pale blue, and have the best reputation; a minimum of 20,000Rp is charged for ordered taxis. Any toll road charges and parking fees – there are lots of them – are extra and paid by the passenger.

AROUND JAKARTA Pulau Seribu

☎ 021 / pop 15,000

A popular destination for locals and expats alike lies only kilometres from the polluted harbour of Jakarta. Pulau Seribu (Thousand Islands), a string of islands in the Bay of Jakarta, is the perfect respite for those stuck in the capital too long, or those who simply want a taste of island life without hopping on a bus, train or plane.

Despite the misleading name, there are actually only 130 islands in the group, and of these, 37 have been used for commercial purposes. Pulau Pramuka is the group's district centre, but most people live on Pulau Kelapa, which is about 15km north of Jakarta. Near Pulau Kelapa, Pulau Panjang has the only airstrip on the islands.

While many of those accessible to tourists have been developed by resorts, the beaches remain white, the seas calm and clean (aside from the islands close to the mainland), and the pace of life unhurried.

All the resorts have individual bungalows with attached bathrooms and provide water sports facilities, including diving. While comfortable, none are international-standard

resorts, despite the prices. Most resorts offer packages that also include buffet-only meals and transport. Weekends are up to 50% more expensive than prices quoted here and hefty single supplements apply (quotes are usually per person, based on two sharing). Most resorts also charge inflated rates for the first night, offering discounts of up to 30% for additional nights. The resorts have offices in Jakarta or at the **Ancol Marina** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 64711822; Taman Impian Jaya Ancol) for bookings. As well as booking through their respective offices, you can make reservations through the **Jakarta Visitor Information Office** (Map p110; ☎ 3154094, 3161293; www.jakarta.go.id; Jl Wahid Hasyim 9; 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat), allowing for better comparisons.

Getting There & Around

The resorts have daily speedboats from Jakarta's Ancol Marina for guests and day-trippers, usually leaving around 8am and returning around 2pm. Even the furthest islands take only a little over two hours to reach. Return day-trip rates to the resorts with lunch include Pulau Bidadari (125,000Rp), Pulau Ayer (230,000Rp), Pulau Kotok (550,000Rp), Pulau Putri (455,000Rp) and Pulau Sepa (438,000Rp). Gray Line also offers day trips to the islands (p109).

You should have little problem finding someone to ferry you from one island to the next (but prices vary widely, depending on where you want to go) and most islands are small enough to easily explore on foot.

PULAU BIDADARI

This is the closest resort island and is popular with Jakarta residents for day trips. It is one of the least interesting resorts, but you can use it to visit other islands such as Pulau Kahyangan; Pulau Kelor, which has the ruins of an old Dutch fort; or Pulau Onrust, where the remains of an 18th-century shipyard can be explored. Boats can be hired for the short trip from Pulau Bidadari for 30,000Rp per hour.

The island's resort (per person with full board from 446,000Rp) has a variety of simple cottages and sports facilities, and can be booked at **Ancol Marina** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 64711822; Taman Impian Jaya Ancol).

PULAU AYER

Pulau Ayer is a little further north and is another popular day-trip destination. Its

resort (☎ 3852004; www.pulauayer.com/cottages.htm; packages with full board 1st/additional night from 540,000/440,000Rp) has comfortable cottages and a small stretch of good beach with cloudy water.

PULAU KOTOK

Near the islands' administrative centre is Pulau Kotok, an island with reputedly some of the best reef for snorkelling and diving around.

On the western side of Kotok, **Kul Kul Kotok Island Resort** (bungalows with fan/air-con from 600,000/625,000Rp, with full board & transfers 900,000/925,000Rp; a) is about the quietest and most traditional option, scoring high marks in the deserted tropical island stakes. It also offers diving from the resort, or direct from Ancol (two boat dives, lunch and transport for 1,400,000Rp). The resort can be booked through its **Jakarta office** (☎ 53675634; www.alamresorts.com/lang-en/kotok; Jl Bima 14).

PULAU PUTRI

About 4km north of Pulau Kelapa is Pulau Putri, which is notable for its aquariums and restaurants. Its resort (packages 1st/additional night from 1,100,000/880,000Rp; s), which consists of rustic yet charming cottages, has an idyllic setting at the north of the island; it can be booked through **PT Buana Bintang Samudra** (☎ 8281093; Jl Sultan Agung 21).

PULAU SEPA

Pulau Sepa is another island near Pulau Putri; it's quite small (by foot, it takes about 10 minutes to circumnavigate) and is surrounded by wide stretches of pristine white sand.

Rooms at **Pulau Sepa Resort** (full-board packages 1st/additional night from 688,000/448,000Rp; a) have hot water but are really just a better class of losmen, while bungalows are also simple but have more character. Book through **PT Pulau Sepa Permai** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 63863477; Jl Kyai Caringin 20).

PULAU BIRA

Pulau Bira is a more developed island, with good beaches and the added advantage of a golf course.

Bira Resort (bungalows with full board 1st/additional night 1,235,000/718,000Rp; a s) has spacious, well-equipped bungalows and the island's golf course; book through **PT Buana Bintang Samudra** (☎ 8281093; Jl Sultan Agung 21).

PULAU ANTUK TIMUR & ANTUK BARAT

Pulau Antuk Timur and Pulau Antuk Barat are some of the most northerly islands and are separated by a small channel. Both of them are home to Pulau Seribu's fanciest resort.

The upmarket **Pulau Seribu Marine Resort** (packages with full board 1,600,000Rp; a s) has very comfortable bungalows and a range of facilities considerably better than other islands. Full-board packages cost 200,000Rp more at weekends. This, along with other resorts, can be booked through **Viany Tour & Travel** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 6453377; www.vianytravel.com; Jl Lodan Timur 7, Taman Impian Jaya Ancol).

WEST JAVA

Many tourists experience the lush, volcanic panoramas of West Java (Jawa Barat) through the murky window of a speeding bus. In the rush to get to Yogyakarta and the high-profile attractions of Central Java, those with limited time make a beeline through the province, stopping for breath only in the regional capital, Bandung. But this dramatic, diverse region, historically known as Sunda and still home to the Sundanese people, has a fair few marvels of its own. Many of these marvels are off the beaten track, but while they will take some extra time to get to, they are well worth searching out.

Covering 46,229 sq km, West Java stretches from the remote islands of the Ujung Kulon National Park (last Javan home of the one-horned rhino) in the west to the waterways, sweeping beaches and bars of the beach resort of Pangandaran in the east. In between, you can also visit the infamous offshore volcano of Krakatau, kick back in the chilled coastal resorts of the west coast and stroll through Bogor's lush botanical gardens.

JAKARTA TO MERAK

Most visitors just head straight from Jakarta to Merak on their way to (or from) Sumatra, simply because there's not a lot in this area to attract your attention. From here it is possible to head for the west coast though, and the historic town of Banten can be an intriguing diversion if you have time to kill.

Banten

On the coast due north of Serang, the dusty fishing village of Banten was once a great maritime capital, where the Dutch and English first landed in Java to secure trade and struggle for economic supremacy.

Banten reached its peak during the reign of Sultan Agung (1651-83), and in 1680 he declared war on the Dutch, but internal conflict within the royal house ultimately led to his downfall. Agung fled Banten but finally surrendered in 1683, and his defeat marked the real beginning of Dutch territorial expansion in Java.

The chief landmark of a prosperous era, the 16th-century mosque **Mesjid Agung** dominates the village. This is a good example of early Islamic architecture, though its great white minaret was reputedly designed by a Chinese Muslim.

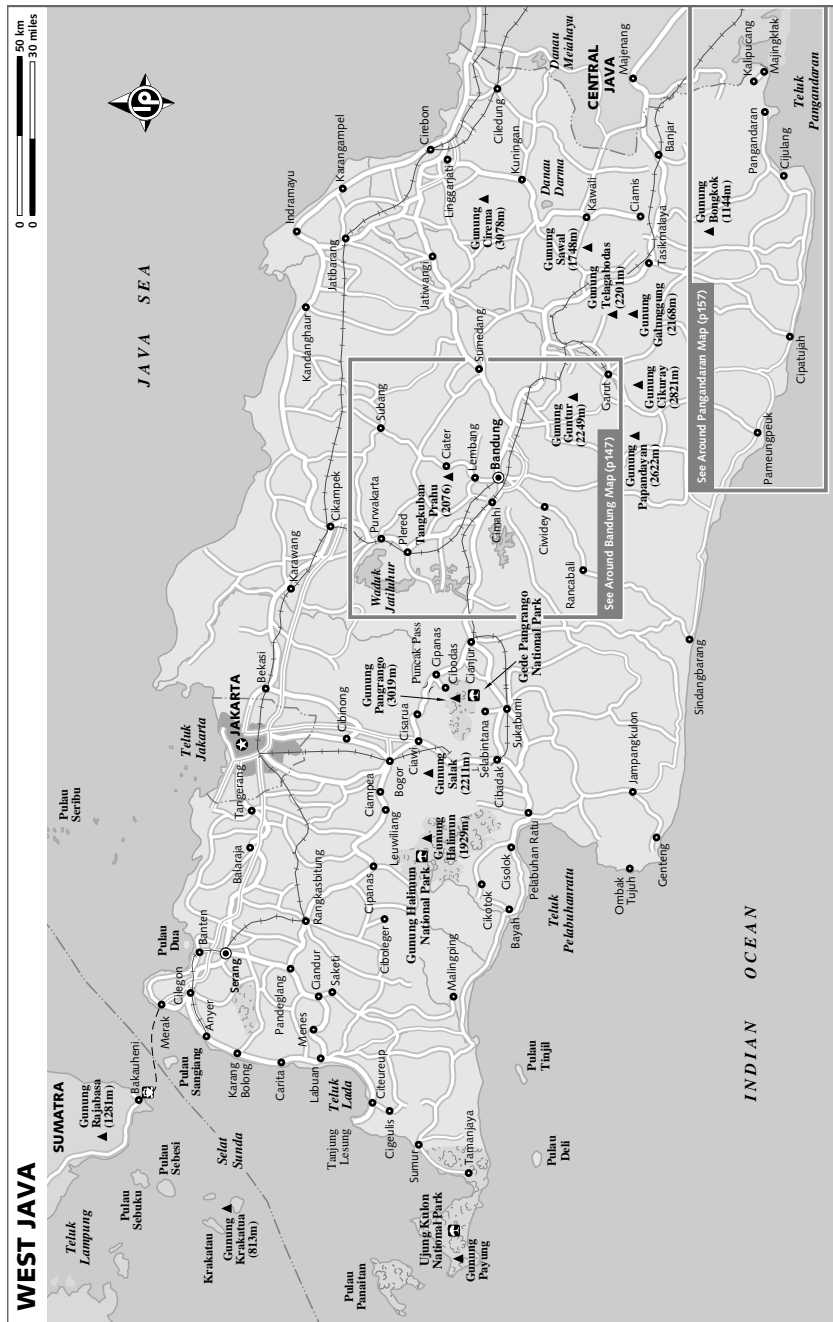
Next to the mosque is an archaeological museum (admission 2000Rp; 9am-4pm Tue-Sun), which has a modest collection of local clay artefacts, and a few of the long iron chained spikes for which the 'Debus players' are famous. Banten has long been a centre for practitioners of the Debus tradition, which is supposed to have come from India. These Islamic ascetics engage in masochistic activities such as plunging sharp weapons into their bodies (without drawing blood!) and are able to control the pain by the strength of their faith.

Directly across from the mosque is the large grass-covered site of Hasanuddin's fortified palace, the Surosowan, which was wrecked in the bloody civil war during the reign of Sultan Agung. It was rebuilt, only to be razed to the ground by the Dutch in 1832. Hasanuddin was a powerful ruler in the early 1500s who spread Banten's authority to the pepper-producing district of Lampung in southern Sumatra.

Other points of interest around the mosque include the massive ruins of **Fort Speelwijk** to the northwest; opposite the entrance to the fort is a Chinese temple, dating from the 18th century, which is still in use. Back along the road to Serang are the huge crumbling walls and archways of the **Kaibon** palace, and nearby is the tomb of **Maulana Yusuf**, who died in 1580.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Take a bus from Jakarta's Kalideres bus terminal to Serang (12,000Rp, 1½ hours),



SUNDANESE MUSIC & DANCE

Sundanese instrument makers are highly innovative and are capable of producing a sweet sound from just about anything. Of their better-known designs, the *kecap* (a type of plucked lute) is the most idiosyncratic and is often accompanied by the *suling*, a soft-toned bamboo flute that fades in and out of the long vibrating notes of the *kecap*. The *angklung* is less gainly in appearance and consists of a series of bamboo pieces of differing length and diameter, loosely suspended from a bamboo frame. When shaken, it produces an unlikely echoing sound.

Another traditional form is *gamelan degung*. This is played like Central Javanese gamelan, by a small ensemble, but with the addition of a set of small, suspended gongs (*degung*) and an accompanying *suling*. The music produced exists in the hinterland and has a sound somewhere between the soporific Central Javan and livelier Balinese styles of gamelan.

The best-known, contemporary West Javan dance form, Jaipongan, is a whirlwind of fast drumming and erotic movement, interspersed with a good dose of *pencak silat* (Indonesian martial arts) and a flick of New York-style break dancing. Jaipongan dance/music is a recent mutation of a more traditional Sundanese form called Ketuktilu, in which a group of professional female dancers (sometimes prostitutes) dance for male spectators.

Other dance forms include Longser, Joker and Ogel. Longser and Joker involve the passing of a sash between two couples. Ogel is a slow and exhaustive form, featuring measured movements and a rehearsal regime that many young performers simply lack the time or patience for.

10km south of Banten, from where a minibus (2000Rp, 30 minutes) will drop you near the Mesjid Agung.

Pulau Dua Bird Sanctuary

Off the north coast at Banten, Pulau Dua is one of Indonesia's major bird sanctuaries. The island has a large resident population – mainly herons, storks and cormorants – but the peak time is between March and July, when great numbers of migratory birds flock here for the breeding season.

It's a half-hour trip by chartered boat from the Karanghantu harbour in Banten, but you can walk across the fish ponds (via bridges) to the island. From Banten, take an *angkot* (minibus) 5km east to Sawahluhur village. The trail to the island starts 100m or so before the village and then it's a hot 1km walk, weaving between the fish ponds – just keep heading for the trees on the horizon. There is a Perlindungan Hutan dan Konservasi Alam (PHKA) post with a derelict hut that has bare wooden beds and not much else. If you are planning to stay bring food and water.

MERAK

☎ 0254

Right on the northwestern tip of Java, 140km from Jakarta, Merak is the terminus for ferries shuttling to and from Bakauheni on the southern end of Sumatra. Think of it only as an arrival and departure point, and

you won't be disappointed by this rough-and-ready town.

Hotel Andra (☎ 571041; Jl Raya Puloirda 4; r from 45,000Rp, with air-con from 85,000Rp; a) will do if you're stuck; rooms are basic but staff are friendly and it's right opposite the ferry terminal.

Getting There & Away

The bus terminal and train station are at the ferry dock.

BOAT

Ferries to Bakauheni in Sumatra depart every 30 minutes, 24 hours a day (see also p379). Ferries cost 8000/10,000Rp in economy/business class and take two hours. Alternatively, the slightly less-frequent Dermaga is a fast, passenger-only ferry to Bagoni, taking 45 minutes and costing 30,000Rp. The through-buses to Bandarlampung are the easiest option.

BUS

There are frequent buses making the run between Merak and Jakarta (economy 11,000Rp, three hours; express 20,000Rp, two hours). Most terminate at Jakarta's Kalideres bus terminal, but buses also run to/from Pulo Gadung and Kampung Rambutan. Other buses run all over Java, including Bogor (20,000Rp) and Bandung (normal/air-con 30,000/45,000Rp).

Buses leave from the front of the Merak bus terminal for Serang (5000Rp) and Cilegon (4000Rp); for Labuan (8000Rp), a change at Cilegon is required.

TRAIN

A business train to Jakarta (16,500Rp, three hours) departs at 12.30pm, but is sometimes cancelled; a slower economy-class train (6500Rp, five hours) leaves at 6am and 2pm.

WEST-COAST BEACHES

The west-coast beaches of Java are some of the best on the island; good surf, calm swimming spots and sparkling white sand. It's not Bali, but it makes a pleasant break from Jakarta, which, if you turn up on a weekend, you'll notice is common knowledge to many Jakartans.

Apart from the multiplying resorts, the area is sparsely populated. The main place of interest is Carita, for arranging tours to Krakatau (p126), visible on the horizon from most of the resorts, and Ujung Kulon National Park (p128). Strangely, this area is also notorious for motorcycle theft; if you bring your own vehicle, keep a close eye on it.

Anyer & Karang Bolong

☎ 0254

Anyer, some 14km to the southwest of Cilegon, is easily the most upmarket village along the west coast. Here you'll find the west coast's semi-luxurious resorts and decent beaches. Anyer was once the biggest Dutch port on Selat Sunda before being totally destroyed by the tidal waves generated by the eruption of Krakatau. The Anyer lighthouse was built by the Dutch at the instigation of King Willem III in 1885.

Karang Bolong, 11km south of Anyer and 30km north of Labuan, also has a good beach. A huge stand of rock forms a natural archway from the land to the sea.

SLEEPING

The resorts along this stretch of coast are expensive, but the standards are generally high. They are spaced out over a 5km stretch and start just south of the Anyer market; the better places are past the Anyer lighthouse.

At weekends the hotels fill up and prices are 20% to 30% more than the weekday

rates quoted here. Discounts are sometimes available during the week.

Hotel Mambruk Anyer (☎ 601602; www.mambruk.co.id; r from 560,000Rp plus 21% tax; a) Mambruk is the first place south of the lighthouse; it is hacienda style and has a good range of facilities and decent rooms, but only a ribbon of beach.

Anyer Cottage (☎ 601556; r from 750,000Rp, traditional bungalows 1,500,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s) At the 21km mark heading to Carita is Anyer Cottage, with an inviting yellow-sand beach and a relaxed, beachy atmosphere. Rooms, cottages and bungalows are a little worn around the edges on the outside, but indoors they're comfy and cool. Expect heavy discounts on weekdays.

Sol Elite Marbella (☎ 602345; www.solelitemarbella.com; r from 1,080,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s) Owned by a Spaniard, this 580-room giant is more than a little reminiscent of the super-resorts of the Iberian Costas. Half hotel, half shopping mall, this has it all, with swimming pools, shops, restaurants and a host of activities. The beach is also appealing, as long as it isn't in the hotel's enormous shadow.

Pondok Tubagus Resort (☎ 601776; tropical tents 1,250,000Rp, cottages from 2,750,000Rp; a s) This is one of the classiest resorts on the coast. It looks more like a tidy village than an expensive hotel. Cottages are in excellent condition, and the breezier 'tents' are right on the beach.

EATING

Marina Anyer Kafe (mains 20,000-50,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) A little further south of Sol Elite Marbella and just before Karang Bolong is the marina housing the Anyer Kafe. It faces the waterfront and is a fashionable spot for a drink or light meal. Bands play on the weekend.

Griya Anyer Spa (☎ 602577; Jl Griya Anyer, Km 127; mains around 50,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) On the very northern edge of Anyer, 2.5km before the Hotel Mambruk Anyer, is Griya, a top-notch Japanese and seafood restaurant in pleasant, airy surrounds. If you want to make a day of it, there is also a full complement of massage and spa treatments available.

Sol Elite Marbella (mains around 50,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) This offers good dining options. You can get a good paella, among other things, here.

Seafood warungs are scattered along the coast from Anyer to Karang Bolong and provide the only cheap dining.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Most visitors to Anyer go by car from Jakarta – 2½ to three hours via the toll road (turn off at Cilegon). By bus from Jakarta, take a Merak bus (11,000Rp) and get off at Cilegon, from where infrequent buses and frequent minibuses run to Labuan via Anyer (5000Rp) and Karang Bolong.

Carita

☎ 0253

Carita has a more rustic and laidback feel than Anyer, with a wide beach that's good for swimming and wandering. It's the most popular beach for travellers because it has moderately priced accommodation and is the best place to arrange visits to Krakatau (p126) and Ujung Kulon National Park (p128).

A new tourist information office was under construction at the time of research; look for it around 500m north of Rakata Hotel. Heading north from Labuan port, the usual access point, Carita proper starts around the Km 8 mark.

SIGHTS

About 2km from Carita over the rice paddies you can see the village of Sindanglaut (End of the Sea), which is where the giant tsunami of 1883 ended its destructive run. Hutan Wisata Carita is a forest reserve with walks through the hills and jungle. Curug Gendang waterfall is a three-hour return hike through the reserve.

ACTIVITIES

The big hotels or travel agencies such as **Black Rhino** (☎ 802818; blackrhinojva@yahoo.com), next to the Sunset View hotel, can arrange diving. Boats and diving equipment can also be hired through **Marina Lippo Carita** (☎ 801525); Rakata Hotel is another contact point for diving tours. Equipment rental starts at 250,000Rp, while a boat to Krakatau starts at 1,800,000Rp (maximum six). The best diving is in Ujung Kulon National Park, but Krakatau and Pulau Sanghiang are also of interest.

TOURS

In Carita, a number of operators offer tours to Krakatau and Ujung Kulon. Their rates

tend to be better than those offered by the big hotels. **Black Rhino** (left) and **Rakata Hotel** (below) can help out with tours. All operators offer almost identical tours to Krakatau and Ujung Kulon (from US\$225 per person for four days and three nights), as well as Badui villages (one-day/overnight trip US\$90/140).

SLEEPING

Carita is the place to find budget to mid-range hotels.

Sunset View (☎ 801075; r 60,000Rp, with air-con 120,000Rp; a) Sunset View is close to the cheapest place on the coast, and it shows; rooms are small, dark and pokey, but if you're going to spend the day on the beach or diving, it probably won't matter much.

Rakata Hotel (☎ 801171; r 65,000Rp, with air-con & TV 140,000Rp; a) Rakata is situated in the middle of Carita, and is a solid bet for those looking for a clean room and a soft bed. It has a good restaurant and can organise tours to Ujung Kulon and Krakatau. The bright rooms are a reasonable deal in Carita. All rates are pricier at the weekend.

Niguadharna Hotel (☎ 803288; economy/air-con r 100,000/220,000Rp; a s) Not far from the Km 10 mark, this used to be a very attractive boutique hotel, but sparrow droppings and sea air have taken their toll. The central pool looks very inviting, and rooms are set back from the busy road.

Carita Baka Baka (☎ 801126; r from 100,000Rp, 10-person bungalows from 300,000Rp; a) Like many of the hotels and resorts along the west coast, Carita Baka Baka is looking battered by the sea air, but it has an idyllic spot right on the beach and is surrounded by palm trees. Rates are more than double on the weekends.

Krakatau Surf Carita (☎ 803848; villas from 600,000Rp plus 21% tax; a) Perched on the beach with a view of the crashing surf and Krakatau in the background, this small place has a superb location. It's also one of the most luxurious spots in Carita.

Mutiara Carita (☎ 801069; www.mutiara-carita.com; cottages from 300,000Rp, beach-front cottages from 1,050,000Rp; a s) This large complex of cottages and bungalows occupies the southern point of Carita Bay. Its cottages are spacious and immaculate, there's a private beach, and activities are organised to entertain the kids on a regular basis.

EATING

Carita has plenty of warungs and *rumah makan* (restaurants) lining the beach and main drag, along with a couple of good restaurants.

Diminati (mains 5000-15,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) Opposite Carita marina is this simple place, with 'Mama' at the helm and homemade Indonesian dishes on the menu. It's a good place to hang out and swap stories with fellow backpackers, if there are any around.

Carita Baka Baka (mains 30,000-70,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) At the hotel of the same name, this open restaurant occupies a perfect spot right on the beach, but the food can be hit and miss.

Valentine Restaurant (mains 35,000-70,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Opposite the Krakatau Surf, Valentine is the most upmarket eating option in Carita, with a pleasant, airy ambience and a plethora of fish dishes. You could always try the frog specialities if you so desire.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

To get to Carita from Jakarta, take a bus to Labuan and then a Colt or *angkot* to Carita (4000Rp). Overcharging is common.

To Anyer, an *angkot* costs around 6000Rp.

LABUAN

☎ 0253

The dreary little port of Labuan is merely a jumping-off point for Carita or for Ujung Kulon National Park (p128), but it is home to the Labuan PHKA office (☎ 801731; h 8am-4pm Mon-Fri). This office is 2km north of town towards Carita and is a helpful spot for travellers wishing to visit Ujung Kulon independently.

Carita is so close that it's not even worth considering an overnight stay in this dumpty town.

Frequent buses depart from Kalideres bus terminal in Jakarta for Labuan (35,000Rp, 3½ hours) via Serang and Pandeglang. Frequent buses also operate between Labuan and Bogor (20,000Rp, four hours), while the only bus to Bandung (30,000Rp, seven hours) leaves at 6am.

Angkot for Carita (4000Rp, 30 minutes) leave from the market, 100m from the Labuan bus terminal.

TANJUNG LESUNG

☎ 0253

Tanjung Lesung, 30km southwest of Labuan, is a quiet and unspoilt peninsula with beautiful beaches and untouched Sundanese villages. Accommodation is limited to a couple of relatively upmarket resorts.

Near the resort hotel, **Tanjung Lesung Sailing Club** (☎ 802904; cottages weekdays/weekends from 200,000/250,000Rp plus 21% tax) has boat rental and pleasant, but more basic, cottage accommodation. It also has a bar and restaurant.

Tanjung Lesung Resort Hotel (☎ 802900, in Jakarta 021-5727270; www.tanjunglesung.com; cottages weekdays/weekends from 756,000/1,500,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s) may be having an identity crisis (is it a resort or hotel?), but either way you look at it, the four-star comfort and peaceful surroundings offered are very welcome. It has a spa and restaurant, and the price includes breakfast and dinner.

From Labuan, you can take an *angkot* to Citeureup (12,000Rp, 45 minutes) and then hire an *ojek* (5000Rp, 10 minutes) to the resort or sailing club.

GUNUNG KRAKATAU

The legendary peak of Krakatau, the most famous of the world's famous volcanoes, is a name almost everyone knows – but few actually know of its location (take the film makers of *Krakatoa, East of Java*, for instance). Resting in relative peace some 50km from the West Java coast and 40km from Sumatra, the volcano is nowadays a shadow of its former self – a small group of disconnected islands centred on Anak Krakatau (Child of Krakatau), a volcanic mass that has been on the boil since 1928.

The highlight of any trip to Krakatau is rounding Pulau Rakata and first glimpsing the menacing peak of Krakatau's child.

Information

Labuan PHKA office (☎ 801731; h 8am-4pm Mon-Fri) has information on the volcano; otherwise consult your hotel reception for information on tours and Anak Krakatau's current activity status.

Activities

Boat trips are the only way to visit Krakatau. It's sometimes possible to land on the eastern side of Anak Krakatau. At the time of writing, organised tours were taking

visitors about 150m up the side of Anak Krakatau, and on walking and snorkelling tours to neighbouring islands. Walking to the edge of the caldera is never advisable, and you should seek qualified advice before making any trip to the volcano.

Getting There & Away

Most visitors to Krakatau come from Carita or the other beach resorts on the west coast of Java. However, Krakatau officially lies in Sumatra's Lampung province, and it is slightly quicker and cheaper to reach Krakatau from the small port of Kalianda, 30km north of the ferry terminal at Bakauheni (p482).

Tour operators out of Carita (see p125) will take down the names of interested trav-

ellers wanting to share a ride, but usually the numbers just aren't available and you will have to charter.

Prices vary depending on the quality of the boat, but always charter the best boat you can afford. During the rainy season (November to March) there are strong currents and rough seas, but even during the dry season strong southeast winds can whip up the swells and make a crossing inadvisable. When weather conditions are fine it's a long one-day trip, but it's definitely worth the effort – *if* you can hire a safe boat.

Small fishing boats may be cheap, but so are the tales of travellers who spent the night, or longer, adrift in high swells. Reliable boats with radios and life jackets cost

THE WORLD'S LOUDEST RECORDED BANG

Few volcanoes have as explosive a place in history as Krakatau, the island that blew itself apart in 1883 with the loudest bang ever recorded on earth. Turning day into night and hurling devastating tsunamis against the shores of Java and Sumatra, Krakatau quickly became volcanology's A-list celebrity.

Few would have guessed that Krakatau would have snuffed itself out with such a devastating swan song. It had been dormant since 1680 and was regarded as little more than a familiar nautical landmark for maritime traffic passing through the narrow Selat Sunda.

But from May through to early August in 1883, passing ships reported moderate activity, and by 26 August Krakatau was raging.

At 10am on 27 August 1883, Krakatau erupted so explosively that on the island of Rodriguez, more than 4600km to the southwest, a police chief reported hearing the booming of 'heavy guns from eastward'.

With its cataclysmic eruptions, Krakatau sent up a record column of ash 80km high and threw into the air nearly 20 cu kilometres of rock. Ash fell on Singapore 840km to the north and on ships as far as 6000km away; darkness covered Selat Sunda from 10am on 27 August until dawn the next day.

Far more destructive were the great ocean waves that were triggered by the collapse of Krakatau's cones into its empty belly. A giant tsunami, more than 40m high, swept over the nearby shores of Java and Sumatra, and the sea wave's passage was recorded far from Krakatau, reaching Aden (on the Arabian Peninsula) in 12 hours over a distance 'travelled by a good steamer in 12 days'. Measurable wave effects were even said to have reached the English Channel. Coastal Java and Sumatra were devastated: 165 villages were destroyed and more than 36,000 people were killed.

The following day a telegram sent to Singapore from Batavia (160km east of Krakatau) reported odd details such as 'fish dizzy and caught with glee by natives', and for three years, ash clouds circled the earth, creating strange and spectacular sunsets.

The astonishing return of life to the devastated islands has been the subject of scientific study ever since. Not a single plant was found on Krakatau a few months after the event; 100 years later – although the only fauna are snakes, insects, rats, bats and birds – it seems almost as though the vegetation was never disturbed.

Krakatau may have blown itself to smithereens but it is currently being replaced by Anak Krakatau, which has been on the ascendant ever since its first appearance nearly 80 years ago. It has a restless and uncertain temperament, sending out showers of glowing rocks and belching smoke and ashes.

from 1,800,000Rp for a small utility boat (maximum of six people) to 3,000,000Rp for a faster boats (eight to 10 people). These can be organised through Carita agents or Marina Lippo (☎ 0253-801525) in Carita.

Wanawisata Alamhayati (☎ 5710392) also arranges expensive tours to Krakatau from Jakarta.

UJUNG KULON NATIONAL PARK

On the remote southwestern tip of Java, the UNESCO World Heritage-listed **Ujung Kulon National Park** (admission 59,500Rp) covers about 760 sq km of land, including the large Pulau Panaitan. Because of its isolation and difficult access, Ujung Kulon has remained an outpost of primeval forest and untouched wilderness in heavily developed Java; alongside some fine opportunities for hiking, it also has some good beaches with intact coral reefs. Few people visit the park, but despite its remoteness, it is one of the most rewarding national parks in Java.

Ujung Kulon is best known as the last refuge in Java for the once plentiful one-horned rhinoceros, now numbering only around 55. The shy Javan rhino is an extremely rare sight and you are far more likely to come across *banteng* (wild cattle), wild pigs, otters, squirrels, leaf monkeys and gibbons. Panthers also live in the forest and crocodiles in the river estuaries, but these are also rare. Green turtles nest in some of the bays and Ujung Kulon also has a wide variety of bird life. On Pulau Peucang, sambar deer, long-tailed macaques and big monitor lizards are common, and there is good snorkelling around coral reefs.

The main park area is on the peninsula but it also includes the nearby island of Panaitan and the smaller offshore islands of Peucang and Handeuleum. Much of the peninsula is dense lowland rainforest and a mixture of scrub, grassy plains, swamps, pandanus palms and long stretches of sandy beach on the west and south coasts. Walking trails follow the coast around much of the peninsula and loop around Gunung Payung on the western tip.

Information

The **Labuan PHKA office** (☎ 801731; 7am-4pm Mon-Fri) is a useful source of information, but you pay your entry fee when you enter the park at the park office in Tamanjaya or on the islands. Try to pick up a copy of

the excellent, but rarely available, *Visitor's Guidebook to the Trails of Ujung Kulon National Park* (25,000Rp) from the park office. The **Jakarta Visitor Information Office** (Map p110; ☎ 3154094, 3161293; www.jakarta.go.id; Jl Wahid Hasyim 9; 7am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) also has information and can organise tours.

The best time to visit Ujung Kulon is in the dry season (April to October), when the sea is generally calm and the reserve less boggy. Be aware that malaria has been reported in Ujung Kulon.

Guides must be hired for hiking in the park and cost around 250,000Rp per day. Bring along lightweight food, such as packaged noodles, and drinking water if you are trekking; otherwise food can be organised by tour operators or the park wardens. Supplies are available in Tamanjaya, but in Sumur and Labuan there is more choice.

Activities

Tamanjaya village, the entry point to the park, has accommodation and can arrange guides for the three-day hike across to the west coast and on to Pulau Peucang. This is the most rewarding way to explore the park and its diversity. It can be tackled by anyone of reasonable fitness, but is not a stroll.

Conditions on the trail are basic – there are rough shelters, but some are almost derelict. If you have a tent, bring it. The trail heads to the south coast and the hut near Pantai Cibandawoh. The second day is a five-hour walk along the beach to the hut at Sungai Cibunar – rivers have to be waded through. On the third day, most hikers cross over the hills to the west coast at Cidaon, opposite Peucang. An alternative and longer trail with good coastal scenery goes from Cibunar via Sanghiang Sirah and the lighthouse at Tanjung Layar, the westernmost tip of mainland Java.

Pulau Peucang is the other main entry into the park but can only be reached by chartered boat. Good but expensive accommodation and a restaurant are run by a private tour company, **Wanawisata Alamhayati** (☎ 5710392). Peucang also has beautiful white-sand beaches and coral reefs on the sheltered eastern coast. Hikers might be able to hitch a lift on a boat out of Peucang, but don't count on it.

There is also comfortable but simple accommodation at **Pulau Handeuleum**, which

is ringed by mangroves and doesn't have Peucang's attractions. Boats or canoes can be hired for the short crossing to Cigenter, on the mainland opposite Pulau Handeuleum, and other trails can be explored on this side of the park.

Large **Pulau Panaitan** is more expensive to reach, but has some fine beaches and hiking opportunities. Panaitan is also popular with surfers (see p847). It is a day's walk between the PHKA posts at Legon Butun and Legon Haji, or you can walk to the top of Gunung Raksa, topped by a Hindu statue of Ganesh, from Citambyung on the east coast.

Tours

A typical tour from Carita, as offered by travel agencies such as **Black Rhino** (☎ 802818; blackrhinojva@yahoo.com), is four days/three nights with a transfer by car to Sumur, then a boat to Handeuleum (about seven to eight hours) where you camp. Then you trek to Jamang and camp overnight at the ranger's post. The next day you can explore around Tanjung Alang Alang and the nearby beaches, then return. The all-inclusive tours cost US\$225 per person for a minimum of four.

Boat hire from Labuan or Carita can also be arranged. A three-day return trip to Pulau Peucang costs US\$300 in a speedboat (2½ hours, maximum six persons). The park office in Tamanjaya can arrange boat transfers to the islands for around 1,800,000Rp.

Wanawisata Alamhayati (☎ 5710392) has all-inclusive, two-day/three-night tours to Pulau Peucang for around US\$300 per person, depending on accommodation, for a minimum of two people.

Sleeping & Eating

Advance bookings through the tourist office and tour operators in Carita (p125) are recommended for Pulau Peucang and Handeuleum, particularly at weekends.

Umang Resort & Spa (☎ 0253-803331, in Jakarta 021-563 9023; www.pulau-umang.com; packages for 2 from 3,500,000Rp; a s) This stunning new resort takes up the entire island of Umang, close to Sumur. The spacious, stylish cottages are decked out in dark-wood furniture, and many come with a private terrace facing the sea. Its seclusion and romantic ambience make it popular with honeymooners and love-struck couples.

Tamanjaya, a sleepy, rural village with a few shops and warungs, also has homestays. Here you'll find **Wisma Wisata Alam** (☎ 0253-802224; Jl Dermaga; r 40,000-50,000Rp), with reasonable rooms and good views of Krakatau, and **Sunda Jaya homestay** (r per person 40,000Rp), a basic place that also offers meals.

On Pulau Peucang there are double rooms in the old guesthouse (d 400,000Rp), and the much more luxurious **Flora A & B bungalows** (d US\$80; a) has hot water and fridges. Add 15% tax to all rates, including meals in the very good restaurant.

Not to be outdone, Pulau Handeuleum has a reasonably good guesthouse (r 110,000Rp plus 15% tax) in pleasant surroundings. It has a kitchen but you need to bring your own food, as the island has no other dining options.

Within the park you can camp or stay at the primitive huts for a small fee. Bring food for yourself and your guide.

Getting There & Away

The cheapest way to get to the park is by minibus from Labuan to Sumur (30,000Rp, 3½ hours), and then an *ojek* to Tamanjaya (50,000Rp, 1½ hours) along a badly rutted road.

The only other way to reach the park is to charter a boat. Given the long stretch of open sea, which is often subject to large swells, make sure you take a good boat.

BOGOR

☎ 0251 / pop 715,000

'A romantic little village' is how Sir Stamford Raffles described Bogor when he made it his country home during the British interregnum. As an oasis of unpredictable European weather – it is credited with 322 thunderstorms a year – cool, quiet Bogor was long the chosen retreat of starch-collared colonials escaping the stifling and crowded capital.

Today, the long arm of Jakarta reaches almost the whole way to Bogor, and while a ribbon of green still just about survives between the two, the city is already choked with the overspill of the capital's perennial traffic problem.

But while Bogor's transformation into a distant Jarkatan suburb continues apace, the real oasis remains untouched. Planted in the very centre of the city, with the traffic passing idly by, Bogor's botanical gardens are truly world class.

The gardens can be visited as a day trip from Jakarta, or since the capital is only an hour away, Bogor can be used as a cooler and more manageable base from which to visit Jakarta. From Bogor you can venture to the nearby mountains that surround the city or continue on to Bandung or Pelabuhan Ratu.

Though Bogor stands at a height of only 290m, it's appreciably cooler than Jakarta. Visitors in the wet season should bear in mind the town's 'City of Rain' moniker. Bogor has probably the highest annual rainfall in Java, so bring an umbrella and be prepared for wet feet.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS & TELEPHONE

Wartels can be found next to the post office and at the entrance to the botanical gardens.

Hotel Salak (☎ 350400; Jl Ir H Juanda 8; per hr 5000Rp; 7am–10pm)

Warnet and Wartel Paledang (Jl Paledang; per hr 10,000Rp; 7am–9pm) Next to Pensiune Firman.

MONEY

Bogor has plenty of banks. Both the following banks have ATMs:

BCA bank (Bank Central Asia; Jl Ir H Juanda 28)

BII bank (Bank Internasional Indonesia; Jl Dewi Sartika)

POST

Post office (7am–5pm) Just south of the western entrance to the gardens; also has internet access.

TOURIST INFORMATION

PHKA Headquarters (Jl Ir H Juanda 15; 7am–2pm Mon–Thu, 7–11am Fri) The official body for administration of all of Indonesia's wildlife reserves and national parks; located next to the main garden gates.

Tourist office (☎ 081 1110347; Jl Ir H Juanda 10; 7am–4pm) On the western side of the gardens, the office has hotel information, a rough map of the town, and can organise guides and tours (p132).

Sights

KEBUN RAYA

At the heart of Bogor are the huge botanical gardens, known as the **Kebun Raya** (Great Garden; admission 5500Rp Sat & Sun, 7500Rp Mon–Fri; 7am–5pm), covering an area of around 80 hectares. They are said to be the inspiration of Governor General Raffles, but the spacious grounds of the Istana Bogor (Presidential

Palace) were converted to botanical gardens by the Dutch botanist Professor Reinwardt, with assistance from Kew Gardens, and officially opened by the Dutch in 1817. It was from these gardens that various colonial cash crops, such as tea, cassava, tobacco and cinchona, were developed by early Dutch researchers during the infamous Cultivation Period in the 19th century. The park is still a major centre for botanical research in Indonesia.

The gardens contain streams and lotus ponds, and more than 15,000 species of trees and plants, including 400 types of magnificent palms. The orchid houses are reputed to contain more than 3000 orchid varieties. Near the main entrance of the gardens is a small monument, erected in memory of Olivia Raffles, who died in 1814 and was buried in Batavia. There is also a cemetery near the palace with Dutch headstones.

Crowds flock to here on Sunday, but the gardens are quiet at most other times. The southern gate is the main entrance and is home to Bogor's only touts; other gates are only open on Sunday and holidays.

ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Near the entrance to the botanical gardens, this **museum** (admission 2000Rp; 7am–4pm Sat–Thu, 8am–noon Fri) has a motley but interesting collection of zoological oddities, including the skeleton of a blue whale. If you have heard about Flores having a rat problem, one glance at the stuffed Flores version in the showcase of Indonesian rats will explain why.

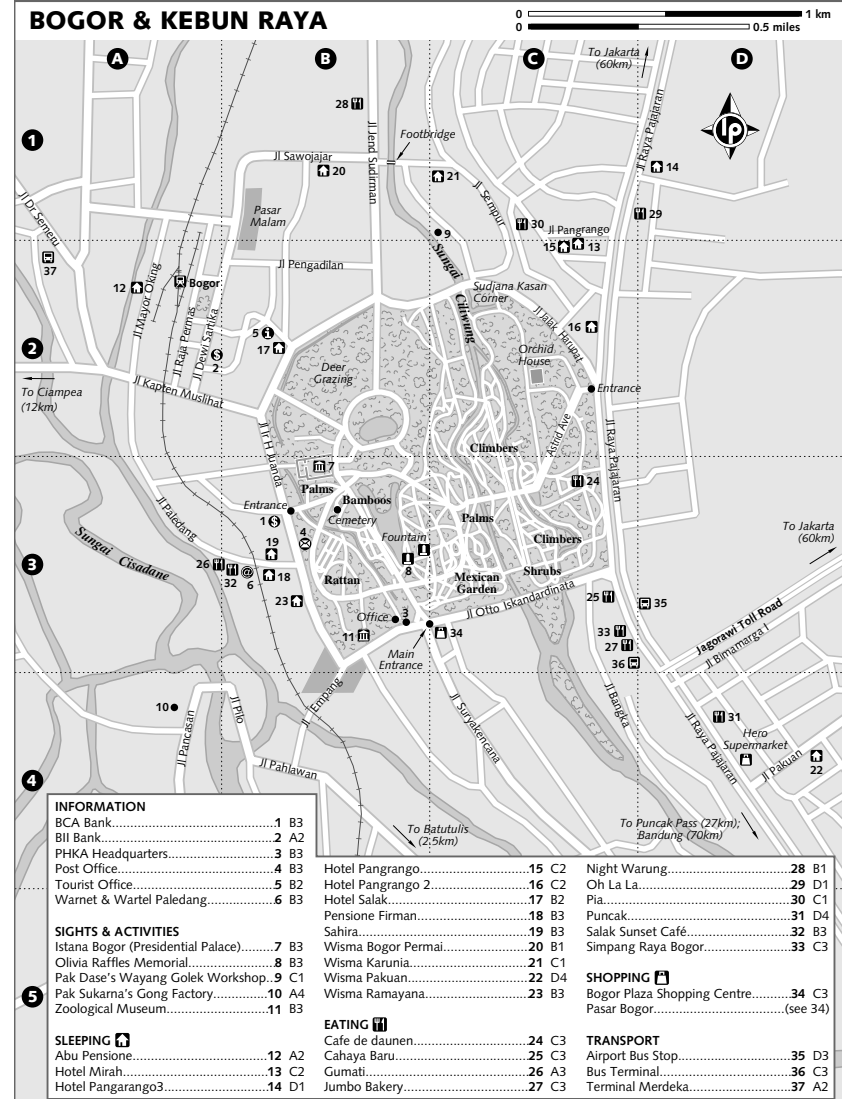
ISTANA BOGOR

In the northwestern corner of the botanical gardens, the summer palace of the president was formerly the opulent official residence of the Dutch governors general from 1870 to 1942.

Today, herds of white-spotted deer roam the immaculate lawns and the building contains Soekarno's huge art collection, which largely focuses on the female figure. The palace is only open to groups (minimum 10) by prior arrangement, and children are not allowed inside. Contact the tourist office for more information.

OTHER SIGHTS

The **Batutulis** is an inscribed stone dedicated to Sri Baduga Maharaja (1482–1521), a Pa-



jajaran king credited with great mystical power. The stone is housed in a small shrine visited by pilgrims – remove your shoes and pay a small donation before entering. Batutulis is 2.5km south of the botanical gardens, on Jl Batutulis. It's almost opposite the former home of Soekarno, who was attracted by the stone's mystical power. His

request to be buried here was ignored by Soeharto, who wanted the former president's grave as far away from the capital as possible.

One of the few remaining gongsmiths in West Java is Pak Sukarna, and you can visit his **gong factory** (☎ 324132; Jl Pancasan 17), where gongs and other gamelan instruments are

smelted over a charcoal fire. A few pricey gongs and *wayang golek* puppets are on sale.

Pak Dase makes quality puppets at his **wayang golek workshop** (Lebak Kantin RT 02/VI), down by the river, just north of the botanical gardens. Take the footbridge to Wisma Karunia from Jl Jenderal Sudirman and ask for Pak Dase in the labyrinthine *kampung* (village).

Tours

Tours of Bogor can be arranged through the tourist office (p130), as can four-day/three-night eco-trips to Halimun National Park, Garut and Pangandaran. The latter is a popular tour taken by Alwi (☎ 081 1110347; alwiadin@yahoo.com), a guide who speaks excellent English and Dutch. He also arranges for tourists to teach English to local children in the nearby village of Leuwiliang in exchange for food and lodging. It's one of the best ways to mix with the locals and give something to the community.

Sleeping BUDGET

Bogor has a good selection of family-run places. The most popular budget options are close to each other, midway between the train station and bus terminal, near the botanic gardens.

Pensione Firman (☎ 323246; Jl Paledang 48; r with/without mandi 55,000/45,000Rp) This friendly family-stay has the added advantage of a breezy roof terrace with views of the city below. Rooms are very basic, but will do if you're only looking for a bed. The owner speaks excellent English, tours are offered and meals are served.

Abu Pensione (☎ 322893; Jl Mayor Oking 15; r with/without mandi 80,000/70,000Rp, with air-con & hot water 135,000Rp; a) This hotel is geared to the travellers trade. It's in good condition, has tourist information and travel services and most rooms have an attached bathroom.

Wisma Pakuan (☎ 319430; Jl Pakuan 12; r with balcony 110,000Rp, with air-con 175,000Rp; a) Pakuan occupies the upper floor of a large, modern family home southeast of the bus terminal. Rooms are in excellent condition and the owners are more than happy to share their knowledge of town and the surrounding area. It's on a busy street, so ask for a room at the back.

Wisma Bogor Permai (☎ 381633; Jl Sawojajar 38; tw/d 150,000/185,000Rp; a) Bogor Permai may have seen better days, but it's still a good bet for a bed. Rooms around a pleasant courtyard have TV, minibar and carpets, but they also come with a hefty dose of mothballs and plenty of early evening noise.

Also recommended: **Wisma Karunia** (☎ 323411; Jl Sempur 33-35; r without private bathroom 40,000Rp, s/d with private bathroom 60,000/70,000Rp) A long way from the city centre but is a quiet and very friendly family-run place.

Wisma Ramayana (☎ 320364; Jl Ir H Juanda 54; r from 65,000Rp) Across from the gardens; has the most colonial charm.

MIDRANGE

A good hunting ground for midrange hotels is the area northeast of the botanical gardens.

Hotel Pangrango 2 (☎ 321482; Jl Raya Pajajaran 32; budget/standard r 125,000/400,000Rp; a s) With spacious and comfortable standard rooms and a good restaurant, Pangrango 2 is arguably one of the finest hotels in Bogor. Its biggest drawback is its location on a busy road.

Hotel Pangrango (☎ 328284; Jl Pangrango 23; r from 236,000Rp; a s) Next door to Hotel Mirah is the first of Pangrango's three hotels; it has a selection of older rooms in a peculiar mock-Tudor setting.

Hotel Pangrango 3 (☎ 343433; Jl Raya Pajajaran 1; r from 250,000Rp; a) Hotel Pangrango's new sister hotel is underlit and resembles a pink wedding cake from the outside, but the rooms are in better condition.

Hotel Mirah (☎ 348040; Jl Pangrango 9A; r from 265,000Rp, ste 800,000Rp; a s) This gaudily opulent hotel has been around for ages, and has labyrinthine passages and a variety of rooms. The older doubles are bland, but rooms in the impressive newer wing are among the best in this range.

Sahira (☎ 322413; www.sahirabutikhotel.com; Jl Paledang 53; r from 460,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s) Sahira is the latest addition to Bogor's accommodation scene; rooms sparkle in their newness and face an inner courtyard taken up by the hotel's pool.

Hotel Salak (☎ 350400; www.hotelsalek.co.id; Jl Juanda 8; r from 510,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s i) Salak is a large hotel with plenty of business facilities and comfy rooms. It's within easy walking distance of the train station and the gardens.

Eating

Cheap warungs appear at night along Jl Dewi Sartika and Jl Jenderal Sudirman. During the day, you'll find plenty of food stalls and good fruit at **Pasar Bogor** (☎ breakfast & lunch), the market close to the main garden gates. In the late afternoon along Jl Raja Permas next to the train station, street vendors cook up delicious snacks, such as deep-fried *tahu* (tofu) and *pisang goreng* (fried banana fritters).

Jumbo Bakery (Jl Raya Pajajaran; cakes 2000Rp; ☎ breakfast & lunch) This simple diner-style bakery has been needing new light bulbs for years, but the lack of light doesn't seem to affect the bakers, who produce some fine cakes.

Pia (☎ 329765; Jl Pangrango 10; pies around 3000Rp; ☎ breakfast & lunch) Just across from the Hotel Pangrango, Pia would surely snatch a place on the podium if Java were ever to host an apple-pie contest. As well as apple pastries, expect apple salad, apple and ice cream and even apple sauce spaghetti.

Simpang Raya Bogor (Jl Raya Pajajaran; mains from 10,000Rp; ☎ lunch & dinner) This sprawling *masakan Padang* (Padang dish) heaves with customers by early evening; stroll on in and find a seat wherever there is room.

Café de daunen (☎ 350023; mains 20,000-50,000Rp; ☎ lunch & dinner) This may unashamedly be a tourist eatery in the botanical gardens, but it has lovely views across an open meadow, an international menu, and an open terrace that attracts a cool breeze. Plus, it's the perfect spot to watch (and avoid) the rainstorms that roll in.

Cahaya Baru (Jl Raya Pajajaran 7; mains around 30,000Rp; ☎ lunch & dinner) This air-con restaurant is a good bet for Chinese food, but a better bet for seafood.

Gumati (Jl Palendang 28; mains 30,000-50,000Rp; ☎ lunch & dinner) Gumati is a hip café-bar with plenty of wood and wicker, a large open balcony with valley vistas, and a big East-meets-West menu. Most of the fresh produce is on view, including piles of chillis big enough to bring tears to the eyes of even the spiciest boys and girls.

Puncak (Jl Kantor Pos 6; mains 30,000-50,000Rp; ☎ dinner) Puncak is on a quiet back street near Wisma Pakuan. It serves up some steaming Thai and Chinese feasts in a lazy, bamboo setting; problem is, the 'lazy' setting also extends to the waitresses.

You can also test your tastebuds at the following:

Oh La La (Jl Raya Pajajaran 7; cakes 2000Rp; ☎ breakfast & lunch) Specialises in cappuccino and croissants.

Salak Sunset Café (Jl Paledang 38; mains 20,000Rp; ☎ lunch & dinner) Chic, cheap little place with river views. Juices, pizzas, spaghetti and Indonesian favourites are featured.

Getting There & Away BUS

Every 15 minutes or so, buses depart from Jakarta's Kampung Rambutan bus terminal (normal/air-con 7000/10,000Rp), and can do the trip in a little over half an hour via the Jagorawi toll road. The only problem is that it takes at least double that time to travel between Kampung Rambutan and central Jakarta.

A Damri bus goes to Jakarta's Soekarno-Hatta international airport (16,000Rp) hourly from 4am to 6pm. It leaves from opposite KFC on Jl Raya Pajajaran.

Buses depart frequently from Bogor for Bandung (15,900/25,000Rp, three hours). At weekends the buses are not allowed to go via the scenic Puncak Pass and therefore travel via Sukabumi. Other bus destinations from Bogor include Pelabuhan Ratu (18,000/24,000Rp, three hours) and Labuan (20,000Rp, four hours).

Air-con, door-to-door minibuses go to Bandung for 75,000Rp. Dimas Dewa (☎ 653671) has the best buses. Phone for a pick-up.

CAR

Bogor is a good place to hire a car and driver. Bargaining is essential. Bogor has a number of private operators who are used to taking tourists on day trips or extended trips further afield. Many speak English, and some speak Dutch. Prices start at around 400,000Rp. This price includes a driver, and if you've booked through a hotel, expect it to add on a large commission.

TRAIN

The easiest way of reaching central Jakarta is to take the trains, which run every 20 minutes from around 4am to 8pm and take 1½ hours. The economy-class trains (2500Rp) are reasonably efficient but best avoided during peak hours when they can be crowded to bursting point. Much more comfortable *Pakuan* express trains

(10,000Rp) leave Bogor for the capital at least once an hour from 6.10am till 6pm.

Getting Around

Green *angkot* minibuses (2000Rp) shuttle around town, particularly between the bus terminal and train station. Blue *angkot* run to outlying districts and terminate at Terminal Merdeka. From the bus terminal, *angkot* leave from the street behind, Jl Bangka. *Angkot* 03 does an anticlockwise loop of the botanical gardens on its way to Jl Kapten Muslihat, near the train station. To the bus terminal from the tourist office take 06.

Becak are banned from the main road encircling the gardens. Metered taxis are few and far between, although some Jakarta taxi drivers do hang out by the airport bus stop by the Jagorawi toll road. You can also haggle with the minivan drivers who hang out near the entrance to the botanical gardens.

AROUND BOGOR

Batutulis (Purnawarman Stone)

Those in need of reminding that all great empires come to an end can head for Batutulis, where sits the large black boulder on which King Purnawarman inscribed his name and footprint around AD 450. His rather immodest inscription, in the Palawa script of South India, is uncannily reminiscent of Percy Shelley's *Ozymandias*, and reads: 'This is the footstep of King Purnawarman of Tarumanegara kingdom, the great conqueror of the world'.

The Ciampea boulder has been raised from its original place and embedded in the shallow water of Sungai Ciaruteun. The inscription on the stone is still remarkably clear after more than 1500 years.

Colts make the run to Batutulis from the village of Ciampea, about 12km northwest of Bogor.

Gunung Halimun National Park

This national park is home to some primary rainforest, but the park has mixed usage and also includes plantations such as the Nirmala Tea Estate. The dominant feature of the park is the rich montane forest in the highland regions around Gunung Halimun (1929m), which is the highest peak.

Visitor facilities at the park are undeveloped and park administration is handled by

the Gede Pangrango National Park (p138) at Cibodas some distance away. The most-visited attractions in the park are the waterfalls near Cikidang and those near the Nirmala estate, but the big draw card is white-water rafting. Pt Lintas Seram Nusantara (% 021-8355885) in Jakarta organises white-water rafting on the Class II to IV (depending on season) Sungai Citarak on the southeastern edge of the park. Prices start at 165,000Rp for a 1½-hour trip and end at 245,000Rp for a three-hour trip.

The usual access (you need your own transport) is through Cibadak on the Bogor to Pelabuhan Ratu road, from where you turn off to Cikidang and then on to the Nirmala Tea Estate. Rainfall in the park is between 4000mm and 6000mm per year, most of which falls from October to May, when a visit is more or less out of the question.

SUKABUMI & SELABINTANA

% 0266

Sukabumi is a thriving commercial town of 120,000 people at the foot of Pangrango and Gede volcanoes. The main reason to visit is for bus connections to Bandung and Pelabuhan Ratu or to visit Selabintana, a small hill resort 7km north of town.

Selabintana is much less developed than the Puncak Pass resort area to the north of Gunung Gede, which means fewer people. It is possible to walk up the hillside to Saver Waterfall and on to Gunung Gede, but there is no PHKA post in Selabintana. Selabintana has a golf course, swimming pools and a good selection of midrange hotels. Otherwise it is simply a quiet place to relax.

The old-fashioned, slightly faded Hotel Selabintana (% 221501: Jl Selabintana, Km 7; r from 200,000Rp, VIP bungalows 348,000Rp plus 21% tax; s) is for sport junkies; it has a golf course, tennis and volleyball courts, two swimming pools and a bar-restaurant for afterdrinks. There are rooms or huge bungalows with antique furniture. Minibuses from Sukabumi (take a 10 from the Yogyakarta department store) to Selabintana run straight up to the foot of Gunung Gede and terminate at the hotel.

PELABUHAN RATU

% 0266

About 90km south of Bogor on Java's southern coast is Pelabuhan Ratu, a small fishing village that moonlights as a seaside

resort. The town itself is loud and fairly ugly – saved only by its long black beach and the colourful outrigger fishing boats crowding the harbour – and most people come here for the beaches to the west.

Legend has it that Pelabuhan Ratu (which translates as 'Harbour of the Queen') actually witnessed the creation of Nyai Loro Kidul, the malevolent goddess who takes fishermen and swimmers off to her watery kingdom. Don't wear green on the beach or in the water (it's *her* colour), and in the Hotel Indonesia Samudra a room is set aside for meditating mystics wishing to contact the Queen of the South Seas.

Information

The tourist office (% 433544; Jl Kidang Kencana; 11 9am-4pm Mon-Fri) is within easy walking distance of the bus terminal – just head for the water. You'll find a wartel next door and another in the bus terminal. The BCA bank (Bank Central Asia; Jl Siliwangi) will change US dollars and travellers cheques, and cash only for other currencies, but the rates are low. The ATM accepts Visa cards.

Sights & Activities

Swimming is possible up and down the coast when the sea is quiet, but like most of Java's south coast, the crashing surf can be treacherous. Drownings do occur in spite of the warning signs.

Aside from its fish market, Pelabuhan Ratu won't hold your interest for long – it's best to head west once you've got your bearings. Cimaja, 8km west of Pelabuhan Ratu, has a pebble beach and a lively surfing community that flocks here to catch some of the south coast's best waves at the Ombak Tujuh (Seven Waves) surf break. This is also the place to arrange diving or motorcycling trips.

Pantai Karang Hawu, 13km west of Pelabuhan Ratu, is a towering cliff with caves, rocks and pools created by a large lava flow. According to legend, it was from the rocks of Karang Hawu that Nyai Loro Kidul leapt into the mighty ocean to regain her lost beauty and never returned. Stairs lead up to a small *kramat* (shrine) at the top.

Further west, about 2km past Cisolok, are the Cipanas hot springs. Boiling water sprays into the river, and you can soak downstream where the hot and cold waters mingle. It is a very scenic area; you can

walk a few kilometres upstream through the lush forest to a waterfall. Cipanas has changing sheds, warungs and crowds on the weekend.

Goa Lalay is a bat cave that's about 4km southeast of Pelabuhan Ratu. It's of limited interest except at sunset, when thousands of small bats fly out.

Sleeping & Eating

Though quiet during the week, Pelabuhan Ratu can be crowded at weekends and holidays, and accommodation reflects Jakarta prices.

PELABUHAN RATU

Pelabuhan Ratu has its fair share of accommodation options, but you're better off heading west – even if it's only for 1km or so – than staying in town.

Bayu Amrta (% 431031; fax 431344; bayu_amrta@cbn.net.id; Jl Karang Pamulang; r with air-con from 210,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s) About 1.5km from town on a headland, Bayu is perched on precipitous cliffs, with good views of crashing surf and whirling gulls. The restaurant is perfect for sunset tipples.

Queen Restaurant (Jl Kidang Kencana; mains 30,000-60,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) Just west of the tourist office, this is the pick of Pelabuhan Ratu's excellent Chinese seafood restaurants.

CITEPUS

Citepus is a tiny village 3km from Pelabuhan Ratu. As well as the places listed here, it has a number of homestays.

Padi Padi (% 432124; padi2@dnnet.net.id; standard r from 350,000Rp, penthouse 690,000Rp) With Santa Fe architecture, rustic Asian furnishings and a good restaurant, Padi Padi is an above-average choice. It is dead during the week, but superb rooms have all the mod cons and back onto a fish-pond maze.

Hotel Inna Samudra (% 431200; s/d from 470,000/560,000Rp plus 21% tax) Another 2km further west from Padi Padi is one of Soekarno's original 1960s luxury hotels, with a rather bleak Stalin-on-the-South-Seas look. It has its own beach, but it's starting to look past its use-by date. Room 308 is said to be the haunt of the Queen of the South Seas.

CIMAJA

The surfing beach of Cimaja has the best breaks around, friendly, good-quality

accommodation, a relaxed vibe and three surf shops.

Pondok Kencana (☎ 431465; lms@cbn.net.id; dm 30,000Rp, bungalows from 200,000Rp plus 15% tax; Ⓢ) Perched up above the main road, this surfer hang-out features good, comfortable villa-style accommodation and the Ombak 7 pub, with surf flicks and other diversions. The Kencana's Australian expat owner is an endless source of information about the area and can organise just about everything from diving excursions to fishing trips for black marlin.

Green Room (☎ 432608; s/d 40,000/60,000Rp) This is one of the coast's simpler surfer haunts, with stripped-back rooms that are fan-cooled and, as the name states, green. The bar downstairs is small but lively and inviting.

Rumah Makan Mirasa (☎ 436337; r 40,000-60,000Rp; ⌚ breakfast, lunch & dinner) Almost opposite the Green Room is this perennial favourite with surfers, with simple, adequate rooms and hearty portions of Indonesian fare (mains around 15,000Rp).

Hotel Daun Daun (☎ 431501; r from 60,000Rp; a) Daun Daun is a simple place with a range of clean, YHA-style rooms.

Didesa (☎ 433288; www.didesa.co.id; Jl Raya Cisolok 23; r from 390,000Rp; Ⓢ) Also known as *Cek Ombak* ('check the waves' in Bahasa Indonesia), this hotel is an excellent option for those looking for some comfort. There are plush bungalows on stilts, a sun terrace, a surf shop/repair service, a tower for checking surf conditions, and live reggae every Saturday night.

Any's Tavern (☎ 431184; mains around 15,000Rp; ⌚ breakfast, lunch & dinner) Any's Tavern is a legend in these parts and even features in Jakarta-based magazines. It's popular with surfers for its lively bar and good, cheap food. Arrangements for motorcycling trips can be made here. It's between Cimaja and Cisolok.

Getting There & Away

By car, Pelabuhan Ratu can be reached in four hours from Jakarta. Local buses run throughout the day from Bogor (24,000Rp, three hours) and Sukabumi (15,000Rp, 2½ hours). Buses from Sukabumi continue on to Cisolok from Pelabuhan Ratu, and it is possible to continue right along the south coast by a variety of connections.

Getting Around

Angkot run between Pelabuhan Ratu and Cisolok (5000Rp) and occasionally continue on to Cipanas; otherwise, charter them from Cisolok to Cipanas for around 10,000Rp. *Ojek* at the Pelabuhan Ratu and Cisolok bus terminals can be hired for around 20,000Rp per hour for sightseeing. Motorbikes (65,000Rp per day) can be hired at the Bayu Amrta (p135).

BOGOR TO BANDUNG (PUNCAK PASS AREA)

Snaking through sleepy tea plantations and terraced fields, the road over the 1500m-high Puncak Pass between Bogor and Bandung tips and rises through some of West Java's most sensational scenery. The climate is cool, there are some fantastic walking opportunities and the resort towns that line the route offer a wide range of accommodation.

But while the vistas are a worthwhile addition to any photo album, the Puncak area has also fallen victim to its own beauty. Inundated with tourists who are hoping to escape the push-and-shove of Jakarta, Bogor and Bandung, the region's narrow roads are often a chaotic knot of gridlocked traffic, blaring karaoke lounges and pricey motels. Weekends can bring pandemonium.

Almost the whole highway is a resort strip that's crammed with hotels and villas starting about 10km out of Bogor at Ciawi and continuing up through Cibogo, Cipayang and Cisarua to the Puncak Pass and over the other side to Cipanas. Crowds quickly evaporate away from the highway, however, and peace and quiet is never too far away.

From Jakarta's Kampung Rambutan bus terminal, any Bandung bus can drop you off at any of the resort towns on the highway (but not on Sunday, when they aren't allowed to use this highway). From Bogor, frequent buses and Colts (which travel on Sunday) also ply the highway.

When heading to Bandung from Puncak, buses can be flagged down on the main road. Be sure to check that the bus is going into Bandung itself though, as buses going to other destinations will often drop you on the ring road, miles from the city centre.

The best way to see the area in a day is to hire a car in Bogor (500,000Rp per day) and make your visit during the week.

Cisarua

☎ 0251
Ten kilometres from Bogor on the slopes of the Puncak, Cisarua has budget accommodation and walks to picnic spots and waterfalls.

SIGHTS

Curug Cilember, the town's most scenic waterfall, is about a 30-minute walk from Cisarua. Just east of Cisarua is the turn-off to **Taman Safari Indonesia** (☎ 250000; adult/child under 6 60,000/55,000Rp, car 15,000Rp; ⌚ 9am-5pm). This spacious drive-through game park has well-tended indigenous and African 'safari' animals, a bird park, white tiger pavilion, red pandas, children's rides and animal shows. It also has a night safari (35,000Rp) on Saturday night for viewing nocturnal animals. The park is best explored by car, but a park bus does tours of the safari park for those without a car. Park facilities include a swimming pool, restaurants and accommodation (rooms from 325,000Rp).

In the foothills, 7km before the Puncak summit, you finally leave the overdevelopment behind and pass through the tea-carpeted hills of **Gunung Mas Tea Estate** (⌚ 9am-5pm Tue-Sun). You can tour the tea factory (5000Rp), which is a couple of kilometres from the highway, or combine it with a guided walk through the plantation itself (50,000Rp). Accommodation is available on site.

Almost at the top of the pass, the **Rindu Alam Restaurant** is a must on all tour itineraries and either has fine views of the surrounding tea estates or is surrounded by ethereal mist. Set just below the restaurant is **Telaga Warna**, a small 'lake of many colours'. The colours require sunlight; otherwise the lake is not as exciting as the patch of montane forest surrounding it.

SLEEPING

Scores of midrange hotels and villas are spread out along the highway from Ciawi to Cipanas.

Wisma Dirga Cibulan (☎ 254056; r/bungalows from 44,000/228,000Rp; Ⓢ) This is a large place with OK rooms. It's a good bet if everything else is full.

Gunung Mas Guesthouse (☎ 252501; basic r 160,000Rp, deluxe r 209,000Rp, bungalows from 500,000Rp) In the grounds of the tea estate, Gunung

Mas oozes soporific, colonial charm and is one of the best places around to kick back and relax. Add 50,000Rp to all rates on weekends.

Puncak Pass Hotel (☎ 0263-512503; www.puncakpassresort.com; r/bungalows from 350,000/500,000Rp; Ⓢ) On the Bandung side of the pass, this is the most salubrious choice in these parts. It has dreamy vistas and bungalows hugging the hillsides.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

From Bogor take a bus or Colt to Cisarua (5000Rp, 45 minutes).

Cibodas

☎ 0263
Cibodas, the next village over the Puncak Pass, is home to billions of pot plants for sale and the beautiful high-altitude extension of the Bogor botanical gardens, the **Kebun Raya Cibodas** (admission per person/per car 4000/6500Rp; ⌚ 8am-6pm). It's surrounded by thick tropical jungle on the slopes of the twin volcanoes of Gunung Gede and Gunung Pangrango. The gardens, which are bigger than Bogor's, were originally planted in 1860 and now contain 1014 species. Beside the entrance to the gardens is the entrance to the Gede Pangrango National Park.

Cibodas has limited facilities and gets far fewer visitors than Cisarua, but it has fine scenery and excellent walks. Visitors must pay 2000Rp on entering the village.

SLEEPING & EATING

Freddy's Homestay (☎ 515473; r without mandi 75,000Rp) Located down a tight alleyway beside Wartel Resimi, 500m before the gardens, Freddy's has cheerful rooms and can organise guides for walking and bird-watching. Meals are available.

Cibodas Guest House (☎ 512051; r from 100,000Rp) Cibodas is a fair way below the gardens and is an unusual place to spend the night. It is quirky and chaotic, with lots of greenery, a menagerie of pet dogs, goats, horses and birds, and a tip-top restaurant overlooking the valley. Ask for a discount.

Wisma Tamu (☎ 512776; lodge 1,000,000Rp) Right inside the gardens, a 1km walk uphill from the gate, Wisma Tamu has one of the best settings of any hotel in Java. It's a colonial place, with five faded but large rattan-style

rooms with loads of character, that sleeps up to 10 persons. There is a kitchen, but individual rooms are not available for rent; bookings are essential.

There's cheap food at warungs near the gardens and in the village, 500m down the hill.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

The turn-off to Cibodas is on the Bogor-Bandung Hwy, a few kilometres west of Cipanas. The gardens are 5km off the main road. *Angkot* run from Cipanas (3000Rp, 30 minutes).

Gede Pangrango National Park

The Cibodas gardens are right next to the main entrance to Gede Pangrango National Park, the highlight of which is the climb to the 2958m peak of the volcanically active Gunung Gede. From the top of Gede on a clear day you can see Jakarta, Cirebon and even Pelabuhan Ratu on the south coast – well, Raffles reported that he could.

Register for the climb and obtain your permit (4000Rp, 2500Rp for Cibeureum Falls only) from the PHKA office just outside the gardens' entrance. The office has an information centre and pamphlets on the park, which is noted for its alpine forest and bird life, including the rare Javan eagle. Guides to the summit can also be hired here for 300,000Rp at the office, or for 400,000Rp at Freddy's (p137).

From Cibodas, the trail passes Telaga Biru (15 minutes), which is a blue/green lake. Cibeureum Falls (one hour away) lies just off the main trail. Most picnickers only go this far, though some continue on to the hot springs, 2½ hours from the gate. The trail continues to climb another 1½ hours to Kandang Badak, where a hut has been built on the saddle between the peaks of Gunung Gede and Gunung Pangrango (3019m). Take the trail to the right for a hard three-hour climb to Pangrango. Most hikers turn left for the easier, but still steep, 1½-hour climb to Gede, which has more spectacular views. The Gede Crater lies below the summit, and you can continue on to the Suryakencana Meadow.

The 10km hike right to the top of Gunung Gede takes at least 10 hours there and back, so you should start as early as possible and take warm clothes (night tem-

peratures can drop to 5°C), food, water and a torch (flashlight). Most hikers leave by 2am to reach the summit in the early morning before the mists roll in. Register at the park office the day before. The main trails are easy to follow. The hike should only be undertaken in the dry season from May to October.

BANDUNG

½ 022 / pop 2 million

After the bottle-green hills of the Puncak Pass, the sprawling bulk of Bandung hits you like a baseball bat across the back of the head. Once the 'Paris of Java', the city is now a twisting throng of congested streets and endless suburbs, and any romantic notions of colonial glamour have long disappeared. This is Indonesia's fourth-largest city and West Java's capital, and it likes everyone to know it.

But not everything has gone to pot. Among the shopping malls and business hotels you'll find a dynamic, major city that's on the move. It attracts workers, intellectuals and artisans from across the archipelago, and its industries, bars and restaurants throb with life. Today, grandiose Art Deco buildings, heaving market stalls, becak and multiplexes jostle for space in a city where past, present and future effortlessly coexist. It's also the centre of Sundanese culture, which plays a supporting role in the city's identity.

Bandung was originally established in the late 19th century as a colonial garrison town, but it rapidly acquired importance as a commercial and educational centre. Because of its pleasant climate – it stands at 750m above sea level – the Dutch even had plans to make it the capital prior to WWII. Bandung's most notable entry in the history books was as host of the Asia-Africa conference in 1955, which finally placed it in the world spotlight.

The main attraction of Bandung is its proximity to sights; high volcanic peaks, hot springs and enormous tea plantations are all easy day trips from the city. But with its cool climate and a handful of its own attractions, Bandung is worth a day or two of your time. This is the place to dip into Sundanese culture and, with street after street of shopping options, explore the depths of your shopping desires.

Orientation

Bandung spreads out over the northern foothills of a huge plateau surrounded by high mountain ridges. The main part of the city lies south of the train line, and is centred around Jl Asia Afrika and the *alun-alun* (main public square). Along Jl Asia Afrika are the tourist office, post office and most of the banks, airline offices, restaurants and top-end hotels. Jl Braga was the ritzy shopping area in Dutch times, but is now the hub of Bandung's after-dark activity.

In colonial times, the train tracks divided the riffraff in the south from the Dutch city in the north, and the social divide still rings true. The gracious residential areas in the north are studded with tree-lined streets and parks, and bordered on the northern-most edge by the hills of Dago.

Information

BOOKSHOPS

Gramedia (Jl Merdeka; ½ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat) Small selection of English books and maps.

INTERNET ACCESS

X-net (Jl Lengkong Kecil 38; ½ 8am-10pm) Access for 5000Rp per hour; smiles and 'Hello, Misters' thrown in for free.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Adventist Hospital (½ 2034386; Jl Cihampelas 161) A missionary hospital with English-speaking staff.

MONEY

Banks with ATMs are scattered across Bandung.

Golden Megah moneychanger (Jl Asia Afrika 142)

Some of the best rates in town.

POST

Main post office (cnr Jl Banceuy & Jl Asia Afrika; ½ 8am-7pm) Opposite the *alun-alun*.

TELEPHONE

Wartel aplenty can be found just south of the train station.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Bandung Tourist Information Centre (½ 4206644; Jl Asia Afrika; ½ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, 9am-2pm Sun) While the *alun-alun* receives a facelift, the city's tourist office can be found in the Masjid Agung next door. It offers excellent free booklets, maps and information on cultural events.

Sights

CITY CENTRE

If you're interested in learning more about the Asia-Africa conference of 1955, visit the **Museum Konperensi** (Conference Museum; Jl Asia Afrika; admission by donation; ½ 9am-3pm Mon-Fri) in Gedung Merdeka (Freedom Building). Exhibits and photos detail the meeting between Soekarno, Chou En-Lai, Ho Chi Minh, Nasser and other Third World leaders of the 1950s.

Not far north of Gedung Merdeka is the **Museum Mandala Wangsit** (Army Museum; Jl Lembang 38; admission free; ½ 9am-3pm Mon-Fri), which devotes itself to the history and exploits of the West Java Siliwangi Division (based in Bandung).

For a bird's-eye view of central Bandung, climb the easterly tower of **Masjid Agung** (Jl Jenderal Sudirman; admission 2000Rp; ½ 9am-5pm Sat & Sun), next to the *alun-alun*.

NORTH OF THE CENTRE

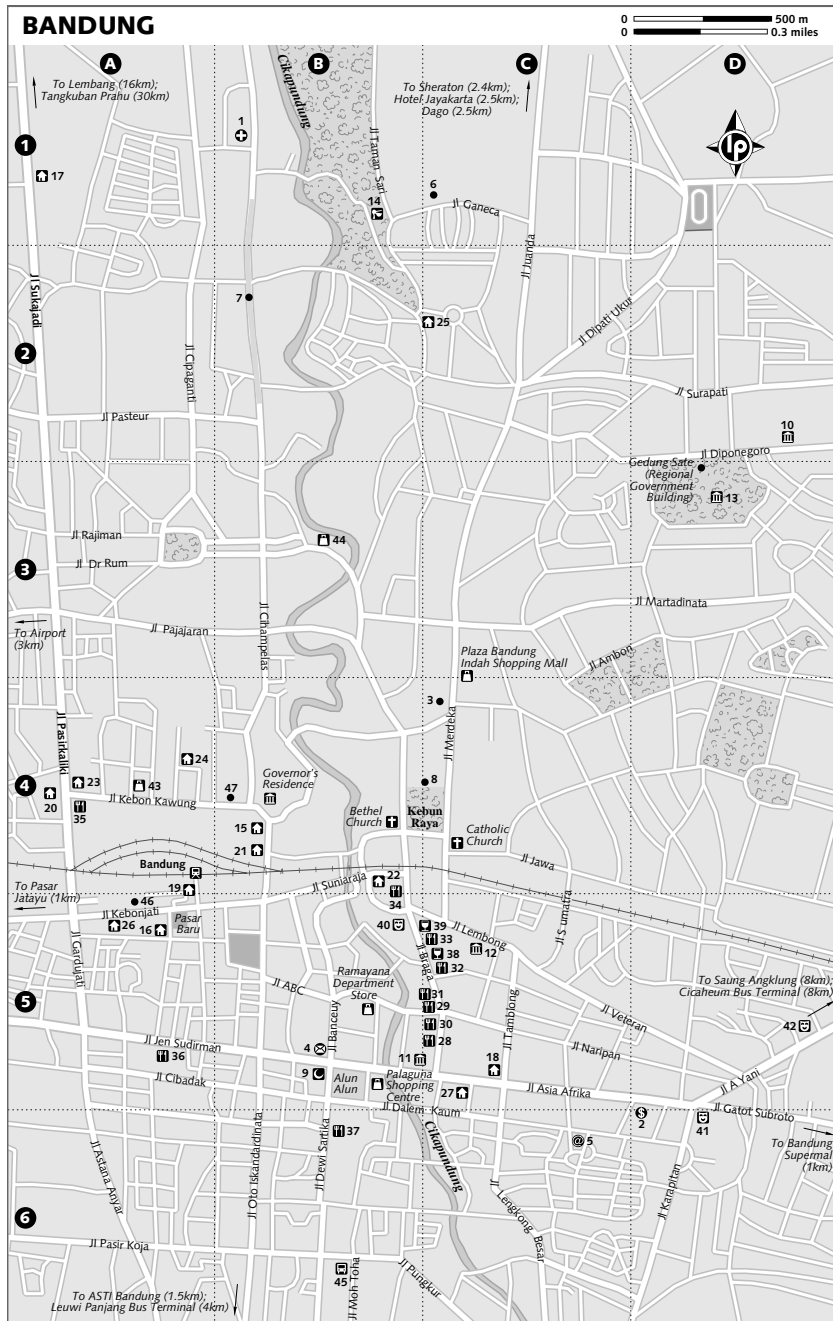
North across the railway tracks, the **Museum Geologi** (Geological Museum; Jl Diponegoro 57; adult/child 2000/1500Rp; ½ 9am-3.30pm Mon-Thu, 9am-1.30pm Sat & Sun) is housed in the massive old headquarters of the Dutch Geological Service. It has excellent volcano exhibits and an array of fossils, including a model skull of Java Man. From the train station you can take an *angkot* bound for 'Sadang Serang' and get off at the Gedung Sate (Regional Government) complex, about 300m from the museum.

While you're in the neighbourhood, dip into the **Museum Prangko** (Stamp Museum; Jl Diponegoro; admission free; ½ 9am-3pm Mon-Fri) in the northeastern corner of the Gedung Sate complex. As well as thousands of stamps from around the world, the museum has everything from post boxes to pushcarts used since colonial times.

BANDUNG INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Further north of Gedung Sate is the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB; Jl Ganeca), built at the beginning of the 20th century. The university has large grounds and gardens, and the main campus complex is notable for its 'Indo-European' architecture, featuring Minangkabau-style roofs atop colonial-style buildings.

Opened in 1920, ITB was the first Dutch-founded university open to Indonesians. It



INFORMATION	
Adventist Hospital.....	1 B1
Golden Megah Moneychanger...	2 D6
Gramedia.....	3 C4
Main Post Office.....	4 B5
Tourist Information Centre.....	(see 9)
X-net.....	5 C6
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES	
ITB (Bandung Institute of Technology).....	6 C1
Jeans Street.....	7 B2
Kantor Walikota (City Hall).....	8 C4
Masjid Agung.....	9 B5
Museum Geologi.....	10 D2
Museum Konperensi.....	11 B5
Museum Mandala Wangsit.....	12 C5
Museum Prangko.....	13 D3
Zoo.....	14 B1
Edelweiss.....	17 A1
Grand Hotel Preanger.....	18 C5
Hotel Arimbi.....	19 A4
Hotel Cemerlang.....	20 A4
Hotel Gunter.....	21 B4
Hotel Kedaton.....	22 B4
Hotel Mutiara.....	23 A4
Hotel Patradissa.....	24 A4
Hotel Sawunggaling.....	25 C2
Hotel Surabaya.....	26 A5
Savoy Homann Hotel.....	27 C5
EATING	
Braga Café.....	28 C5
French Bakery.....	29 C5
Kartika Sari.....	(see 43)
Kyooki.....	30 C5
London Bakery.....	31 C5
Momiji.....	32 C5
Roempoet.....	33 C5
Royal Siam.....	34 B4
Rumah Makan Mandarin.....	35 A4
Rumah Makan Sari Sunda.....	36 A5
Warung Nasi Mang Udju.....	37 B6
DRINKING	
Amsterdam Café.....	38 C5
Downtown.....	(see 38)
North Sea Bar.....	39 C5
ENTERTAINMENT	
Braga Disco.....	40 B5
Fame Station.....	41 D6
Rumentang Siang.....	42 D5
SHOPPING	
Cupu Manik Puppet Factory.....	43 A4
Flower Market.....	44 B3
TRANSPORT	
Abd Muis Angkot Terminal.....	45 B6
Garuda.....	(see 18)
Kramatjati.....	46 A5
Merpati.....	47 B4
Pahala Kencana.....	(see 46)

was here that Soekarno studied civil engineering (1920–25) and helped to found the Bandung Study Club, whose members formed a political party that grew into the Indonesian Nationalist Party (Partai Nasional Indonesia; PNI), with independence as its goal. The institute's students have maintained their reputation for outspokenness and political activism, and in 1978 they published the *White Book of the 1978 Students' Struggle*, which alleged corruption in high places. In 1998, in the lead-up to Soeharto's downfall, up to 100,000 students rallied daily, but in keeping with Bandung's laid-back reputation, there were no riots in the city.

The ITB is the foremost scientific university in the country, but it also has one of the best fine-arts schools, and its art gallery (admission free; h on request) can be visited. Across from the main gate is a useful canteen in the *asrama mahasiswa* (student dorm complex), where many of the students congregate.

To reach the ITB, take a Lembang or Dago *angkot* from the train station and then walk down Jl Ganeca.

ZOO

The Bandung zoo (Jl Taman Sari; admission 5000Rp; h 8am–4pm) has spacious, beautifully landscaped gardens, which are very attractive, but there are few animals and most are housed in typically cramped conditions. The zoo is a few minutes' walk from the

ITB – the entrance is down the steps past the toy stalls opposite Jl Ganeca.

DAGO

At the end of Jl Merdeka, Jl Juanda climbs up to Dago Hill to the north, overlooking the city. The famous, but faded, *Dago Thee Huis* (Dago Tea House; $\% 2505364$; admission 1000Rp) offers views through the forest of power lines and radio towers and is a fine place to catch the sunset. The complex has an outdoor theatre and an indoor theatre further down the hill where cultural events are sometimes held.

On the main road, 100m past the tea-house turn-off, a path leads down to Curug Dago (Dago Waterfall). From here you can walk along the river to Taman Hutan Raya Ir H Juanda, which is a pleasant forest park with another waterfall, 'caves' and walking paths. By road, the park entrance is 2km past the Dago bemo terminal.

Gua Pakar is in fact an ammunition store hacked out by the Japanese during the war. Further north is Gua Belanda, which is the same deal but built by the Dutch. A tunnel leads right through the mountain to the start of the trail that leads all the way to Maribaya (p145) along Sungai Cikapundung.

'JEANS' STREET

Advertising is one thing, but a 20ft-high plaster statue of Rambo? Bandung's celebrated 'Jeans' Street, Jl Cihampelas, is the

place where seeing is believing. Traditionally the home of the city's thriving textile industry, this congested drag, in the affluent northern suburbs of Bandung, is now a menagerie of kitsch plaster giants, looming over shops competing with one another for the top spot in the city's booming denim trade. The jeans are definitely cheap; just don't expect to look like a Dean or a Monroe when you slip them on.

ABU DOMBA

These noisy ram-butting fights, held most Sundays between 9am and 1pm, are a favourite pastime of the Bandung populace. Animal lovers won't like it a bit, but, like Spain's bullfights, they're a sight to behold, and at least the rams only walk away with a sore head. Consult the tourist information centre (p139) for more details.

Tours & Courses

Many of Bandung's budget hotels, such as By Moritz (below) and Hotel Patradissa (right), offer one-day tours (300,000Rp per person) of the sights to the north and south of the city, and also two-day trips to Garut and Pangandaran (750,000Rp).

Bahasa Indonesia courses can be taken at the Institute of Technology; contact the Tourist Information Centre (p139) for details.

Sleeping BUDGET

Many of Bandung's budget options are close to the train station and city centre.

Hotel Arimbi (☎ 4202734; Jl Station Selatan 5; dm 27,500Rp, s/d with shared mandi 40,000/47,500Rp) Arimbi is a rough-and-ready place a stone's throw from the train station. Staff are exceptionally friendly, but the throng of hangers-on crowding the foyer is a little off-putting.

By Moritz (☎ 4205788; Kompleks Luxor Permai 35, Jl Kebonjati; s/d with breakfast & shared bathroom 35,000/45,000Rp) Even though the walls are thin, cleaning doesn't seem a priority and rooms are Spartan, By Moritz still gets more than its fair share of readers' recommendations. It's also a good place to swap stories with other travellers and arrange trips to outlying attractions.

Hotel Surabaya (☎ 436791; Jl Kebonjati 71; s/d/dq 35,000/45,000/65,000Rp) Surabaya is an unusual beast, even by Javan standards. Housed in

a beautiful, colonial lodge, this could be a fabulous hotel if someone gave it a good make-over. But with its yellowed 1920s photographs, Moulin Rouge prints and authentic layer of dusts, it still has plenty of charm; just don't expect too much in the way of comfort.

Hotel Patradissa (☎ 4206680; Jl H Moch Iskati 8; s/d 75,000/90,000Rp, with TV from 100,000Rp, with air-con from 130,000Rp; a) Patradissa is looking a bit worse for wear these days and fails to attract many travellers, but staff are welcoming and rooms are in better condition than most of its contemporaries.

Hotel Gunter (☎ 4203763; Jl Oto Iskandardinata 20; r with/without air-con 160,000/135,000Rp; a) Gunter is an old-fashioned hotel lacking character, but its rooms are in very good condition and quite spacious. Fortunately, it's set back from busy Jl Oto Iskandardinata, making it a quiet option.

Edelweiss (☎ 2032369; Jl Sukajadi 206; r with air-con & TV from 188,000Rp; a) This quiet and clean guesthouse is a fair trip from the centre, but handy for a quick escape to Tangkuban Prah. Rooms are in very good nick, and if you can't find any staff members, try the factory outlet store out front.

MIDRANGE

Bandung has plenty of midrange hotels, especially north of the train station and along Jl Gardujati, but most are old and faded.

Hotel Cemerlang (☎ 6071383; Jl Pasirkaliki 45; r from 250,000Rp; a) Near Hotel Mutiara, this midrange hotel has above-average rooms that lose out on the charm factor, but it's still a good bet all round. Add 30,000Rp at weekends.

Hotel Sawunggaling (☎ 4218254; Jl Sawunggaling 13; r from 250,000Rp; a) This attractive and pleasant hotel, out near ITB, oozes colonial style. It occupies a quiet corner and rooms are big and comfy.

Hotel Mutiara (☎ 4200333; fax 4200111; www.mutiarahotel.com; Jl Kebon Kawung 60; r from 330,000Rp, ste 550,000Rp; a s) Mutiara is a polished, motel-style place, with a range of rooms around a busy courtyard. All rooms come with hot water, TV and air-con. It also has a restaurant and bar, so you won't need to go far to fill up. Ask for a room away from the extremely loud street.

Hotel Kedaton (☎ 4219898; kedaton@indosat.net.id; Jl Suniaraja 14; r from 338,000Rp; a s) Tower-

ing over a busy intersection in shades of pale pink and yellow is this rather opulent hotel. Rooms are well kept and of a high standard, and discounts may be available if you ask nicely.

Savoy Homann Hotel (☎ 4232244; www.savoy-homann-hotel.com; Jl Asia Afrika 112; s/d from 475,000/500,000Rp; a s i) This temple to Art Deco style is looking as good as ever, and is Bandung's most famous hotel. Rooms are plush, and come with buckets of style and character.

Arion Swiss-Belhotel (☎ 4240000; www.swiss-belhotel.com; Jl Oto Iskandardinata 16; r from 495,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s) This hotel is so new it looked as though the plastic wrapping was removed five minutes before we walked in. Rooms are long, spacious and immaculate (some even have carpeted walls), and the top floor is given over to the pool and fitness centre.

Hotel Jayakarta (☎ 2505888; rsvo_bdg@jayakarta-hotelresorts.com; Jl Juanda 381; r from 568,000Rp; a) Right near the Dago Tea House at the top of Jl Juanda is this boutique hotel. Views from top-floor rooms are extensive, there's aromatherapy on site, and discounts may be available.

TOP END

Like any big city, Bandung has a glut of luxury hotels, all with swimming pools. Most offer good discounts, so ring around.

Sheraton (☎ 2500303; www.sheraton.com/bandung; Jl Juanda 390; r from 700,000Rp; a s) Smaller but slicker than Grand Hotel Preanger, Bandung's Sheraton is a small oasis of calm on the crowded and busy road to Dago. Needless to say, rooms and facilities are of the highest standard.

Grand Hotel Preanger (☎ 4231631; www.preanger.aerowisata.com; Jl Asia Afrika 181; r from 756,000Rp, ste from 2,000,000Rp; a s) Built in 1928, the Grand lives up to its name, with Art Deco charm coupled with modern luxury. Its suites are as plush as anything you'll find in the city.

Eating

Jl Braga is the city's quasi-European strip, featuring a plethora of coffee shops, quality restaurants and bakeries. The best night warungs are on Jl Cikapundung Barat, across from the *alun-alun* near the Ramayana department store. Stalls sell a bit of

everything – try the *soto jeroan*, intestine soup with various medicinal properties, mostly designed to stimulate male libido.

Warung Nasi Mang Udju (Jl Dewi Sartika; mains from 15,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Just south of the *alun-alun*, this Spartan place is a good spot to sample some traditional Sundanese food.

Rumah Makan Sari Sunda (Jl Jenderal Sudirman 103-107; mains 20,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Sari Sunda is a more salubrious eatery, with ratan décor, a not-so-tasteful artificial waterfall, and huts in the garden for dining on mats. The Sundanese food, however, is of the same standard as Nasi Mang Udju – delicious.

Rumah Makan Mandarin (Jl Kebon Kawung; mains 20,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Mandarin is a very simple eatery with seafood specialities and a loyal band of Chinese regulars.

Roempoet (Jl Braga 80; mains around 20,000Rp; h dinner) Roempoet is a stripped-back eatery-bar popular with a young crowd. You'll find regular live bands and simple but tasty Indonesian fare cooked on an open barbecue.

Kyooki (☎ 4204188; Jl Braga 21; mains 25,000-50,000Rp; h dinner) This minimalist restaurant attracts Bandung's bright young things with a range of Japanese favourites and some of the city's best cocktails.

Momiji (☎ 4203786; Jl Braga 64; mains 25,000-65,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Another of Jl Braga's Japanese restaurants, Momiji is a more traditional place, with a serene atmosphere and even a small library of Japanese books. Expect plenty of fresh sushi, maki and sashimi.

Royal Siam (☎ 4241459; Jl Braga 121; mains 30,000-50,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) This top-notch Thai restaurant has formal service, authentic wooden décor and huge dishes of *gai pad pid* (red curry). Sit at tables or sprawl out Asian style and soak up the atmosphere.

Bandung Supermal (Jl Gatot Subroto 289; mains 10,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) In the east of the city, this shopping mall has all the usual food court favourites.

Bandung has a surprisingly large number of excellent bakeries, and probably an excessive amount of dentists too. The following are all worth visiting (bakeries, not dentists):

Kartika Sari (Jl Haji Akbar 4; cakes around 2000Rp; h breakfast & lunch) Next door to the Cupu Manik puppet

factory; has an incredible array of sweets and a steady flow of customers.

London Bakery (Jl Braga 37; cakes 2000Rp; 𠄎 breakfast & lunch) Serves sweet cakes and strong coffees alongside burgers; try the brownies.

French Bakery (Jl Braga 35; cakes 2000Rp; 𠄎 breakfast & lunch) Has more of the same, just the name is different.

Braga Café (Jl Braga 19; cakes 2000Rp; 𠄎 breakfast & lunch) Yet another Bandung bakery excelling in providing the population with sweet treats; this time the pastries are the best bet.

Drinking

For a night out on the turps in Bandung, head for Jl Braga, where you'll find a string of bars, including the following:

Downtown (Jl Braga 70) Big bright pool hall filled with a local rather than expat atmosphere.

North Sea Bar (Jl Braga 82) The beer flows into the wee small hours at this expat and bar-girl hangout.

Amsterdam Café (Jl Braga 74) Offers a heady mix of loud music, bar girls and booze; North Sea Bar's rival for the expat crowd.

Entertainment

CULTURAL PERFORMANCES

Bandung is the place to see Sundanese performing arts; however, performance times are haphazard – check with the Tourist Information Centre for the latest schedules.

Rumentang Siang (% 4233562; Jl Baranangsiang 1) This is Bandung's performing arts centre, where *wayang golek*, Jaipongan (West Javanese dance), *pencah silat* (the art of self-defence), Sandiwara (traditional Javanese theatre) and *ketoprak* (popular Javanese folk theatre) performances are held.

ASTI-Bandung (% 7314982; Jl Buah Batu 212) In the southern part of the city, this is a school for traditional Sundanese arts – music, dancing and *pencah silat*.

Saung Angklung (% 7271714; Jl Padasuka 118; performances 35,000Rp; 𠄎 10.30am-5pm) *Angklung* (bamboo musical instrument) performances take place at Pak Ujo's Saung Angklung, east of the city on the way to the Cicaheum bus terminal. You can also see the instruments being made here. Performances are held most afternoons at 3.30pm.

LIVE MUSIC

A mix of bar and restaurant, **Roempoet** (Jl Braga 80) has a relaxed, informal air and lives bands most evenings.

NIGHTCLUBS

Like anywhere in the world, Bandung's youth love to get out on the dance floor and shake it up. Just off Jl Braga, Braga Disco is a safe bet for loud music, dark corners and people-watching, as is **Fame Station** (Jl Gatot Subroto 2), a busy dance club on the 11th floor of the Lippo Centre Building.

Shopping

Shopping centres dominate the town these days, but Bandung isn't all about glitzy stores and mall fever. Jl Cibaduyut, in southwest Bandung, is to shoes what Jl Cihampelas is to jeans, but without the gaudy statues. Shop after shop sells everything from Puma to Bata, but if you've big feet, you may have trouble finding the right size.

Bandung Supermal (Jl Gatot Subroto 289) This is Bandung's latest addition to its plethora of shopping centres; it has the largest Hero Supermarket in Indonesia, a bowling alley, a couple of cinemas, and more than 200 shops.

Pak Ruhayat (No 78/17B; 𠄎 7am-5pm) Down a small, unnamed alley behind Jl Pangarang 22, this small shop produces *wayang golek* puppets and masks.

Cupu Manik puppet factory (Jl Haji Akbar 10; 𠄎 8am-4pm Mon-Sat) This is another puppet maker, with a range of styles for sale.

Saung Angklung (% 7271714; Jl Padasuka 118; 𠄎 10.30am-5pm) Traditional Sundanese musical instruments can be bought here at this bamboo workshop.

Markets to explore in Bandung include the following:

Pasar Baru (Jl Kebonjati; 𠄎 8am-5pm) Somewhat grotty central market, with fruit, vegetables and assorted paraphernalia.

Pasar Jatayu (Jl Arjuna; 𠄎 9am-5pm) One kilometre west of the train station, this flea market is where a few collectables hide in piles of junk.

Flower market (Jl Wastukencana; 𠄎 7am-3pm) On the way to the zoo.

For everyday purchases, the liveliest shopping district is on Jl Dalem Kaum and in the nearby streets, just east of the *alun-alun*. Supermarkets can be found in the Ramayana department stores on Jl Cikapundung Barat and Jl Dalem Kaum, and in the Plaza Bandung Indah.

Getting There & Away

AIR

You can book your flight to Jakarta and Surabaya with **Merpati** (% 4260253; Jl Kebon Kawung 16); **Garuda** (% 4209468) is in the Grand Hotel Preanger (p143). Consult the Java Airfares map (p98) for prices.

BUS

Five kilometres south of the city centre, **Leuwi Panjang bus terminal** (Jl Soekarno Hatta) has buses west to places such as Bogor (normal/air-con 15,900/25,000Rp, three hours), Sukabumi (15,000Rp, three hours) and Jakarta's Kampung Rambutan bus terminal (20,000Rp to 45,000Rp, 4½ hours). Buses to Bogor are not allowed to take the scenic Puncak Pass route during weekends.

Buses to the east leave from the Cicaheum bus terminal on the eastern outskirts of the city. They include Cirebon (normal/air-con 20,000/33,000Rp, 3½ hours), Garut (10,000Rp, two hours) and Pangandaran (32,000Rp, six hours).

SariHarum (% 6077065) has air-con minibuses to Pangandaran (60,000Rp, five hours) at 6am and 2pm. Both **Kramatjati** (% 4239860; Jl Kebonjati 96) and **Pahala Kencana** (% 4232911; Jl Kebonjati 92) run luxury buses to long-distance destinations, such as Yogyakarta (81,000Rp).

TRAIN

The best train service for Jakarta is the *Parahyangan* (business/executive 45,000/60,000Rp, three hours), with departures roughly every hour from 4am to 8.25pm.

Several trains operate on the Bandung-Banjara-Yogyakarta route, most continuing on to Surabaya. Most are night expresses, such as the business-class *Mutiara Selatan*, which passes through Bandung at 5.05pm on its way to Yogyakarta (80,000Rp) and Surabaya (120,000Rp). The *Lodaya* leaves Bandung at 8am for Yogyakarta and Solo (business/executive 90,000/150,000Rp).

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

Bandung's Husein Sastranegara airport is 4km northwest of town; it costs 60,000Rp to get there by taxi.

BUS, ANGKOT & TAXI

Bandung has a fairly good, if crowded, Damri city bus service that charges a fixed

2000Rp. Buses 9 and 11 run from west to east down Jl Asia Afrika to Cicaheum bus terminal.

Angkot run over set routes all over town between numerous stations. From Stasiun Hall (St Hall), on the southern side of the train station, *angkot* go to Dago, Ledeng and other stations. When returning, catch any *angkot* displaying 'St Hall'. Abdul Muis (Abd Muis), south of the *alun-alun* on Jl Dewi Sartika, and Cicaheum are the other main *angkot* terminals. *Angkot* cost from 2000Rp to 3000Rp.

Becak have all but disappeared from central Bandung. Taxis, both private and metered, are numerous, but meters are rarely used – drivers will ask for a minimum of 10,000Rp.

NORTH OF BANDUNG

Lembang

% 022

The town of Lembang was once a noted hill resort but is now a busy little market town. Most visitors keep heading further up the hills, but if you're looking for a quick break from Bandung, 16km to the south, then it's a decent option.

The old-fashioned and comfortable **Grand Hotel Lembang** (% 2786671; ghl@bdg.centrin.net.id; Jl Raya Lembang 272; weekday/weekend r from 279,000/410,000Rp; 𠄎) harks back to the days when Lembang was a fashionable resort for Bandung's Dutch colonial community. It's a sprawling place with dated but comfortable rooms, beautiful gardens and tennis courts.

Maribaya Hot Springs

Maribaya, 5km east of Lembang, has a thermal spa, landscaped gardens and a thundering waterfall (admission to waterfall is 5000Rp). It's another tourist spot, crowded on Sunday, but worth visiting. You can extend your Tangkuban Prahau (below) trip by walking from the bottom end of the gardens down through a brilliant, deep and wooded river gorge all the way to Dago. There's a good track, and if you allow about two hours for the walk (6km), you can be at a Dago vantage point for sunset. From there it's only a short trip by Colt back into Bandung.

Tangkuban Prahau

The 'overturned *perahu*' volcano crater is 30km north of Bandung. Years ago the centre

THE LEGEND OF TANGKUBAN PRAHU

Like so many of Java's unusual geographical features, there is a legend behind Tangkuban Prahu.

An estranged young prince returned home and unwittingly fell in love with his own mother. When the queen discovered the terrible truth of her lover's identity, she challenged him to build a dam and a huge boat during a single night before she would agree to marry him. Seeing that the young man was about to complete this impossible task, she called on the gods to bring the sun up early, and as the cocks began to crow, the boat builder turned his nearly completed boat over in a fit of anger.

of Tangkuban Prahu collapsed under the weight of built-up ash and, instead of the usual conical volcano shape, it has a flat, elongated summit with a huge caldera.

At 2076m Tangkuban Prahu can be quite cool, and around noon the mist starts to roll in through the trees, so try to go early. The crater is easily accessible by car, so it's very much a tourist trap.

At the crater is an information centre (7am-5pm), warungs and a parade of peddlers hustling postcards, souvenirs and other junk. It's a tacky jumble that detracts from the scenery, but you can escape this bedlam of activity.

The huge crater is an impressive sight. Tangkuban Prahu still emits sulphur fumes but is not particularly active – its last serious eruption was in 1969. It's possible to circumnavigate the crater in around two hours.

Kawah Ratu is the huge 'Queen Crater' at the top. Walk around the rim of the main crater for about 20 minutes for views of the secondary crater, Kawah Upas. The trail leads further along a ridge between the two craters and returns to the car park, but it is steep and slippery in parts – exercise caution. A better and less-crowded walk is to Kawah Domas, a volcanic area of steaming and bubbling geysers that can be reached by a side trail to the top. You can also head off across country towards Ciater or Lembang; guides can be hired for 50,000Rp per hour.

Surrounded by forest just north of the town of Cikole, the outdoor centre Taman

Wisata Alam (☎ 022-91150480; camping 5000Rp, bungalows 150,000Rp) has camp sites and basic wooden bungalows that sleep up to four. Cooking facilities are available, or there's a tiny restaurant for meals. Tours and treks to the mountain are offered by staff. Bookings are advisable.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

From Bandung's minibus terminal in front of the train station, take a Subang Colt (10,000Rp) via Lembang to the park entrance.

Entry is 20,000Rp per person. Minibuses to the top officially cost 10,000Rp per person, but the drivers will probably ask for more; if there are not enough people to share, you will have to charter – bargain hard.

Alternatively, you can walk from the gate at the main road. It's 4.5km along the road or you can take the more interesting side trail that goes via Kawah Domas. It is a very steep one-hour walk through the jungle and better tackled from the top down. It starts just behind the information centre and is very easy to follow.

Drivers in Bandung will charge around 300,000Rp for a visit to Tangkuban Prahu, depending on the time spent at the crater, or 150,000Rp to 180,000Rp for a motorbike; prices include petrol but exclude entry (6000Rp extra for a car, 2000Rp for a bike).

Ciater Hot Springs

Eight kilometres northeast of Tangkuban Prahu, Ciater is a pretty little place in the middle of huge tea and clove estates. The area has good walks, and a tea factory on the south side of Ciater can be visited.

At the end of the road through the village, Ciater's main attraction is the Sari Ater Hot Spring Resort (☎ 0260-471700; admission 10,000Rp, pools extra 20,000Rp; 7-24hr). Although they're quite commercialised, the pools are probably the best of all the hot springs around Bandung. If you've been climbing around the volcano on a cool, rainy day there's no better way to get warm. Rooms (from 250,000Rp) and rustic bungalows are also available.

Ciater has plenty of small *penginapan* (lodging houses) with rooms starting at around 30,000Rp – those on the main road are cheaper.

You can walk to Ciater – about 12km across country – from Tangkuban Prahu, or flag down a Colt at the entrance point to Tangkuban Prahu; the road that leads up to Tangkuban from the main road.

SOUTH OF BANDUNG

☎ 022

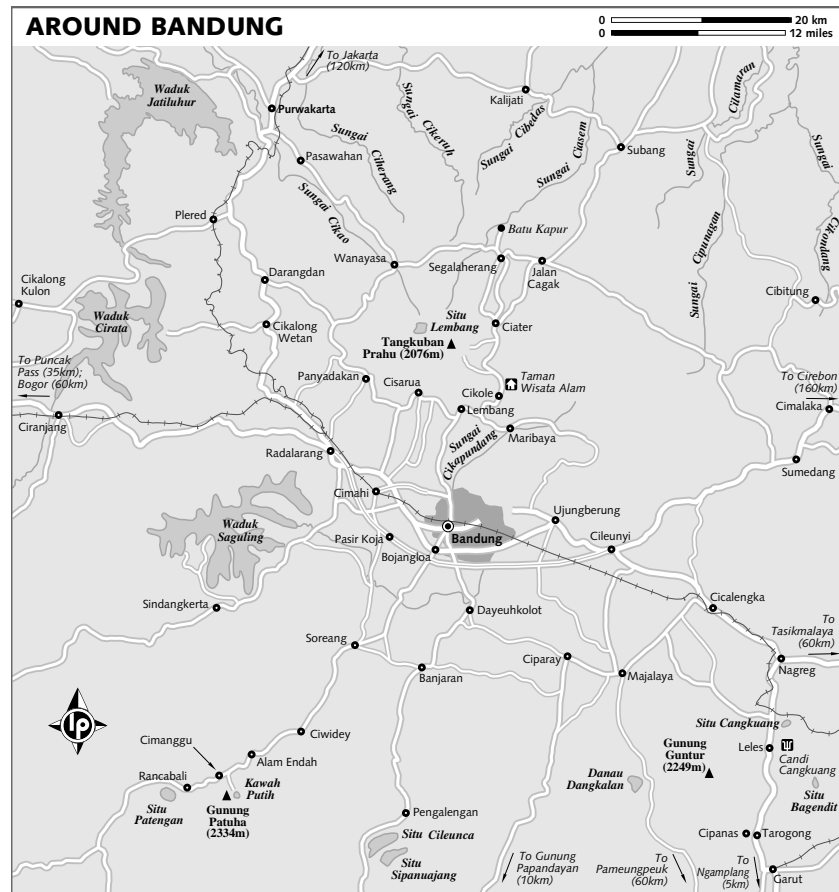
Less developed than the resorts to the north, the mountains south of Bandung have fewer facilities, but are quieter. The road south of Bandung leads to Ciwidey, a town where every second house has a strawberry patch.

From there, the road winds through the hills to the turn-off to Kawah Putih (admission per person 5500Rp, plus motorbike/car 1000/3000Rp;

7am-5pm), a volcanic crater with a beautiful turquoise lake. The turn-off is 6km before Rancabali, and then it is 8km to the small crater lake just below Gunung Patuha (2334m). Although it is only a small crater, Kawah Putih is exceptionally beautiful and eerily quiet when the mists roll in.

Back on the road a few kilometres further south from the turn-off to Kawah Putih are two developed hot springs at Cimanggu; the newer Walini complex has big hot pools and a few bungalows.

Rancabali, 42km from Bandung, is basically one big tea estate surrounded by rolling green hills of tea plantations. Just 2km south of the town is Situ Patengan, a pretty



lake with tea rooms and boats catering to the Sunday crowds.

The area's main attraction is the Malabar Tea Estate, 5km from Pengalengan, where you can tour the plantations and stay at the wonderful guesthouse, the Malabar Mess (below).

Sleeping

Accommodation is limited to a couple of places in Ciwidey, Alam Endah and Pengalengan, plus the Malabar Tea Estate. Generally they're all empty during the week.

Hotel Selly (☎ 5928261; Jl Raya Rancabali, Km 1; r from 60,000Rp) This pink place has spotless rooms and is on the southern edge of Ciwidey. It's also on the busy main road.

Patuha Resort (camping 5000Rp, r sleeping 4 from 125,000Rp) 'Outdoor Centre' or 'School Camp-ground' would be a more appropriate title for the Patuha Resort. Its rows of rooms are basic but very clean and comfortable, and wood has been used throughout. Peace and quiet are commodities in large supply here, and views back down the valley are thrown in free of charge. It's at the northern end of Alam Endah. Bookings should be made through the office in Bandung (☎ 7208310).

Sindang Reret Hotel (☎ 5928205; Jl Raya Propinsi; weekday r with hot-water shower from 145,000Rp) At the other end of town, this large hotel is more salubrious than Selly and has a large Sundanese restaurant built over a fish pond. Add up to 100,000Rp at weekends.

Malabar Mess (☎ 5979401; weekday/weekend r from 176,000/231,000Rp) This delightful colonial guesthouse furnished with Dutch antiques is surrounded by tea plantations near the town of Pengalengan. It's a perfect place to kick back for a few days and soak up some cool air and drink copious amounts of fresh tea. Bookings in advance must be made through the estate's Bandung office (☎ 2038996).

Getting There & Away

From Bandung's Leuwi Panjang terminal, frequent buses run to Ciwidey (6000Rp, 1½ hours), as do the minibuses (7000Rp). From Ciwidey, local *angkot* run to Situ Patengan (6000Rp). Kawah Putih is not serviced by regular public transport, but you'll find plenty of *ojek* (10,000Rp) in Alam Endah. Buses also run directly to Pengalengan

(7000Rp), where *ojek* hang out at the bus terminal.

BANDUNG TO PANGANDARAN

Heading southeast from Bandung, the road passes through rolling hills and stunning volcanic peaks skirting – at a safe distance – the particularly explosive Gunung Papandayan (2622m). This is the Bandung–Yogyakarta road as far as Banjar; the Bandung to Yogyakarta train line passes through Tasikmalaya and Banjar, but not Garut. After the choked roads of Jakarta and Bandung, driving on these quieter Javan roads is a pleasure.

Garut & Cipanas

☎ 0262

Sixty-three kilometres southeast of Bandung, Garut is a small functional town, and is most prized for its vegetables, which flourish in the region's rich volcanic soil. Of much more interest to tourists, however, are the volcanoes themselves and the beautiful countryside that surrounds them.

SIGHTS

On the outskirts of town, 6km northwest of Garut, are the hot springs at Cipanas, a small resort at the foot of Gunung Guntur (2249m) and an ideal base from which to explore the area. From Cipanas, the Curug Citiis waterfall is a three-hour walk away up the mountain; it's a four-hour walk further on to the peak of Gunung Guntur. It is best to leave by 5am for good views.

Garut is famed for its *dodol* – a confectionery of coconut milk, palm sugar and sticky rice. The 'Picnic' brand is the best quality, and it is possible to visit the factory (Jl Pasundan 102). Garut also has a thriving leatherwork industry. Styles wouldn't look out of place in the 1970s, but there is a big selection on Jl Sukaregang in the east of town. A tailored leather jacket comes in at around 550,000Rp.

SLEEPING

Garut has hotels and guesthouses, but the nicest place to stay is Cipanas, where almost everything is strung along Jl Raya Cipanas, the resort's single road. Most rooms are equipped with water piped in from the hot springs, while only the flashier hotels have swimming pools heated by

the springs; if you're staying at a cheaper option, it's possible to use the pools for a minimal fee (adult/child 4000/2000Rp). Prices quoted here are weekly rates; expect anything between a 15% and 40% increase on weekends.

Hotel Tirta Merta (☎ 231112; r from 75,000Rp) This simple place has clean rooms, cheerful staff and plenty of decorative concrete tree stumps.

Hotel Tirta Alam (☎ 241556; r/bungalows 90,000/300,000Rp) This hotel is popular with drivers, who can park directly outside their plain rooms; bungalows sit inches above thermal pools.

Hotel Nurgraha (☎ 234829; r 100,000Rp, ste from 175,000Rp) The pick of the cheap/midrange options, Nurgraha has rooms with balconies overlooking the road, and sunset views of a thermal pond and coconut trees.

Cipanas Indah (☎ 233736; r from 100,000Rp, VIP r 200,000Rp; Ⓢ) With simple, clean rooms centred on a pool, Cipanas Indah supplies a nice holiday atmosphere for its guests.

Sumber Alam (☎ 238000; www.kampungsumberalam.com; r 250,000-1,000,000Rp; Ⓢ) Alam is the most attractive hotel in Cipanas, with wooden bungalows built over the water; it's a popular family hang-out, particularly on weekends.

Tirtagangga Hotel (☎ 232549; r/ste from 265,000/735,000Rp; Ⓢ) Easily the town's second-best hotel, Tirtagangga comes complete with tasteful rooms, a quality restaurant and information on the area.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Buses and *angkot* leave from the Guntur terminal in Garut, in the north of the town. Garut is easily reached by bus from Bandung (10,000Rp, two hours) and also from Tasikmalaya (12,000Rp, two hours). For Pangandaran, take another bus from Tasikmalaya.

Regular *angkot* run around town and to Cipanas (*angkot* 4, 2000Rp).

A car or minibus with driver can be rented in Cipanas – ask around the hotels. A trip to Papandayan will cost 300,000Rp to 400,000Rp, depending on the quality of the car.

Around Garut

Near Leles, about 10km north of Garut, is Candi Cangkuang, which is one of the few

stone Hindu temples found in West Java. Dating from the 8th century, some of its stones were found to have been carved into tombstones for a nearby Islamic cemetery. The small, restored temple lies on the edge of Situ Cangkuang, a small lake. It has become something of a tourist trap, but it's a peaceful and beautiful trip. From Garut take a green *angkot* to Leles (3000Rp) on the highway and then another *angkot* or horse-drawn *dilman* (two-wheeled buggy, 2500Rp per person) for the 3km to Candi Cangkuang. Rafts across the lake to the temple cost 25,000Rp.

Twenty-eight kilometres to the southwest of Garut, Gunung Papandayan (2622m) is one of the most active volcanoes in West Java. Papandayan first became active in 1772, when a large piece of the mountain exploded sideways in a catastrophe that killed more than 3000 people. It was active again in the closing months of 2002 and thousands of villagers were forced to evacuate their homes as plumes of smoke and ash were spewed thousands of feet into the air. Papandayan is once again open to visitors, but check with locals before setting out on what could be a wild goose chase, or something far more dangerous.

The bubbling yellow crater (Kawah Papandayan) just below the peak is an impressive sight and clearly visible from the Garut Valley on clear mornings. To get there, take a Cikajang minibus and get off at the turn-off on the outskirts of Cisarupan (5000Rp), where you can catch a waiting *ojek* (25,000Rp one way, 13km).

From the car park area it is an easy half-hour walk to the crater, which is riddled with bubbling mud pools, steam vents and crumbling sulphur deposits. Take care – keep well to the right when ascending through the crater; it may pay to hire a guide (250,000Rp per day; from the PHKA office, as the car park area is generally full of cowboys) for closer inspection. For fine views, go very early in the morning before the clouds roll in. Gunung Papandayan's summit is a two-hour walk beyond the crater, and there are fields of Javan edelweiss near the top. PHKA staff can arrange a camping permit.

To the east of Garut town, Gunung Telagabodas (2201m) has a bubbling bright-green crater lake that's alive with sulphur.

To get to Telagabodas, take an *angkot* to Wanaaraja (4000Rp), an *ojek* (10,000Rp) to the parking area and then walk to the crater. Craters to the west of Garut that can be visited are Kawah Darajat, 26km away, and Kawah Kamojang, 23km away, the site of a geothermal plant that has defused the once spectacular geyser activity and replaced it with huge pipes.

Halfway between Garut and Tasikmalaya is Kampung Naga, a traditional village and a museum piece of Sundanese architecture and village life. It is home to 110 families, who preserve the old ways of life despite the crowds of tourists that pass through here during the peak season. Kampung Naga, with its thatched-roof houses, is a photographer's dream, nestled next to a river and surrounded by precipitous hillsides – there are 360 steps up to the car park on the main highway. Guides (50,000Rp) can be found next to the warungs by the car park.

Tasikmalaya

☎ 0265

Sixty kilometres east of Garut, Tasikmalaya is the centre for the district of the same name. For travellers, it is merely a transit town on the way to Pangandaran. The surrounding area has a few points of interest and Tasik has plenty of hotels; the **Crown Mahkota Graha** (☎ 332282; Jl Martadinata 45; r 225,000-395,000Rp; a s), with its restaurant and tidy rooms, is the best.

From Tasikmalaya, buses operate to Bandung (20,000Rp, four hours), Garut (12,000Rp, two hours) and Pangandaran (30,000Rp, three hours). Overcharging from here to Pangandaran is common, so bargain hard. The main bus terminal is 4km from the town centre on the eastern outskirts. Tasikmalaya is also on the main train line.

Around Tasikmalaya

For cheap rattan crafts, for which the area is famous, visit the village of **Rajapolah** (12km north of Tasikmalaya on the road to Bandung), where many of the weavers work.

Cipanas Galunggung is 20km northwest and is a hot spring at the foot of **Gunung Galunggung** (2168m), a volcano that exploded dramatically in 1982. From the hot springs recreation park, a trail leads to a small waterfall and then on to Galunggung crater, 3km

away. A steep road to the crater is an easier walk but less interesting. From Tasikmalaya's main bus terminal take an *angkot* to Bantar on the highway. From there, an *ojek* can take you 14km along a rough road.

Situ Lengkong is about 40km north of Tasikmalaya and 500m from the village of Panjalu. It's a serene lake that was formed when the Hindu ruler of Panjalu dammed the valley. There is a forested island in the middle and boats can be hired to take you around the island. Panjalu village has a small museum containing the heirlooms of the kings of Panjalu. Situ Lengkong can be reached by bus from Tasikmalaya or from Kawali terminal, where *angkot* run the 20km to Ciamis.

On the highway to Banjar and Pangandaran, 16km southeast of Ciamis, **Karang Komulyan** is the excavated site of the ancient Galuh kingdom. Local guides and tourist literature give a glorified account of the Galuh kingdom as both the first Hindu and the first Muslim kingdom in Java, but this Neolithic settlement dating from around the 5th century points to the pre-Hindu period. Only a few stone walls and foundations remain of the 'palace', store, prayer and bathing areas, but it is a beautiful walk through the jungle and bamboo groves down to the confluence of the swift Ciliwung and Citanduy Rivers. A large car park and government-built cottages next to the park are attempts to make it a major tourist stop.

Banjar

Banjar, 42km east of Tasikmalaya, is the junction point where the Pangandaran road branches from the Bandung to Yogyakarta road and rail route. It has some basic hotels if you get stuck en route to Pangandaran.

The bus terminal is 4km west of town on the highway. Many buses can be caught as they come through the centre of town near the train station. From Banjar the buses go to Pangandaran (12,000Rp, 1½ hours), Bandung, Purwokerto and Jakarta. Buses also go from the Banjarsari bus terminal, half an hour south of Banjar, to Jakarta.

Banjar is not a good place to catch trains, since most are crowded through-trains. To Yogyakarta and Solo, the best option is the **Lodaya** (business 60,000Rp), which heads east at 11.07am. On its way back to Bandung, the **Lodaya** passes through Banjar just after midnight. The economy-class **Pasun-**

dan II (35,000Rp) leaves Banjar for Surabaya at 10.35am.

PANGANDARAN

☎ 0265

Situated on a narrow isthmus, with a broad sweep of sand on either side and a thickly forested national park on the nearby headland, Pangandaran is Java's premier beach resort. While it can never compete with Bali's pristine white sands or party atmosphere, it is nevertheless an attractive, friendly and peaceful – or lively, if you're here during Indonesia's school holidays – spot to recuperate before pushing onto sights inland.

As well as days of sun-worshipping on Pangandaran's volcanic black-sand beaches, the town and its surrounds offer up coastal walks, forest treks and seafood so fresh it's still sparkling. And with an army of hotels covering every budget base, you should have no problem finding something to suit.

Like Bali, Pangandaran has been hard hit by the fallout of the recent bombings. Usually catering to thousands of tourists each year, Pangandaran saw the perennial flood of new arrivals become a trickle following the attacks. The resulting discounts offered by hotels are great for travellers, but terrible for the local economy.

Orientation

Pangandaran extends for about 2km from the bus terminal and *pasar* (market) to the national park boundary in the south. The town is flanked by the west and east beaches, and bisected by the main street, Jl Kidang Pananjung. The west beach is a wide sweep of sand and the main resort strip. The east beach is a quieter, fishing beach, and not much sand remains since a retaining wall was built.

Information

A 2500Rp admission charge is levied at the gate on entering Pangandaran.

BNI ATM (Bank Negara Indonesia; Jl Bulak Laut; 24hr)

PANGANDARAN'S TSUNAMI

Pangandaran was devastated by a tsunami on 17 July 2006. See the boxed text on p265 for further information.

BRI bank (Bank Rakyat Indonesia; Jl Kidang Pananjung; 8am-2.30pm Mon-Fri) Changes most currencies and major brands of travellers cheques, but at poor rates.

CV Sawargi (☎ 639180; Jl Kidang Pananjung 123; 9am-11pm) Has internet access (per hr 18,000Rp), can book onward travel and tours, and is very knowledgeable about Pangandaran.

Magic Mushroom Books (Jl Pasanggahan;

8.30am-8.30pm) Sells Western titles from a psychedelic shack.

Main post office (Jl Kidang Pananjung; 7.30am-3pm Mon-Thu, 7.30am-1.30pm Sat) On the main street.

PT Lotus Wisata (☎ 639635; lotus_wisata@yahoo.com; Jl Bulak Laut; 6am-midnight) Very helpful travel agent with plenty of local experience.

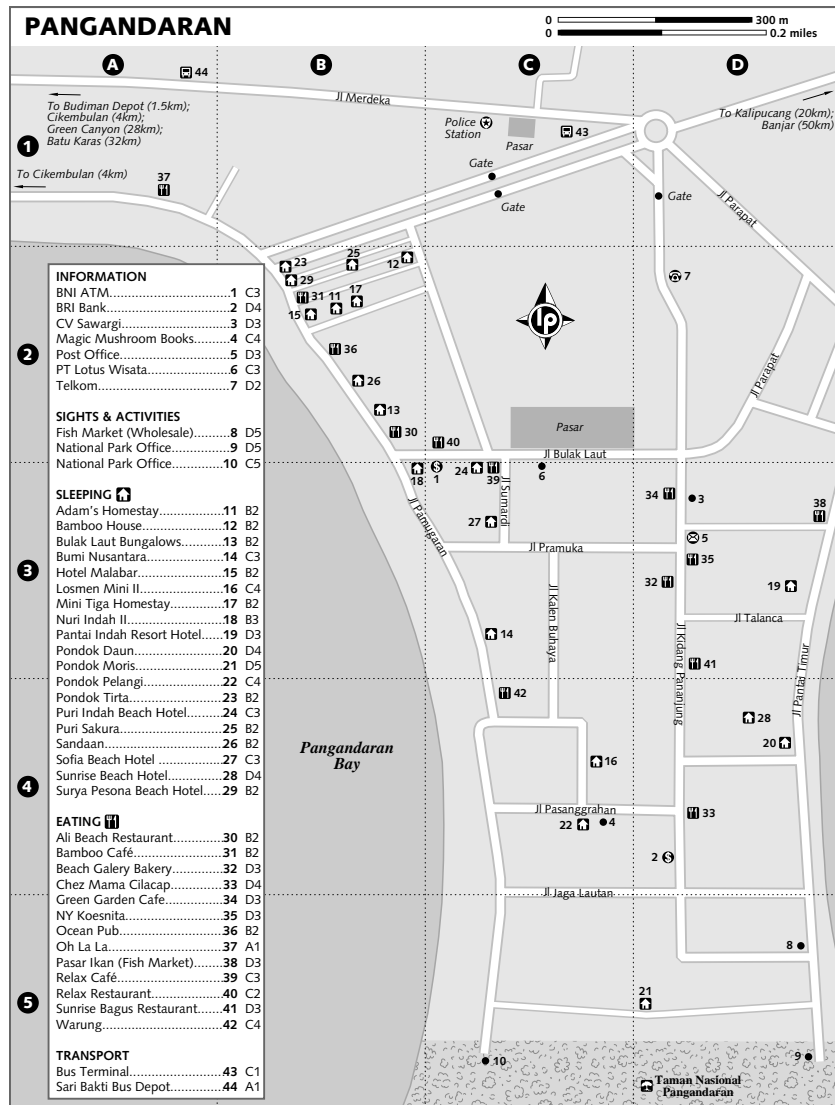
Telkom office (Jl Kidang Pananjung; 6am-midnight) Near the main post office; has a Home Country Direct phone.

Sights & Activities

The **Taman Nasional Pangandaran** (Pangandaran National Park; admission 2500Rp; dawn-dusk), which takes up the entire southern end of Pangandaran, is a wild expanse of dense jungle. Within its boundaries live banteng, *kijang* (barking deer), hornbills and monkeys, including Javan gibbons, and small bays within the park enclose tree-fringed beaches. Occasionally, the park is even used as a temporary home for elephants being transported around the archipelago. The park is divided into two sections: the recreation park and the jungle. Due to environmental degradation, the jungle is now off limits, but some guides still offer illegal tours.

It's possible to follow the **stone path** in the recreation park, which has a few nondescript caves and a couple of nice beaches on the eastern side, but in general trails are very muddy and not easy to follow – don't enter alone. Guides can be hired for around 50,000Rp. The best walk is the **Boundary Trail**, which is a natural trail that skirts the jungle. Starting at the eastern entrance, take the trail along the coast past Wisma Cirengganis; the Boundary Trail starts 150m before Goa Cirengganis cave. It leads uphill and then down along the river for 30 minutes to the Wisma Cikumal and the western entrance.

Like most south-coast beaches, Pangandaran has black sand. The surf can be treacherous, particularly the northern end of the west beach, where people still drown regularly. South from Bumi Nusantara Hotel, the beach is patrolled (sometimes) and is sheltered by the headland, so swimming



is safer. Pangandaran's best beach, Pasir Putih, on the western side of the national park, is now off limits to stop the hordes that have destroyed the reef.

Tours

The most popular tours run to the Green Canyon (100,000Rp per person), see p156,

but also widely available are the 'country-side' or 'home industry' tours (100,000Rp), which take you to plantations and local industries to see the making of *tahu* and *krupuk* (prawn crackers), as well as a *wayang golek* maker.

There are also tours to Paradise Island, an uninhabited nearby island with good

beaches (including a 5km white-sand beach) and surfing. Day trips cost 300,000Rp per person (minimum four persons); for food, make an early-morning trip to Pangandaran's fish market and fire up a barbecue when you get to the island.

There are also cycling, boating, and walking tours to just about anywhere within a 50km radius of Pangandaran.

To organise tours, try CV Sawargi (p151), or ask in your hotel.

Sleeping

Pangandaran has more than 100 sleeping options. During the Christmas and Lebaran (the end of Ramadan) holidays, Pangandaran is crowded and prices skyrocket. Prices are very seasonal and in busy periods may be higher than quoted here.

BUDGET

Many of Pangandaran's best homestays and losmen are crowded along the northern stretch of the town's western beach.

Pondok Moris (% 639490; Gang Moris 3; r 50,000Rp) Occupying a quiet spot on a back alley, this is one of Pangandaran's best cheap options. Rooms are simple and clean, with a porch facing a green garden/jungle. It would be a veritable oasis, if it wasn't so close to the mosque.

Losmen Mini II (% 639298; Jl Kalen Buhaya 14; r 50,000Rp) Mini II has rather empty rooms, but they're still quite pleasant and the sheets are clean. The setting is tranquil and staff are eager to please.

Mini Tiga Homestay (% 639436; r 50,000Rp) Mini Tiga is more than a solid bet, with its cheery and colourful rooms that are both large and cool. The owner has been running the place for the past 20 years and knows how to make guests feel at home. You'll find it down an alleyway off Jl Pamugaran.

Bamboo House (% 639419; r with fan/air-con 50,000/85,000Rp; a) Don't be put off by the shabby frontage of Bamboo House; rooms out back are in tip-top condition and graced with touches of art. The air-con rooms are enormous although characterless compared to the fan rooms, which are darker, warmer and come with open-air bathrooms.

Puri Sakura (% 639552; r with fan/air-con 55,000/85,000Rp; a) Puri Sakura keeps its standards very high with immaculate and stylish rooms filled with solid wood fur-

niture and local art; if you're exceedingly claustrophobic, you may want to look elsewhere, though. The owner will treat you like a long-lost friend, and tea and coffee is available all day.

Bulak Laut Bungalows (% 639377; Jl Pamugaran; r from 65,000Rp, bungalows 80,000-185,000Rp, with air-con 185,000-275,000Rp; a) This unusual place directly opposite the beach has reasonable rooms, colourful, spacious bungalows with bamboo floors, and plenty of concrete relief. Unfortunately one of the town's mosques is so close you'll be wanting the best earplugs money can buy.

Pondok Tirta (% 639235; Jl Pamugaran 140; r with fan 70,000Rp) The plethora of bright white tiles give Pondok Tirta an almost sterile gleam, but its huge, clean rooms save the day, as does the friendly, family atmosphere.

Sandaan (% 639165; Jl Pamugaran; r from 75,000Rp; a s) This business-style hotel has very good value standard rooms complete with fan, bathroom and terrace. Better VIP rooms have all the trimmings. Motorbike hire and tours can be arranged at the front desk.

Adam's Homestay (% 639164; Jl Pamugaran; r from 100,000Rp; a s) For a long time Adam's Homestay has been the pick of Pangandaran's budget accommodation, but at the time of writing it was receiving a major overhaul. If the past is anything to go by, expect lovely new rooms and plenty of atmosphere.

MIDRANGE & TOP END

Pangandaran's midrange and top-end hotels are spread the length and breadth of the town; hunt around to discover which area suits you best.

Surya Pesona Beach Hotel (% 639428; Jl Pamugaran; economy r 122,000Rp, 'deluxe' r from 344,000Rp; a s) This is one of Pangandaran's bigger resort hotels, but it's starting to look a little mouldy. It has a restaurant and decent rooms, ranging from very basic to borderline plush.

Pondok Daun (% 630681; Jl Pantai Timur; r from 250,000Rp; a) Pondok Daun is a stylish hotel on Pangandaran's eastern beach. The rooms are spotless, the bathrooms exceptionally large and the dark wood décor has real class.

Bumi Nusantara (% 639032; Jl Pamugaran; nusantarahotel@yahoo.com; cottages 300,000-700,000Rp; a)

Facing Pangandaran's sandy western beach is this large resort, with a range of spacious and charming cottages featuring plenty of bamboo fittings. There's also a restaurant on site.

Pantai Indah Resort Hotel (☎ 63219004; www.pantaiindah.com; Jl Pantai Timur; r 324,000-720,000Rp; a s) This large resort won't charm you with its character, but it will win you over with its super-clean rooms (the more expensive come with sea views), professional service and modern facilities.

Pondok Pelangi (☎ 639023; Jl Pasanggrahan 7; r 50,000Rp, 2-/3-bedroom bungalows 350,000/450,000Rp) Pelangi is an excellent choice for families, with self-contained bungalows in an attractive garden. The bungalows are old but well kept, while the cheaper rooms could do with a bit of TLC (the bathrooms are quite clean, though).

Hotel Malabar (☎ 639969; Jl Pamugaran 128; r from 350,000Rp; a) The impressive bamboo façade of Malabar unfortunately hides a mass of fairly plain rooms, but management had just begun a major overhaul of the hotel at the time of writing, so hopefully things will improve tenfold.

Sunrise Beach Hotel (☎ 639220; Jl Kidang Pananjung 185; r 450,000-550,000Rp, ste 700,000-1,700,000Rp; a s) Sunrise Beach is arguably Pangandaran's best hotel. Even its standard rooms are well above average, with sea views, a terrace, air-con and not a spot of dirt in sight. Privacy and seclusion are thrown in free of charge.

Nuri Indah II (☎ 639415; Jl Bulak Laut; r from 496,000Rp; a s) Nuri Indah II (there's a I and III, but they're not up to scratch) is a small resort-style hotel with quality rooms in excellent condition. There are plenty of secluded corners for those wishing to spend a lazy day in a book, and a fine restaurant on site if you don't want to wander far.

Also recommended:

Sofia Beach Hotel (☎ 639329; Jl Sumardi; r 250,000Rp; a s) Spotless, if a little Spartan, new rooms; popular with families.

Puri Indah Beach Hotel (☎ 639194; Jl Bulak Laut 12; r from 310,000Rp; a s) A glossy hotel with fruit trees and well-equipped rooms centred on a pool.

Eating

Pangandaran is famous for its excellent seafood. For cheap Indonesian food, the town has many warungs. The **main pasar** (market; Jl

Merdeka), near the bus terminal, is the place to stock up on fruit and groceries.

Pasar Ikan (Fish Market; Jl Talanca; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) On the east beach is Pangandaran's fish market, and arguably the best place for fresh seafood. Pick out what you want from the selection of fresh seafood at the front of the warungs here and pay according to weight. The market is to the north, near the post office (not the wholesale fish market to the south).

Relax Restaurant (☎ 630377; Jl Bulak Laut 74; mains 20,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) This is truly a relaxed spot for a bite to eat, a mango lassi, some ice cream or simply a game of dominoes. The menu covers both Western and Indonesian fare, and the Swiss owner can recommend excellent guides and drivers.

Sunshine Bagus (☎ 639220; Jl Kidang Pananjung 177; mains 30,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) This is Pangandaran's most chichi offering, with traditional décor, plenty of greenery and water features galore. The enormous menu spans just about every continent and will satisfy just about any craving.

Ali Beach Restaurant (Jl Bulak Laut 92; mains around 12,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) Ali Beach is a relaxed and welcoming restaurant with natural air-conditioning (there are basically no walls) and a menu filled with standard traveller fare. There's also the option of a massage if you're feeling tucked out.

Chez Mama Cilacap (Jl Kidang Pananjung 187; mains 30,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) This is one of Pangandaran's best restaurants and specialises in seafood fresh from the market. The menu is extensive and the atmosphere relaxed without being too sleepy.

Green Garden Cafe (Jl Kidang Pananjung 116; mains around 20,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) This bamboo hut far from the beach has a delightful garden setting, and its Indonesian dishes, steak, seafood and salads are served with some style.

NY Koesnita (Jl Kidang Pananjung; mains 15,000-20,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) On the main drag near the post office, NY Koesnita has a scrumptious selection of Sundanese and Padang dishes in cheerful surrounds.

Oh La La (Jl Pamugaran; mains from 10,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) On the road to Cikembulan is this quiet bamboo-style haunt. The Indonesian menu is cheaper than most, and the convivial English-

teacher owner will tell you all you need to know about Pangandaran.

Ocean Pub (☎ 630083; Jl Pamugaran; mains around 20,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) A favoured haunt of many of the town's expat residents, Ocean Pub is a good place to chow down on steaks, Indonesian dishes and some hearty breakfasts while making new friends. The beer also comes ice cold, and there's a pool table.

Bamboo Café (Jl Pamugaran; mains 20,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) Bamboo Café is a few doors up from Ocean Pub and follows the same formula, with plenty of rattan and mellow sea views.

Also recommended:

Nuri Indah II (Jl Bulak Laut; mains 30,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) Restaurant in the hotel of the same name, with some of the best Chinese seafood around.

Beach 'Galery' Bakery (Jl Kidang Pananjung 146; pastries around 3000Rp; h breakfast & lunch) Sells a smorgasbord of pies, puffs and pastries.

Relax Café (Jl Bulak Laut; mains 15,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Simple eats and beer in yet another bamboo-style haunt.

Getting There & Away

Pangandaran lies halfway between Bandung and Yogyakarta. Coming from Yogyakarta by bus or rail, Banjar is the transit point. An alternative way of reaching Pangandaran is via the pleasant boat trip from Cilacap to Kalipucang or Majingklak. From Bandung, plenty of direct buses go to Pangandaran, or it's possible to change for connections in Tasikmalaya.

Due to falling tourist numbers, Pangandaran's transport options have been scaled back, and in some cases even stopped. Therefore it's a good idea to check with Pangandaran's travel agencies for the most up-to-date information on buses and boats.

BOAT

An alternative way of getting to/away from Pangandaran is the interesting backwater trip between Cilacap and Majingklak (this may change to the Kalipucang harbour in the near future; check with local travel agencies). From Pangandaran it starts with a 17km bus trip to Majingklak (5000Rp, 40 minutes), where *compreng* (wooden boats) can be chartered for the trip across

the wide expanse of Segara Anakan and along the waterway sheltered by the island of Nusa Kambangan. The boats hold eight people (minimum six required) and cost 250,000Rp each way.

At the time of writing, this was the only option for boat travel between Pangandaran and Cilacap. Normally car ferries operate between Majingklak and Cilacap, but due to dwindling tourist numbers and lack of local interest, they have been cancelled. This is not to say they won't start up again in the near future; once again, check with travel agencies or your hotel in Pangandaran for more up-to-date information.

From the Cilacap harbour it is about 1km to the main road (5000Rp by becak), from where bemos go to the Cilacap bus terminal (2000Rp). A becak all the way to the terminal costs around 10,000Rp.

Door-to-door services between Pangandaran and Yogyakarta are also a good option. Bus-ferry-bus services (125,000Rp, 10 hours) are sold all around Pangandaran (minimum six people) and will drop you at your hotel in Yogyakarta. Connections to Wonosobo are also advertised, but these are on Yogyakarta buses that will drop you in Kebumen, from where you are put on a public bus to Wonosobo.

See Cilacap (p163) for information on transport to Yogyakarta and Wonosobo.

BUS

Local buses run from Pangandaran's bus terminal to Tasikmalaya (30,000Rp, three hours), Ciamis (20,000Rp, 2½ hours), Banjar (12,000Rp, 1½ hours), Kalipucang or Majingklak (5000Rp, 40 minutes) and to Cilacap (25,000Rp, 2½ hours). Buses also run along the west coast as far as Cijulang (7000Rp, 40 minutes).

The large *patas* buses generally leave from the Sari Bakti Utama depot, just north of town, and Budiman bus company depot, about 2km west of Pangandaran along Jl Merdeka. Frequent normal buses go to Bandung (32,000Rp, six hours) between 6am and 9pm.

However, the most comfortable way to travel to Bandung is with the Sari Harum (☎ 639276) door-to-door minibus for 50,000Rp. Perkasa Jaya minibuses (☎ 639607) pick up from hotels for the trip to Jakarta's

Kampung Rambutan terminal (normal/air-con 55,000/75,000Rp, nine hours). Travel agencies can also book tickets for most buses and minibuses for a premium, but transport to the depots is usually included.

CAR

Most travel agencies rent minibuses with drivers for about 500,000Rp per day including driver and petrol. Put together your own tour and you may be able to negotiate a better rate. The most popular trip is a three-day tour to Yogyakarta. The usual route will take you as far as Wonosobo for the first night. The second day goes to Dieng for the sunrise, then on to Borobudur for the night. The final day is to Yogyakarta via Prambanan.

Getting Around

Pangandaran's brightly painted becak start at around 5000Rp and require heavy negotiation. Bicycles can be rented for 25,000Rp per day, and motorcycles cost around 40,000Rp per day, excluding petrol.

AROUND PANGANDARAN

The scenic coast road west from Pangandaran to Cipatujah skirts along surf-pounded beaches and runs through small villages and paddy fields. Cikembulan, a sleepy stretch of huts and houses, is 4km from Pangandaran and has accommodation and local industries that can be visited, including the *krupuk* factory and a *wayang golek* workshop.

Karang Tirta is a lagoon set back from the beach with *bagang* (fishing platforms). It's 16km from Pangandaran and 2km from the highway. Batu Hiu (Shark Rock) is 23km from Pangandaran and 1km from the highway, and has a recreational park atop the cliffs with views along the coast.

Inland from Parigi, near Cigugur, Gunung Tilu has fine views and is included in some of the tour itineraries. Sungai Citumang is reached by a rough and hard-to-find inland road from Karang Benda, and has a small dam from where you can walk upstream to a beautiful gorge – 'Green Canyon II' in Pangandaran tour parlance.

SLEEPING & EATING

The following two places occupy a peaceful setting in Cikembulan. Note that there isn't

much in the way of eating options in this part of the world.

Delta Gecko (% 630886; bungalows with breakfast 75,000Rp) About 5km from Pangandaran central, this current manifestation of Delta Gecko is a retreat for those wanting earthy surroundings accompanied by peace and quiet. The bungalows are by no means flash (there's plenty of gaps in the bamboo walls for the mosquitoes to zip through, but nets are provided) but they have oodles of beachy charm and partial views of the ocean. Meals are available, and the owner is happy to show you his tribal art.

Stella Guesthouse (r 75,000Rp) In a pleasant bamboo-style building with a large terrace overlooking the sea, Stella has stripped-back but clean rooms, and is a fine option if Delta (which is directly behind it) is full.

Green Canyon

The number one tour from Pangandaran is to Green Canyon (Cujang Taneuh). Many tour operators in Pangandaran run trips here for about 100,000Rp and include 'country-side' excursions to make a full-day tour. To get there yourself, hire a boat from the Green Canyon river harbour on the highway, 1km before the turn-off to Batu Karas. Boats cost 70,000Rp for five people and operate daily from 7.30am to 4pm (Friday 1.30pm to 4pm). They travel up the emerald-green river through the forest to a waterfall and a canyon, and stop for swimming (during the rainy season the water may be murky and uninviting). Count on about 1½ hours for this excellent trip. Go as early as possible at peak times to avoid the crush, although the canyon has been quieter since the Bali blast.

Batu Karas

This small fishing village 32km from Pangandaran is one of the most relaxed places to kick back in Java and has one of the coast's best surf beaches, sheltered by a rocky promontory. Accommodation favoured by surfers can be found 1km beyond the fishing village at the headland beach. Surfboards can be rented for 35,000Rp per day and lessons are available; entry to the town costs 1500Rp.

SLEEPING & EATING

Hotel Melati Murni (% 633683; r with fan 50,000Rp) Simple clean rooms can be found at this



laid-back establishment, where staff are happy to hang out and chat.

Teratai (% 633681; r with fan 75,000Rp, bungalows 100,000Rp; s) Large, basic rooms and better-quality bungalows are surrounded by coconut trees at this family-friendly place. You may have to fight for the one hammock, though.

Hotel Pondok Putri (% 633315; r from 100,000Rp; a s) Facing a beach cluttered with outrigger fishing boats, Putri is a standard midrange hotel with the added advantage of a pet monkey called Wendy.

Reef Hotel (% 631108; s/d 150,000/200,000Rp; s) Frequented by surfers eager to take advantage of the break outside its front door, Reef caters to wave lovers with clean, simple rooms, hammocks, and stacks of surfing mags. The pool remains unused and uncleaned.

Batu Karas Beach Bungalows (% 631111; batu karasbungalows@yahoo.com; bungalows 200,000Rp; s) At the very eastern end of town, this resort-style place is looking a bit worse for wear. The rooms could do with a good airing, but it's a very secluded spot and an option for those wanting some privacy. The beach is not good for swimming.

Inviting spots to catch a bite to eat while watching the surfers catch waves are two places side by side near the point: **Kang Ayi** (mains 10,000-20,000Rp) and **Sederhana** (mains 10,000-20,000Rp).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Batu Karas can be reached from Pangandaran by taking a bus to Cijulang (7000Rp) and then an *ojek* over the pretty bamboo bridge for 5000Rp.

Cipatujah

The coast road ends at the village of Cipatujah, which has a wide but uninspiring beach with dangerous swimming and a couple of

cheap hotels. Five kilometres before Cipatujah is a small PHKA post that monitors the green turtles that lay their eggs at Sindangkerta beach. The post welcomes visitors who are interested in their work.

From Cijulang, buses run as far as Cimanuk (6000Rp), from where *ojek* will take you the extra stretch to Cipatujah (7000Rp). However, the best way to see this stretch of coast is to hire a motorcycle in Pangandaran.

Karang Nini

To the east of Pangandaran, Karang Nini is a recreational park perched high on the cliffs. Trails lead down the cliff face to the beach and crashing surf below.

For Karang Nini, take any Kalipucang-bound bus to the Karang Nini turn-off, 5km east of Pangandaran on the highway. It is then a 3km walk to the park.

CIREBON

% 0231

Well off the tourist trail, on the sunburnt north coast, Cirebon is a cultural melting pot, blending the scattered remains of the ancient Islamic kingdom that once had its base here, with a more contemporary cocktail of Javanese, Sundanese and Chinese culture.

But compared to many of Java's cities, Cirebon is refreshingly laid-back. And with a string of venerable *kraton*, a thriving batik industry and one of the north coast's biggest fishing fleets, it's a worthwhile stopover for seafood lovers and inquisitive travellers alike. Cirebon is famous for its batik; its *tari topeng*, a type of masked dance; and *tarliling*, music blending guitar, *suling* (bamboo flute) and voice.

Cirebon was one of the independent sultanates founded by Sunan Gunungjati of Demak in the early 16th century. Later the

powerful kingdoms of Banten and Mataram fought over the town, which declared its allegiance to Sultan Agung of Mataram but was finally ceded to the Dutch in 1677. By a further treaty signed in 1705, Cirebon became a Dutch protectorate, jointly administered by three sultans whose courts at that time rivalled those of Central Java in opulence and splendour.

Information

Banks and ATMs can be found all over town; a branch of BII Bank is located at the northern end of Jl Siliwangi.

Centralnet (Ruko Grand Centre B/9; internet per hr 5500Rp; h 9am-8pm)

Elganet (Ruko Grand Centre B/4; internet per hr 5500Rp; h 9am-8pm)

Main post office (Jl Yos Sudarso) Near the harbour.

Telkom office (Jl Yos Sudarso) For international telephone calls and faxes; this is also near the harbour and has a Home Country Direct phone.

Tourist office (☎ 486856; Jl Dharsono 5; h 7am-3pm Mon-Fri) Lies 5km out of town on the bypass road, near Gua Sunyaragi; it has helpful, English-speaking staff and one English brochure.

Sights

KRATON KESepUHAN

At the southern end of Jl Lemah Wungkuk, **Kraton Kesepuhan** (admission 3000Rp; h 8am-4pm Mon-Thu & Sat, 8-11am & 2-4pm Fri, 8am-4pm Sun) is the oldest and best preserved of Cirebon's *kraton*. Built in 1527, its architectural style is a curious blend of Sundanese, Javanese, Islamic, Chinese and Dutch. Although this is the home of the sultan of Kesepuhan, part of the building is open to visitors. Inside is a pavilion with whitewashed walls dotted with blue-and-white Delft tiles, a marble floor and a ceiling hung with glittering French chandeliers.

The *kraton* museum has an interesting, if somewhat rundown, collection of *wayang* puppets, kris, cannons, furniture, Portuguese armour (weighing in at an impressive 45kg) and ancient royal clothes. The *pièce de résistance* of the collection is the Kereta Singa Barong, a 17th-century gilded chariot with the trunk of an elephant (Hindu), the body and head of a dragon (Chinese-Buddhist), and wings (Islamic). It was traditionally pulled by four white buffaloes and the suspension apparently flapped the wings and waggled the creature's tongue. It

is quite possibly the weirdest carriage you'll ever see.

Entry to the *kraton* includes a guided tour (payment at your discretion), which may finish at the Museum Kereta Singa Barong. Behind in the large grounds of the palace is a dance pavilion where practice is sometimes held. There's also a pleasure palace, Gua Sunyaragi, in the same style as Kraton Kesepuhan.

KRATON KANOMAN

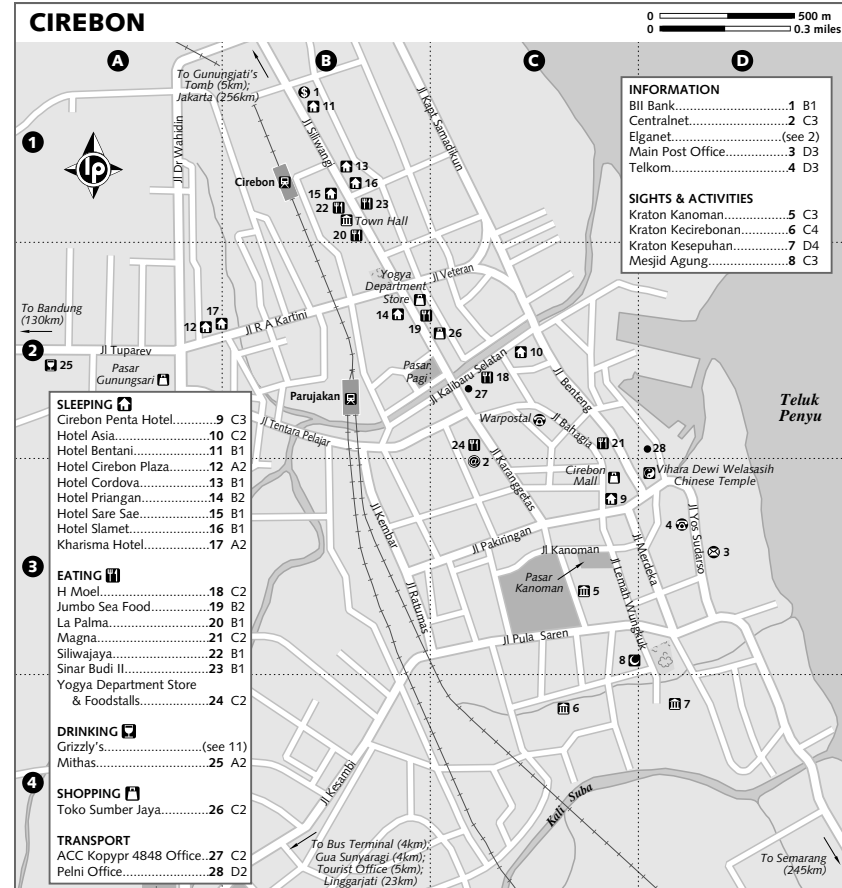
A short walk from Kraton Kesepuhan, Kraton Kanoman was constructed in 1588. The Kanoman dynasty was founded by Sultan Badaruddin, who broke away from the main sultanate after a lineage dispute with the sixth sultan's heir. Outside the *kraton* is a red-brick, Balinese-style compound and a massive banyan tree. Further on past the white stone lions is the *kraton*, a smaller, neglected cousin of Kraton Kesepuhan.

Head to the right past the lions, look lost and someone might – they don't always – come and unlock the museum. It's worth it, because among the museum's small holdings of mostly carved doors and layers of dust is a stunning sultan's chariot in the same style as the one in the Kraton Kesepuhan. It's claimed that the chariot in the Kraton Kesepuhan is a newer copy – the rivalry for the sultanate still exists, it seems. You can also visit the *pendopo* (large open-sided pavilion) and its inner altar. Antique European plates, some with Dutch Reformist scenes from the Bible, can be seen before entering. Opening hours are haphazard to say the least, and the entry fee is by donation.

The colourful **Pasar Kanoman**, just in front of the *kraton*, is at its most vibrant in the morning and is worth a visit in its own right.

KRATON KECIREBANAN

Although it's classed as a *kraton*, this is really only a house occupied by members of the current royal family, descendants of Raja Kanomin, who broke away from the 10th Kesepuhan sultanate. Wander in, knock on the door and someone will be happy to show you around. Built in 1839, the house has fine colonial architecture and a small collection of swords, documents and other royal memorabilia. A donation is expected.



MESJID AGUNG

On the western side of the field in front of Kraton Kesepuhan is Mesjid Agung. It has a tiered roof, is one of the oldest mosques in Java and is similar in style to the Mesjid Agung in Banten.

GUA SUNYARAGI

Approximately 4km southwest of town is this bizarre ruined 'cave' – a grotto of rocks, red brick and plaster, honeycombed with secret chambers, tiny doors and staircases that lead nowhere. It was originally a water palace for a sultan of Cirebon in the early 18th century and owes its present shape to a Chinese architect who had a go at it in 1852. It's often frequented by local students

who, at the sight of a tourist, are more than happy to practise their English, even from 50m away.

Sleeping BUDGET

Inexpensive hotels can be found directly opposite the main train station and along Jl Siliwangi, but conditions are prisonlike and premises are often patrolled by prostitutes; you might be better off forking out a little extra for a midrange option.

Hotel Asia (☎ 204905; Jl Kalibaru Selatan 11A; r 45,000-75,000Rp; a) Located alongside the tree-lined canal near Pasar Pagi, this fine old Dutch-Indonesian inn has seen better days, but it does have a terraced courtyard where

you can sit and have breakfast. Rooms towards the rear are in the best condition.

Hotel Cordova (☎ 204677; Jl Siliwangi 87; r 50,000-220,000Rp; a) Near the main train station, Cordova is one of the better buys. It has good, renovated rooms with air-con and hot water, and no-frills 'economy' rooms.

Hotel Priangan (☎ 200862; hpriangan@yahoo.co.id; Jl Siliwangi 108; r from 68,750Rp, with air-con from 150,000Rp; a) Priangan is a fine bottom-end option, with rooms ranging from Spartan to comfortable. Staff are welcoming, and it's located in the thick of the action.

Hotel Slamet (☎ 203296; Jl Siliwangi 95; r 80,000-125,000Rp; a) This friendly but bland hotel has seen better days, but the air-con rooms are about the cheapest around.

Hotel Sare Sae (☎ 209489; Jl Siliwangi 70; r 175,000-200,000Rp; a) Pick of the litter in Cirebon is Sare Sae, a newly built hotel in immaculate condition with large, comfortable rooms around a private courtyard. Open beam ceilings, wood furniture and 'washbasin' showers with stone bases add to the considerable charm of the place.

MIDRANGE

Cirebon has a surprisingly good selection of midrange hotels; most are older hotels that have fallen from grace but offer attractive discounts.

Hotel Cirebon Plaza (☎ 202062; cphhotel@indosat.net.id; Jl RA Kartini; r 225,000-625,000Rp; a) This is one of Cirebon's business hotels. It offers good, bright and clean rooms in a mish-mash of styles and colours.

Kharisma Hotel (☎ 207668; kh-hotel@telkom.net; Jl RA Kartini 60; r from 326,000Rp; a s) Despite its midrange pricing, Kharisma is one of Cirebon's plush hotels. Rooms in its new section are very spacious, and there are a couple of bars for late-night drinks.

Hotel Bentani (☎ 203246; bentani@cirebon.wa.santara.net.id; Jl Siliwangi 69; s/d from 375,000/425,000Rp; a s i) Despite its orientation towards business clients, Bentani exudes plenty of style, with lots of colour, good facilities, and well-appointed rooms.

Cirebon Penta Hotel (☎ 203328; Jl Syarif Abdurrahman 159; r from 450,000Rp; a) What Penta lacks in soul, it makes up for in location. It's in the bustling heart of the city and has dated yet comfy rooms, a rooftop garden and a health centre. Very basic rooms are also available.

Eating & Drinking

Good warungs serving seafood, *ayam goreng* (fried chicken) and sate can be found along Jl Kalibaru Selatan near Hotel Asia. The department stores have food stall areas; the food stalls upstairs at the back of the Yogya department stores are the best. For a mind-boggling stock of fresh, exotic fruit, head directly to **Pasar Kanoman** (Jl Kanoman; h breakfast & lunch).

La Palma (Jl Siliwangi 86; cakes 2000Rp; h breakfast & lunch) Housed in an old Dutch villa, La Palma harks back to the days when the sweet tooth of Dutch colonialists needed satisfying. Today it's still baking delicious cakes, but for everyone.

Sinar Budi II (Jl Siliwangi 97; mains from 10,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) This place heaves with customers queuing up for its cheap and cheerful local fare.

Siliwajaya (Jl Siliwangi; mains 10,000Rp; h 24hr) Simple Siliwajaya is Cirebon's equivalent of a nonstop takeaway shop. No matter what time of the day or night it is, there are always people queuing up here for nasi goreng or the like.

H Moel (Jl Kalibaru Selatan 69; mains around 15,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) This place is one step up from a warung and has some of the best seafood in town. Choose from the barbecued prawns out front or the heavenly fish dishes coming from the kitchen. Better yet, have them both.

Jumbo Sea Food (Jl Siliwangi 191; mains from 20,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Next to the Yogya department store is this large restaurant; it's been dishing up seafood to the local populace for years and serves big seafood grills.

Magna (☎ 208045; Jl Bahagia 45; mains 40,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Despite a name change, Magna is still one of Cirebon's best Chinese seafood restaurants. Shrimp and crab dishes are specialties, but don't expect an intimate feel at this cavernous place.

For a drink try the following:
Grizzly's (Jl Siliwangi 69) In the Hotel Bentani, this is the place to mingle with Cirebon's tiny expat community and business types over drinks and a live band.

Mithas (Jl Tuparev 323) Pub-style atmosphere attracts locals rather than fleeting visitors to town.

Shopping

Toko Sumber Jaya (Jl Siliwangi 211 & 229) The two branches of this store stock all sorts of *oleh-*

oleh (souvenirs) from Cirebon. Most *oleh-oleh* are of the syrup, dried prawn and *krupuk* variety, but pottery, bamboo crafts and other interesting knick-knacks are also on sale.

Getting There & Away

BOAT

At the harbour, the **Pelni office** (☎ 204300) is past the entrance. The *Lawit* stops in Cirebon every two weeks when travelling to/from Pontianak in Kalimantan (economy/VIP 160,000/550,000Rp).

BUS

The Cirebon bus terminal is 4km southwest of the centre of town.

Normal/air-con buses run between Cirebon and Jakarta (23,000/35,000Rp, five hours), Bandung (20,000/33,000Rp, 3½ hours), Pekalongan (18,000/25,000Rp, four hours); and Semarang (30,000/42,000Rp, seven hours), as well as many of Java's main cities.

For express minibuses from Cirebon, the **ACC Kopyor 4848 office** (☎ 204343; Jl Karanggetas 9) can accommodate. It has air-con minibuses to Bandung (55,000Rp, 3½ hours), Semarang (90,000Rp, six hours) and Yogyakarta (85,000Rp, eight hours).

TRAIN

Cirebon is serviced by frequent trains that run on both the main northern Jakarta-Semarang-Surabaya train line and the southern Jakarta-Yogyakarta-Surabaya line. The better services leave from Cirebon's main train station, just off Jl Siliwangi. Crowded economy-class trains leave from the Parujakan train station further south.

For Jakarta's Gambir station, the *Cirebon Express* (business/executive 50,000/65,000Rp, three hours) departs from Cirebon at 6.15am, 10.15am, 2.50pm and 6pm. To Yogyakarta, the *Fajar Yogya* (100,000Rp, 4½ hours) departs at 8.57am. To Semarang, via Tegal and Pekalongan, the *Fajar Semarang* (10,000Rp business, four hours) departs at 9pm.

Getting Around

Cirebon's city minibus (*angkutan kota*) service operates from behind the main bus terminal; a fixed 2000Rp fare is charged.

Cirebon has legions of becak, and a ride from the train station to Pasar Pagi costs

around 10,000Rp. There are also taxis, but meters are seemingly reserved for family members and royalty.

AROUND CIREBON

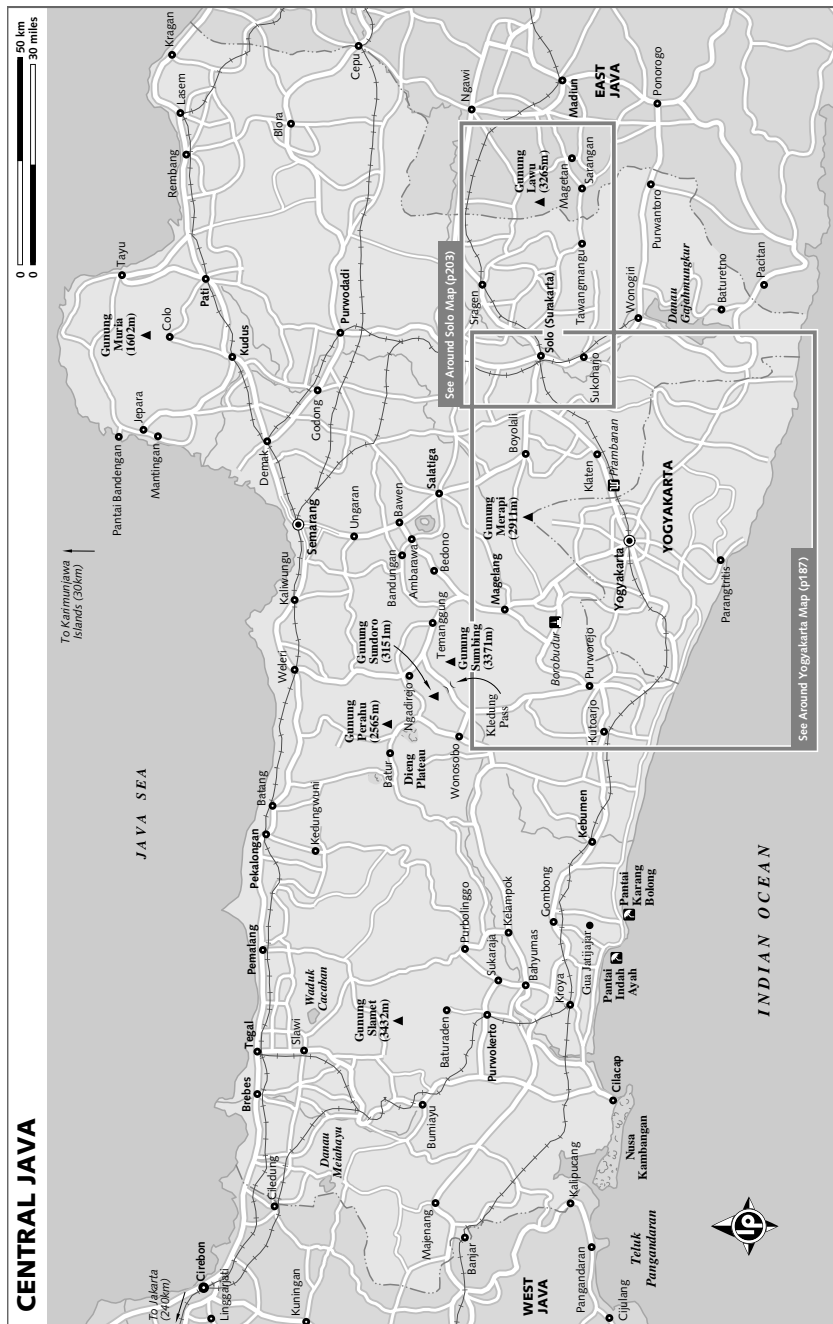
In the royal cemetery, 5km north of Cirebon, is the tomb of Sunan Gunungjati, who died in 1570. The most revered of Cirebon's kings, Gunungjati was also one of the nine *wali songo* (holy men who spread Islam throughout Java), and his tomb is one of the holiest places in the country. The inner tombs are only open once a month on Kliwon Thursday of the Javanese calendar (the calendar is a combination of the normal seven-day week and the five-day Javanese market week), and at Idul Fitri and Maulud Nabi Muhammed (see p856). Pilgrims sit in contemplation and pray outside the doors on other days. Along from Sunan Gunungjati's tomb is the tomb of his first wife, who was Chinese – this tomb attracts Chinese worshippers.

Linggarjati, a small mountain resort 23km south of Cirebon, was assured of its place in the history books when, in 1946, representatives of the Republican government and the returning Dutch occupying forces met to negotiate a British-sponsored cooperation agreement. Terms were thrashed out in a colonial hotel at the foot of Gunung Girema (3078m), once a retreat from the heat for Cirebon's Dutch residents. Soekarno briefly attended, but the Linggarjati Agreement was soon swept aside as the war for independence escalated. The hotel is now Gedung Naksa, a museum re-creating the events.

To reach Linggarjati, take a Kuningan bus from Cirebon to Cilimus (5000Rp) and then a Colt (2000Rp) or horse-drawn *andong* to either resort.

CENTRAL JAVA

Jakarta may be the nation's capital, but the Javan identity is at its strongest here, in the island's historic heartlands. As the seat of Java's first major Indianised civilisation, as well as the great Islamic sultanates centred on the *kraton* of Yogyakarta and Solo, Central Java (Jawa Tengah) remains the province in which the island's cultural pulse beats loudest.



Even though Central Java has a reputation for a short fuse when dealing with religious and political sentiments, it's a relaxed, easy-going province for tourists. Yogyakarta, at the centre of its own quasi-independent 'special region' stretching from the south coast to Gunung Merapi, and Solo, just 65km to the northeast of Yogyakarta, are Java's most interesting cities by far. But even Semarang, the province's busy, maritime capital, has its fair share of charm and is, like its more bombastic tourist centres, an intriguing fusion of Java's past and future. Most, though, will find the intricate Borobudur and Prambanan temples the highlight of any trip to the centre of this stunning island.

CILACAP

☎ 0282

Over the border from West Java, Cilacap is an unhurried city of wide boulevards and usable footpaths, and it has the only natural harbour with deep-water berthing facilities on Java's south coast. It's a pleasant enough town, but the main reason to visit is to make the backwater trip to Pangandaran.

The **tourist office** (☎ 534481; Jl A Yani 8; 7.30am-3.30pm Mon-Fri, 7.30am-1pm Sat) is opposite the Hotel Wijayakusuma.

Sights & Activities

Built between 1861 and 1879, **Benteng Pendem** (admission 2000Rp; 7.30am-4pm) is an impressive Dutch fort complex at the entrance to the old harbour. It has intact barracks (bring a torch to explore properly, as they're rather dark) and massive ramparts, and is one of the best-preserved forts in Java.

The fort overlooks a long stretch of dirty sand, **Pantai Teluk Penyu**. This popular local beach has souvenir stalls that sell an array of shells and trinkets.

For better beaches – complete with white sand – head to **Nusa Kambangan**, an island south of the port. While there isn't a lot to do here (swimming is not safe), it does make a pleasant break from the town. Ferries sail at 7am (30,000Rp).

Sleeping & Eating

Hotel Anggrek (☎ 533835; Jl Angrek 16; r with shared mandi/air-con 30,000/65,000Rp; a) At the low end of the scale, Anggrek has Spartan and reasonably clean rooms. It's about a five-minute walk to Jl Yani, the main drag.

Hotel Wijayakusuma (☎ 534871; www.wijaya.kusumahotel.com; Jl A Yani 12A; r 300,000-550,000Rp; a s) At the southern end of town, this is the top hotel in Cilacap. It has a range of rooms in good order, helpful staff and a quiet restaurant.

Sahabat 64 (mains 20,000-40,000Rp) In the very centre of town, next door to Perapatan, Sahabat 64 is a little cheaper on quality and price.

Restaurant Perapatan/Sien Hieng (Jl A Yani 62; mains around 30,000Rp) This place has been an institution for years – possibly since the '50s looking at the retro décor – and serves top-rate Chinese.

Getting There & Away

BOAT

At the time of writing, only charter boats were plying the backwaters from Cilacap to Majingklak. See p155 for more information on trips. The jetty is near the big Pertamina installations.

BUS

The **Cilacap bus terminal** (Jl Gatot Subroto) is 3km north of the city centre. Buses run between Cilacap and Pangandaran (25,000Rp, three hours), Yogyakarta (34,000Rp, five hours) and Purwokerto (10,000Rp, 1½ hours), where you'll need to change for Wonosobo.

For door-to-door minibuses to Yogyakarta (60,000Rp), Bandung (80,000Rp) and Wonosobo (65,000Rp), call **Toko Djadi** (☎ 533490; Jl A Yani 72) and **Travel Rejeki** (☎ 533371; Jl A Yani 68).

TRAIN

Cilacap's central train station is just off Jl A Yani and close to the tourist office. Only a handful of trains operate from here. The **Purwojaya** leaves for Jakarta (executive/business 100,000/50,000Rp) at 6.30pm and the economy-class **Logawa** departs at 5.30am for Solo (23,000Rp, five hours), Surabaya (33,000Rp, 10 hours) and Jember (44,000Rp, 15 hours).

PURWOKERTO

A surprisingly clean city with some architectural reminders of the Dutch colonial era, Purwokerto is a crossroads for travellers heading to Wonosobo from Cilacap. There are hotels in the town, but you're

better off staying at the mountain resort of Baturaden, 14km north of town.

The train station is close to the city centre and the bus terminal is about 2km south. Buses run to all major centres, including Cilacap (10,000Rp, 1½ hours), Wonosobo (13,000Rp, three hours), Banjar and Yogyakarta. Infrequent direct buses go to Baturaden (6000Rp), or catch an *angkot* from Pasar Wage (6000Rp) in town.

WONOSOBO

☎ 0286 / pop 25,000

Wonosobo is the main gateway to the Dieng Plateau. At 900m above sea level in the central mountain range, it has a comfortable climate and is a typical country town with a busy market. On national holidays it comes alive as people from surrounding villages gather for festivities in the main square. You might see the Kuda Kepang dance from nearby Temanggung, or the local Lengger dance, in which men cross-dress and wear masks.

Information

Bina (Jl Veteran 36; h 24 hrs) Internet access for 5000Rp per hour.

BNI bank (Bank Negara Indonesia; Jl A Yani) Changes cash and travellers cheques at low rates, and has an ATM for credit-card withdrawals; better rates can be found in Yogyakarta.

Telkom office (Jl A Yani) Near the *alun-alun* and has Home Country Direct telephones.

Tourist office (☎ 321194; Jl Kartini 3; h 8am-3pm Mon-Fri) Has maps and brochures of Wonosobo and the Dieng Plateau, and contact details for tour operators in the area.

Sleeping

Citra Homestay (☎ 321880; Jl Angkatan 45; r 50,000Rp) Citra is a simple homestay above a carpenter's with very basic rooms and tours of the Dieng Plateau on offer. Light sleepers should note that it's close to a mosque.

Hotel Sri Kencono (☎ 321522; Jl A Yani 81; r 50,000-250,000Rp) Sri Kencono nicely spans the gap between budget and midrange, with well-kept economy rooms with *mandis* (common Indonesian form of bath, consisting of a large water tank from which water is ladled over the body) and a larger, comfier variety sporting hot showers and TVs.

Wisma Duta Homestay (☎ 321674; Jl Rumah Sakit 3; r with/without shower 250,000/50,000Rp) Duta of-

fers rooms at two extremes: the basic rooms are faded but still a good budget option, while the pricier versions are brand spanking new, with plenty of attractive stonework, thick mattresses and bathroom floors clean enough to eat off.

Hotel Nirwana (☎ 321066; Jl Resimen 18 No 34; r from 150,000Rp) Right in the thick of the market goings-on, this midrange option still manages to provide quiet and secure rooms.

Hotel Surya Asia (☎ 322992; www.suryaasia.com; Jl A Yani 137; r from 230,000Rp) This medium-sized hotel has large rooms and attentive service, and fills up quickly on weekends. There's also a decent restaurant on site.

Gallery Hotel Kresna (☎ 324111; www.galleryhotelkresnawonosobo.com; Jl Pasukan Ronggolawe 30; r 385,000-1,430,000Rp plus 21% tax; a) Kresna dates from 1921 when it was a retreat for Dutch planters. It still retains oodles of colonial charm while providing stylish and new rooms. Its restaurant is top-notch, and comes complete with an airy veranda and excellent service.

Eating

Dieng Restaurant (☎ 21266-21433; Jl Mayjend Bambang; mains 20,000-60,000Rp) A top spot near the bus terminal, Dieng has good Indonesian, Chinese and European food served buffet-style. Mr Argus, the owner, can arrange tours of Dieng Plateau (150,000Rp).

Asia (Jl Kawedanan 43; mains 20,000-50,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) One of central Wonosobo's best Chinese restaurants, Asia has been around in one form or another since 1933. It has frog legs and pigeon alongside normal offerings.

Getting There & Away

Wonosobo's bus terminal is 3km out of town on the Magelang road.

From Yogyakarta take a bus to Magelang (12,000Rp, one hour) and then another bus to Wonosobo (12,000Rp, two hours). **Rahayu Travel** (☎ 321217; Jl A Yani 95) has door-to-door minibuses to Yogyakarta (36,000Rp, three hours). Hotels can arrange pick-up.

Hourly buses go to Semarang (15,000Rp, four hours), passing through Secang and Ambarawa (10,000Rp) en route.

For Cilacap (four hours), a change at Purwokerto (13,000Rp, three hours) is required. Leave early in the morning to catch the ferry to Majingklak and on to Pangandaran.

Frequent buses to Dieng (7000Rp, one hour) leave throughout the day and continue on to Batur.

DIENG PLATEAU

☎ 0286

The lofty plateau of Dieng (2093m above sea level) is home to the oldest Hindu temples in Java. Its name comes from Di-Hyang (Abode of the Gods), and it's thought that this was once the site of a flourishing temple-city of priests.

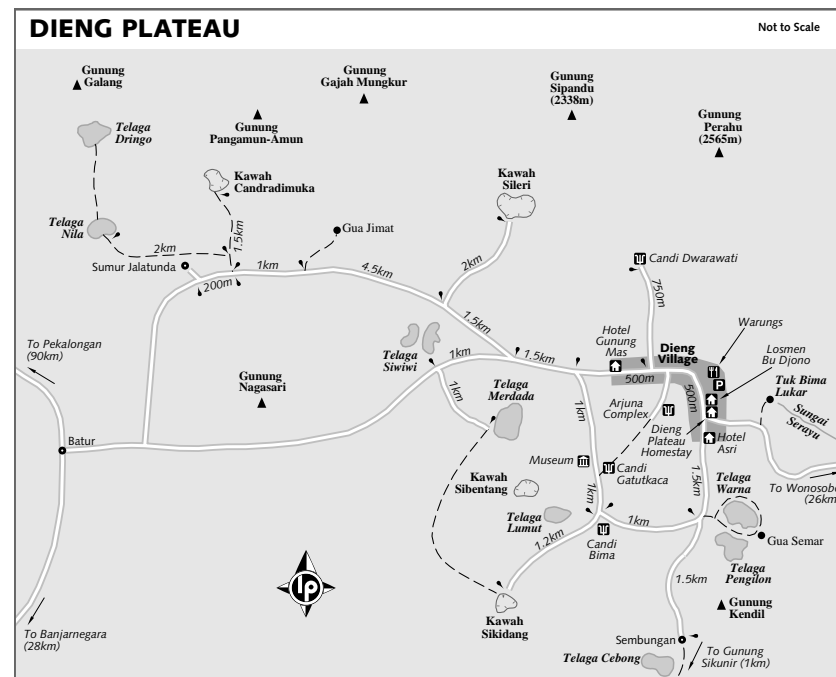
More than 400 temples, most of which were built between the 8th and 9th centuries, covered the highland plain, but with the mysterious depopulation of Central Java, this site, like Borobudur, was abandoned and forgotten. It was not until 1856 that the archaeologist Van Kinsbergen drained the flooded valley around the temples and catalogued the ruins. The eight remaining temples are characteristic of early Central Javanese architecture – stark, squat and boxlike.

These simple temples, while of great archaeological importance, are not stunning.

Rather, Dieng's beautiful landscape is the main reason to make the long journey to this isolated region. Steep mountainsides terraced with vegetable plots enclose the huge volcanically active plateau, a marshy caldera of a collapsed volcano. Any number of walks to mineral lakes, steaming craters or other lonely places can be made around Dieng, including a walk to the highest village in Java, Sembungan.

To really appreciate Dieng, it's best to stay in Dieng village, although Wonosobo has better facilities and can be used as a base. The temples and the main 'natural' sights can be seen in one day on foot – arrive in Dieng in the morning before the afternoon mists roll in.

It is a pleasant three- or four-hour loop south from Dieng village to Telaga Warna (Coloured Lake), Candi Bima (Bima Temple), Kawah Sikidang (Sikidang Crater), and then back to Candi Gatutkaca, the Arjuna Complex and the village. Many other lakes and craters around Dieng are scattered over a large area and are difficult to reach.



Information

In Dieng village a kiosk sells tickets to most of the Dieng sights for 12,000Rp, and hands out basic maps of the area. It costs a further 7000Rp for Telaga Warna and Telaga Pengilon, and another 3000Rp if touring the temples by car.

BRI bank (Bank Rakyat Indonesia; 𠄎 8am-2pm Mon-Fri)

Near Hotel Gunung Mas; changes US dollars at poor rates.

Kios Telephone Dian (𠄎 8am-6pm) This wartel is on the main street, just before Hotel Gunung Mas.

Sights

TEMPLES

The five main temples that form the **Arjuna Complex** are clustered together on the central plain. They are Shiva temples, but like the other Dieng temples they have been named after the heroes of the *wayang* stories of the Mahabharata epic: Arjuna, Puntadewa, Srikandi, Sembadra and Semar. Raised walkways link the temples (as most of this land is waterlogged), but you can see the remains of ancient underground tunnels, which once drained the marshy flatlands.

Just to the southwest of the Arjuna Complex is **Candi Gatutkaca** and the small site **museum** (admission included in Dieng ticket price; 𠄎 8am-4pm) containing statues and sculptures from the temples. The statuary inside reveals interesting carvings, including Shiva's carrier, Nandi the bull. With the body of a man and the head of a bull, it is a unique representation in Hindu iconography found nowhere else. A gargoyle sporting an erection is distinctly animist.

Further south, **Candi Bima** is unique in Java, with its *kudu* (sculpted heads) like so many spectators peering out of windows. The restored **Candi Dwarawati** is on the northern outskirts of the village. Near the entrance to Dieng at the river, **Tuk Bima Lukar** is an ancient bathing spring. It was once a holy place and is said to be a fountain of youth.

OTHER SIGHTS

The road south from the Dieng Plateau Homestay passes a mushroom factory and a flower garden before the turn-off to beautiful **Telaga Warna**, which has turquoise hues from the bubbling sulphur deposits around its shores. A trail leads anticlockwise to the adjoining lake, **Telaga Pengilon**, and the holy

Gua Semar, a renowned meditation cave. Return to the main road via the indistinct trail that leads around **Telaga Pengilon** and up the terraced hillside. The colours of the lakes are better viewed from up high.

From **Telaga Warna** it's about 1km along the main road to **Candi Bima**, and then another 1.2km to **Kawah Sikidang**, a volcanic crater with steaming vents and frantically bubbling mud ponds. Exercise extreme caution here – there are no guard rails to keep you from slipping off the sometimes muddy trails into the scalding-hot waters. **Kawah Sibentang** is a less spectacular crater nearby, and **Telaga Lumut** is another small lake.

South of the geothermal station, the paved road leads on to **Sembungan**, said to be the highest village in Java, at 2300m. Potato farming has made this large village relatively wealthy – it sends an inordinate number of pilgrims to Mecca.

Gunung Sikunir, 1km past **Sembungan**, and the shallow lake of **Telaga Cebong**, just beyond the village, are the main attractions in this area. Views from **Sikunir** are spectacular, stretching across Dieng and east as far as **Merapi** and **Merbabu** volcanoes on a clear day. To reach the hill in time for sunrise, start at 4am from Dieng village. It's a one-hour walk to **Sembungan** and another 30 minutes to the top of the hill. **Dieng Plateau Homestay** and **Losmen Bu Djono** both offer guides for 35,000Rp per person.

Other attractions to the west are more difficult to reach. **Telaga Merdada** is a large lake, with a mushroom factory next to it. **Kawah Sileri**, 2km off the main road and 6km from Dieng, is a smoking crater area with a hot lake. **Gua Jimat**, is a 1km walk through the fields from the main road.

Nine kilometres from Dieng village is the trail to **Kawah Candradimuka**; it is a pleasant 1.5km walk to this crater through the fields. Another trail branches off to two lakes: **Telaga Nila** and a longer two-hour walk to **Telaga Dringo**. Just a few hundred metres past the turn-off to **Kawah Candradimuka** is **Sumur Jalatunda**. This well is in fact a deep hole some 100m across with vertical walls plunging down to bright-green waters.

Another popular spot to see the sunrise and the views of the valley it offers is the lookout point on the **Wonosobo** road, 5km towards **Wonosobo**.

Sleeping & Eating

Dieng has a handful of Spartan hotels to choose from if you are on a budget, but beware: hot water is not always forthcoming.

Hotel Asri (% 642034; r 30,000-40,000Rp) **Asri** is about as cheap as you get in Dieng, but don't expect much for the price; there's no hot water and only shared *mandis*.

Losmen Bu Djono (% 642046; Jl Raya, Km 27; r 30,000-40,000Rp, 'VIP' room with hot water 70,000-80,000Rp) **Bu Djono** is a very basic losmen in poor – yet charming – condition. Staff are incredibly friendly and can supply you with information on the area, and there's hot water – yippee!

Dieng Plateau Homestay (Jl Raya, Km 27; r 50,000Rp) This place is similar in look and atmosphere to **Bu Djono**, its perennial competitor. You may have trouble tracking down the owner, though.

Hotel Gunung Mas (% 592417; r 80,000, with hot water 100,000Rp) This is the most 'upmarket' hotel in town, but that's not saying much. It looks quite dilapidated from the outside, but rooms are in reasonable condition and the beds don't sag (much).

Food is not Dieng's strong suit. **Losmen Bu Djono** wins back a few points from the **Dieng Plateau Homestay** in the eats department, and it has cold beer.

Warungs next to the **Losmen Bu Djono** are a pittance cheaper, but chilly after dark.

Getting There & Away

Dieng is 26km from **Wonosobo** (7000Rp, one hour), which is the usual access point. Buses continue on to **Batur** (3000Rp from Dieng), where it's possible to catch a further bus to **Pekalongan** (12,000Rp, three hours, 90km). The road is steep and bumpy but paved.

It's possible to reach Dieng from **Yogyakarta** in one day (including a stop at **Borobudur**) by public bus provided you leave early enough to make the connection; the route is **Yogyakarta–Magelang–Wonosobo–Dieng**. Travel agents in **Yogyakarta** offer day trips that include **Borobudur**, but you'll spend most of your time on a bus and generally end up seeing Dieng clouded in mist.

BOROBUDUR

% 0293

Like **Angkor Wat** in Cambodia and **Bagan** in Myanmar, Java's **Borobudur** makes the

rest of Southeast Asia's spectacular sites seem almost incidental. Looming out of a patchwork of bottle-green paddies and swaying palm tops, this colossal Buddhist relic is one of Southeast Asia's marvels, surviving **Gunung Merapi**'s ash flows, terrorist bombs, and the wear and tear of a million pairs of tourist flip-flops (thongs) to remain as enigmatic and beautiful as it must have been 1200 years ago.

History

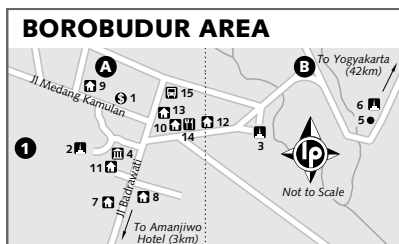
Rulers of the **Sailendra** dynasty built **Borobudur** some time between AD 750 and AD 850. Little else is known about **Borobudur**'s early history, but the **Sailendras** must have recruited a huge workforce, as some 60,000 cubic metres of stone had to be hewn, transported and carved during its construction. The name **Borobudur** is possibly derived from the Sanskrit words 'Vihara Buddha Uhr', which mean 'Buddhist Monastery on the Hill'.

With the decline of Buddhism and the shift of power to East Java, **Borobudur** was abandoned soon after completion and for centuries lay forgotten, buried under layers of volcanic ash. It was only in 1815, when **Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles** governed Java, that the site was cleared and the sheer magnitude of the builders' imagination and technical skill was revealed. Early in the 20th century the Dutch began to tackle the restoration of **Borobudur**, but over the years the supporting hill had become waterlogged and the whole immense stone mass started to subside. A mammoth US\$25 million restoration project was undertaken between 1973 and 1983 to finally finish the job.

On 21 January 1985, bombs planted by opponents of **Soeharto** exploded on the upper layers of **Borobudur**. Many of the smaller stupas were damaged, but it has once again been fully restored, demonstrating the structure's timeless resilience. In 1991 **Borobudur** gained the status of a World Heritage site.

Orientation & Information

The small, bustling village of **Borobudur** consists of several warungs, souvenir stalls and a few hotels that face the monument. The bus terminal is less than 10-minutes' walk from the monument.



Information can be gathered from the information office (☎ 788266; www.borobudurpark.com; admission to temple US\$11; ⌚ 6am-5pm) at the temple's entrance, and from hotels in town. Official guides are available at the information office for 40,000Rp (up to 20 persons). There's a **BNI ATM** (Bank Negara Indonesia; Jl Medang Kamulan; ⌚ 24hr) near the temple's entrance.

Sights

BOROBUDUR TEMPLE

Borobudur is built from two million block stones in the form of a massive symmetrical stupa, literally wrapped around a small hill. It stands solidly on its 118m x 118m base. Six square terraces are topped by three circular ones, with four stairways leading up through finely carved gateways to the top. The paintwork is long gone, but it's thought that the grey stone of Borobudur was at one time washed with a colour to catch the sun.

Viewed from the air, the structure resembles a colossal three-dimensional tantric mandala. It has been suggested, in fact, that the people of the Buddhist community that once supported Borobudur were early Vajrayana or Tantric Buddhists who used it as a walk-through mandala.

The monument was conceived as a Buddhist vision of the cosmos in stone, starting in the everyday world and spiralling up to nirvana, the Buddhist heaven. At the base of the monument is a series of reliefs representing a world dominated by passion and desire, where the good are rewarded by reincarnation as a higher form of life, while the evil are punished by a lowlier reincarnation. These carvings and their carnal scenes are covered by stone to hide them from view, but they are partly visible on the south side.

Starting at the main eastern gateway, go clockwise (as one should around all Buddhist monuments) around the galleries of

INFORMATION	
BNI ATM.....	1 A1
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES	
Borobudur Temple.....	2 A1
Candi Pawon.....	3 B1
Karmawibhanga Archaeological Museum.....	4 A1
Mendut Buddhist Monastery.....	5 B1
Mendut Temple.....	6 B1
SLEEPING	
Homestay Rajasa.....	7 A1
Hotel Bhumisambhara.....	8 A1
Lotus Guest House.....	9 A1
Lotus II.....	10 A1
Manohara Hotel.....	11 A1
Pondok Tinggal Hotel & Restaurant.....	12 B1
Pondok Wisata Bunga Rose.....	13 A1
EATING	
Borobudur Restaurant.....	14 A1
TRANSPORT	
Bus Terminal.....	15 A1

the stupa. Although Borobudur is impressive for its sheer bulk, the delicate sculptural work when viewed close up is exquisite. The pilgrim's walk is about 5km long and takes you along narrow corridors past nearly 1460 richly decorated narrative panels and 1212 decorative panels in which the sculptors have carved a virtual textbook of Buddhist doctrines as well as many aspects of Javanese life 1000 years ago – a continual procession of ships and elephants, musicians and dancing girls, warriors and kings. Some 432 serene-faced Buddha images stare out from open chambers above the galleries, while 72 more Buddha images sit only partly visible in latticed stupas on the top three terraces. Reaching in through the stupa to touch the fingers or foot of the Buddha inside is believed to bring good luck.

Admission to the temple includes entrance to Karmawibhanga archaeological museum, which is just east of the monument and contains 4000 original stones and carvings from Borobudur, an exhibition of tools and chemicals used in its restoration and some interesting photographs, including some recording the damage caused by the 1985 bomb. An audiovisual show at the Manohara Hotel (p170) costs 5000Rp, and there are a few other attractions at Borobudur, including a children's playground and tacky magic museum.

Borobudur is Indonesia's single most popular tourist attraction, and despite a recent drop-off in tourist numbers since

the Bali bombings, it can be crowded and noisy, especially on weekends. Hawkers both outside and inside the archaeological park are becoming increasingly aggressive, but are sometimes put off if you tell them in Bahasa Indonesia that you are a resident of Yogyakarta (*saya tinggal di Yogyakarta*). The finest time to see Borobudur and capture something of the spirit of the temple is at dawn or sunset, but you won't have it to yourself. These are popular times for the bus loads of tour groups to visit Borobudur. The temple is usually at its quietest during Ramadan.

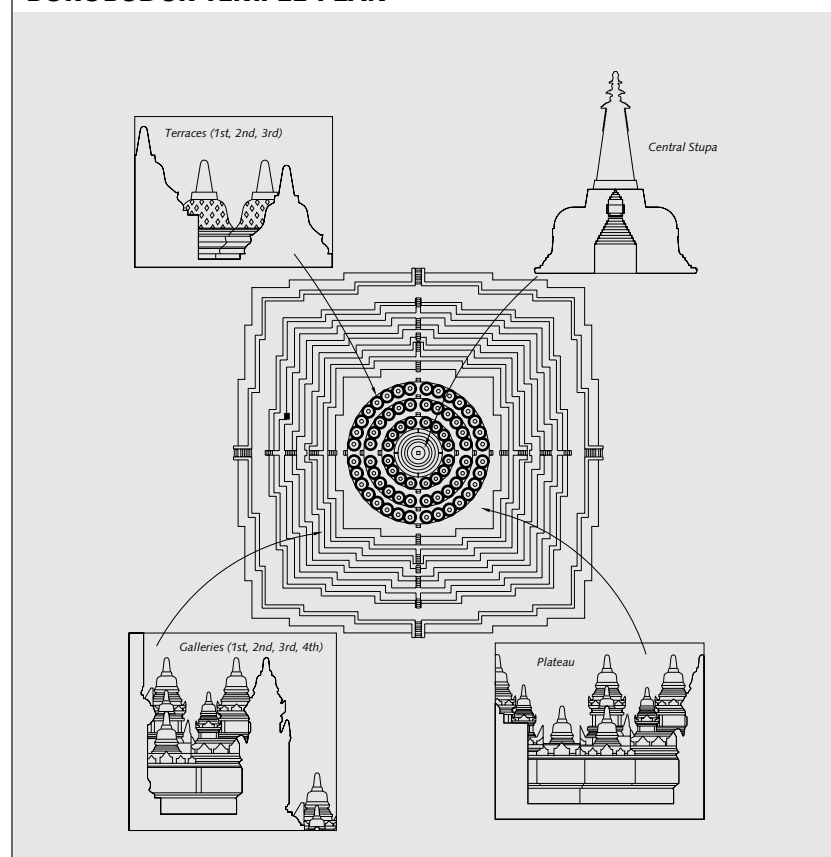
It is, however, possible to beat the crowds at sunrise; for 230,000Rp (90,000Rp if you stay at the hotel) Manohara Hotel (p170)

lets visitors enter the temple's grounds before 6am. A passport is required for entry.

MENDUT TEMPLE

This temple (admission 3000Rp; ⌚ 6am-5pm) is around 3.5km east of Borobudur, back towards Muntilan. It may be small and insignificant compared with its mighty neighbour Borobudur, but it houses the most outstanding statue in its original setting of any temple in Java. The magnificent 3m-high figure of Buddha is flanked by Bodhisattvas: Lokeshvara on the left and Vairapana on the right. The Buddha is also notable for his posture: instead of the usual lotus position, he sits Western-style with both feet on the ground.

BOROBUDUR TEMPLE PLAN



The Mendut temple, also called Venu Vana Mandira (Temple in the Bamboo Grove), was discovered in 1836, and restoration attempts were made by the Dutch between 1897 and 1904. Although parts of the roof and entrance remain unfinished, it is nevertheless a fine temple and the gracefully carved relief panels on its outer walls are among the finest and largest examples of Hindu-Javanese art in the country.

Next to the temple is the **Mendut Buddhist Monastery**. Meditation courses are often held here around December.

CANDI PAWON

Around 1.5km east of Borobudur, this tiny temple (admission 3000Rp; 7 6am-5pm) is similar in design and decoration to the Mendut temple. It is not a stupa, but resembles a Central Javanese temple, with its broad base, central body and pyramidal roof. Pot-bellied dwarfs pouring riches over the entrance to this temple suggest that it was dedicated to Kuvera, the Buddhist god of fortune.

Festivals & Events

Festival of Borobudur Around June the Festival of Borobudur kicks off with a Ramayana-style dance, and goes on to feature folk-dancing competitions, handicrafts, white-water rafting and other activities.

Waisak The Buddha's birth, his enlightenment and his reaching of nirvana are all celebrated on the full-moon day of Waisak. A great procession of saffron-robed monks travels from Mendut to Pawon then Borobudur, where candles are lit and flowers strewn about as offerings, followed by praying and chanting. This holiest of Buddhist events attracts thousands of pilgrims, and usually falls in May.

Sleeping & Eating

Pondok Wisata Bunga Rose (9 788362; r from 25,000Rp) This is about the cheapest room you can get near Borobudur, but it shows. Rooms are quite grungy and it's on a busy road, so ask for a room at the back.

Hotel Bhumisambhara (9 788205; Jl Badrawati; r 45,000Rp, large rooms 55,000Rp) Down a quiet lane east of Borobudur temple, this hotel has very simple rooms, but the setting is tranquil (or dead, whichever way you look at it).

Pondok Tinggal Hotel (9 788145; Jl Balaputradewa 32; dm 15,000Rp, r from 72,000Rp, with air-con

from 120,000Rp; a) With flash rooms around an attractive garden, this is a good bet 1km from Borobudur. The dorms are often empty and the better rooms are excellent value. The hotel also has a decent restaurant (mains around 30,000Rp; 7 6am-10pm).

Lotus Guest House (9 788281; Jl Medang Kamulan 2; s/d with breakfast from 60,000/80,000Rp) To the north of the temple, near the main parking area, Lotus is a super-friendly and homely guesthouse. Conditions can be a little rough-and-ready, but many rooms are quite large. It has a small café and plenty of local info.

Lotus II (9 788845; Jl Balaputradewa 54; r100,000Rp) The newly renovated rooms at this guesthouse are stylish in their simplicity. Expect to find not only tiled floors, bamboo mats, mosquito nets draped from high ceilings and large, comfy beds, but also bathrooms larger than most losmen rooms. As an extra bonus, the huge back balcony looks directly onto rice fields.

Homestay Rajasa (9 788276; ariswara_sutomo@yahoo.com; Jl Badrawati 2; r with fan & cold water/air-con & hot water 100,000/200,000Rp; a) This stylish villa could do with a lick of paint, but its air-con rooms are in good condition and sport dark wood furniture and baths. It's in a peaceful setting away from the town centre, and has a pleasant, open-air restaurant.

Manohara Hotel (9 788131; www.borobudurpark.com/manohara; r from 285,000Rp; a) Manohara has an unbeatable position within the monument grounds. Comfy rooms, most with porches facing the monument, have private bathroom, hot water and TV. Unlimited entry to Borobudur is included and elephant rides are available.

Amanjiwo (9 788333; amanjiwo@amanresorts.com; r US\$650-2600 plus 21% tax; a s) Amanjiwo rivals Borobudur temple in architectural extravagance. Perched among the Menoreh Hills 3km south of Borobudur, with panoramic views over the pyramid, this hotel is practically a tourist attraction in its own right. Exclusive suites, many with their own pool, are among the finest in Java.

As well as the Pondok Tinggal Restaurant, which serves up a broad spread of Western and Indonesian fare, dining options include the pleasant **Borobudur Restaurant** (mains around 30,000Rp; 7 lunch) and the countless warungs outside the monument enclosure and around the bus terminal.

Getting There & Away

Direct buses make the 42km trip from Yogyakarta's Umbulharjo bus terminal to Borobudur (10,000Rp, 1½ hours) via Muntilan. These buses skirt the central city but can also be caught at Jombor, about 4km north of Yogyakarta on Jl Magelang, near the northern ring road. Bus 5 runs from Jombor to the city centre.

From Borobudur terminal, buses also go to Muntilan (5000Rp) and Magelang (5000Rp).

In Borobudur the hotels are within walking distance of the bus terminal; a becak should cost no more than 5000Rp to anywhere in the village. It's a fine walk to Mendut and Pawon; otherwise a bus or bemo is 2000Rp to hop from one temple to the next, or hire a becak or bicycle (from hotels).

Tours of Borobudur (p177) are easily arranged in Yogyakarta at the Prawirotaman or Sosrowijayan agents.

YOGYAKARTA

9 0274 / pop 450,000

If Jakarta is Java's financial and industrial powerhouse, Yogyakarta is its soul. Central

to the island's artistic and intellectual heritage, Yogyakarta (pronounced 'Jogjakarta'), called Yogya for short, is where the Javanese language is at its purest, Java's arts at their brightest and its traditions at their most visible.

Fiercely independent and protective of its customs, Yogya is now the site of an uneasy truce between the old ways of life and the trappings of modernity that have swept across the island in recent decades. Still headed by its sultan, whose *kraton* remains the hub of traditional life, contemporary Yogya is nevertheless as much a city of burger bars, traffic jams and advertising hoardings as batik, gamelan and ritual. But while the process of modernisation homogenises many of Java's cities, Yogya continues to juggle past and present with relative ease, sustaining a slower, more conservative way of life in the quiet *kampung* that thrive only a stone's throw from the throbbing main streets.

Yogya's potency has long outweighed its size, and it remains Java's premier tourist city, with countless hotels, restaurants and attractions of its own. It is also an ideal base for exploring nearby attractions, including

THE BANTUL EARTHQUAKE *Atik Wildan*

Early in the morning of 27 May 2006, Central Java was hit by an earthquake measuring 6.3 on the Richter scale. Its epicentre was the small village of Bantul – a town of farmers and artists, located 25km south of the ancient capital of Yogyakarta – but the quake was felt as far away as Borobudur.

Bantul was all but flattened – only 20% of the village's homes and community centres remained standing after the earthquake subsided. The rest of the affected area came through the quake in better condition, but a total of 200,000 people were left homeless, and around 6000 died. Aftershocks forced many to find shelter in the open, and nearby Mt Merapi sent debris some 3½km down its western flank.

Transport links (including the airport), shops, and the general infrastructure of Yogyakarta and its surrounds were back in operation soon after the quake, but the overall damage to some areas will take longer to rectify. Bantul and its neighbouring villages could possibly take years to fully recover, and while the southern half of Yogyakarta – an area that includes the *kraton* (p174) and Prawirotaman – is recuperating at a fast pace, it was hit hard by the quake, which could result in buildings lying indefinitely derelict.

Around 30% of the region's sights and hotels and 20% of the restaurants mentioned in this book sustained damage; however, most will be up and running by the time you read this. Worst hit are Candi Brahma and Vishnu (p192) at Prambanan, Museum Kareta Kraton (p176), and Taman Sari (p175); check with the tourist office (p172) for more information. The *kraton* itself only incurred cracks to its walls, but the caves of Gua Cerma and Langse near Parangtritis (p187) will probably be out of action for some time.

If you'd like to help out, donations are always welcomed by the Indonesian arm of the **Red Cross** (9 021-7992325; www.palangmerah.org in Indonesian; Jl Jenderal Datot Subroto Kav 96, 12790 Jakarta) and the **Indonesian Forum for the Environment** (WALHI/Friends of the Earth Indonesia; www.eng.walhi.or.id).

Indonesia's most important archaeological sites, Borobudur and Prambanan.

History

Yogyakarta owes its establishment to Prince Mangkubumi, who in 1755 returned to the former seat of Mataram and built the *kraton* of Yogyakarta. He took the title of sultan, adopted the name of Hamengkubuwono (The Universe on the Lap of the King) and created the most powerful Javanese state since the 17th century.

Yogya has always been a symbol of resistance to colonial rule; it was the heart of Prince Diponegoro's Java War (1825–30) and became the capital of the republic from 1946 until independence in 1949.

When the Dutch occupied Yogya in 1948, the patriotic sultan locked himself in the *kraton* and let rebels use the palace as their headquarters. The Dutch did not dare move against the sultan for fear of arousing the anger of millions of Javanese who looked upon him almost as a god. As a result of the sultan's support of the rebels, Yogya was granted the status of a special region when independence finally came.

Orientation

It is easy to find your way around Yogya. Jl Malioboro, named after the Duke of Marlborough, is the main road and runs straight down from the train station to the *kraton* at the far end. The road becomes Jl A Yani further south but is generally referred to as Jl Malioboro. The tourist office and many souvenir shops and stalls are along this street and most of the budget places to stay are west of it, in the Jl Sosrowijayan area near the railway line.

The old, walled *kraton* is the centre of old Yogya, where you will also find the Taman Sari (Water Castle), Pasar Ngasem (Bird Market) and numerous batik galleries. A second midrange hotel enclave is south of the *kraton* area around Jl Prawirotaman.

MAPS

The city's tourist information office (Map p173; % 562000; Jl Malioboro 16; h 8am–7pm Mon–Thu, 8–11.30am & 1–3pm Fri, 8am–6pm Sat) hands out free maps that will satisfy most tourist needs.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

Internet cafés can be found all over town, although many of the cheaper cafés (3000Rp per hour) are located north of Jl Diponegoro.

Caferina (Map p178; Jl Sosrowijayan; per hr 8000Rp; h 8am–11pm) Also food on offer.

Internet Queen (Map p178; Jl Pasar Kembang 17; per hr 7000Rp; h 24hr)

Kresna Tourist Service (Map p179; % 375502; Jl Prawirotaman I; per hr 7000Rp; 8am–11pm)

Metro Internet (Map p179; Jl Prawirotaman II; h 8am–11pm) In the Metro Guest House.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Ludira Husada Tama Hospital (Map p173; % 620333; Jl Wiratama 4; h 24hr)

MONEY

Yogya has plenty of banks and numerous moneychangers in the tourist areas, and many banks have ATMs that accept Visa and MasterCard.

BNI bank (Bank Negara Indonesia; Map p173; Jl Trikora 1) Opposite the main post office.

Mulia (Map p178; Inna Garuda Hotel, Jl Malioboro 60) Along with Pt Barumun Abadi, this has the best exchange rates in Yogya.

Pt Barumun Abadi (Map p178; Inna Garuda Hotel, Jl Malioboro 60) Offers excellent exchange rates, often better than the banks.

POST

Main post office (Map p173; Jl Senopati; h 7am–8pm Mon–Sat, 9am–8pm Sun)

TELEPHONE

You'll find wartels all over town.

Telkom office (Map p173; Jl Yos Sudarso; h 24hr)

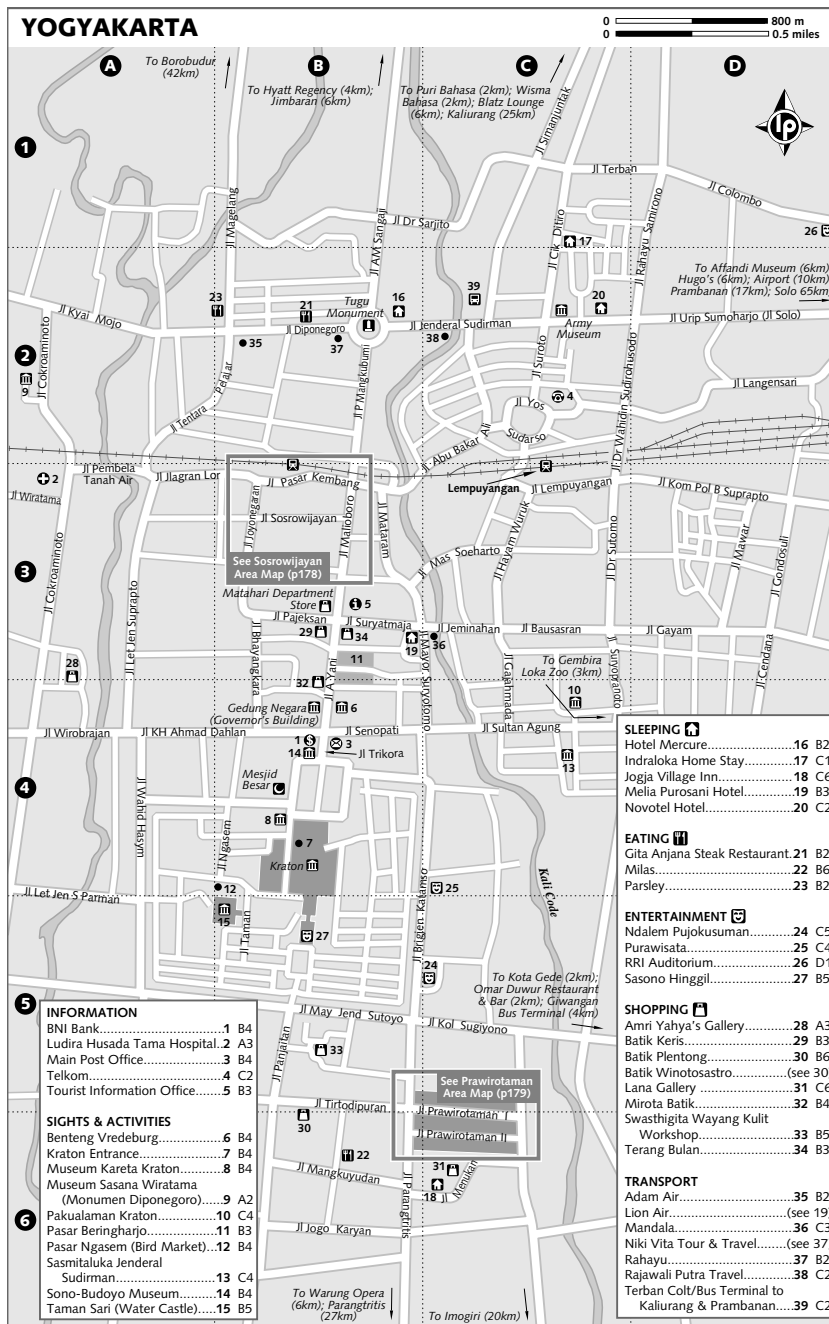
One kilometre east of Jl Malioboro, this has Home Country Direct phones.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist information office (Map p173; % 562000; Jl Malioboro 16; h 8am–7pm Mon–Thu, 8–11.30am & 1–3pm Fri, 8am–6pm Sat) Produces a number of publications (including a calendar of events) and can answer most queries. Also has counters at the airport and on the eastern side of the Tugu train station.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Great Tours (Map p178; % 583221; Jl Sosrowijayan 29; h 8am–11pm) Recommended by the tourist information office.



YOGYA IN...

Two Days

Start your day with a visit to the **kraton** (below) and a traditional performance of gamelan, *wayang* or dance, then spend the afternoon exploring the *kampung* surrounding the sultan's palace and nearby **Taman Sari** (opposite). End your afternoon with a wander through the city's squawking bird market, **Pasar Ngasem** (opposite).

Your second day could start with a wander down Jl Malioboro scouting for batik bargains, and a meander through Yogyakarta's main market, **Pasar Beringharjo** (opposite). A becak ride to **Kota Gede** (p176) to seek out silver bargains should be accompanied by a meal at **Omar Duwur Restaurant and Bar** (p182), one of Yogyakarta's finest.

Four Days

After exhausting the two-day itinerary, it's time to discover the wonders within striking distance of the city. Start with a tour of the beautiful Buddhist temple **Borobudur** (p167), only a 90-minute bus ride away, and move onto **Prambanan** (p190), the Hindu equivalent of Borobudur and only 30 minutes from the city.

This could easily keep you entertained for two days, but if you have one day spare, use it to climb **Gunung Merapi** (p188), Yogyakarta's very own volcano.

Kartika Trekking (Map p178; ☎ 562016; Jl Sosrowijayan 10; ₪ 9am-5pm) Agent specialising in trekking trips to Gunung Merapi. Recommended by locals and readers.

Kresna Tourist Service (Map p179; ☎ 375502; Jl Prawirotaman I; ₪ 8am-11pm) Handy for those staying in the Prawirotaman area.

Dangers & Annoyances

Yogya has its fair share of thieves – be particularly wary when catching buses to Borobudur and Prambanan.

More obvious (and often more annoying) are batik salespeople who'll strike up a conversation pretending to be guides or simply instant friends. Inevitably you'll end up at a gallery where you'll get the hard sell and they'll rake in a big commission if you buy. A time-honoured scam is the special batik exhibition that is being shipped to Southeast Asia – this is your 'last chance' to buy, at maybe 50 times the real price. Another is the only government-sponsored shop in Yogya where students from the Fine Arts school display their wares: there are no official shops or galleries in the city.

Becak drivers offering 'special rates' of 500Rp or 1000Rp for one hour are also trying to get you into a batik gallery.

Sights

KRATON

In the heart of the old city the huge palace of the sultans of Yogya is effectively the

centre of a small walled city within a city. More than 25,000 people live within the **greater kraton compound** (Map p173; ☎ 373321; admission 7500Rp, guided tour 10,000Rp; ₪ 8am-2pm Sat-Thu, 8am-1pm Fri), which contains its own market, shops, batik and silver cottage industries, schools and mosques.

The innermost group of buildings, where the current sultan still resides, was built between 1755 and 1756, although extensions were made during the long reign of Hamengkubuwono I. European-style touches to the interior were added much later, in the 1920s. Structurally this is one of the finest examples of Javanese palace architecture, providing a series of luxurious halls and spacious courtyards and pavilions. The sense of tradition holds strong in Yogya, and the palace is attended by very dignified elderly retainers who still wear traditional Javanese dress.

The centre of the *kraton* is the reception hall, the **Bangsai Kencana** (Golden Pavilion), with its intricately decorated roof and great columns of carved teak. A large part of the *kraton* is used as a museum and holds an extensive collection, including gifts from European monarchs, gilt copies of the sacred *pusaka* (heirlooms of the royal family) and gamelan instruments. One of the most interesting rooms contains the royal family tree, old photographs of grand mass weddings and portraits of the former sultans of Yogya.

An entire museum within the *kraton* is dedicated to the beloved Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX, with photographs and personal effects of the great man.

Other points of interest within the *kraton* include the 'male' and 'female' entrances indicated by giant-sized 'he' and 'she' dragons (although the dragons look very similar). Outside the *kraton*, in the centre of the northern square, there are two sacred *waringin* (banyan trees), where, in the days of feudal Java, white-robed petitioners would patiently sit hoping to catch the eye of the king. In the *alun-alun kidul* (southern square), two similar banyan trees are said to bring great fortune if you can walk between them without mishap while blindfolded; on Friday and Saturday nights you can see the youth of Yogya attempting the feat to a chorus of laughter from friends.

There are gamelan performances in the inner pavilion at 10am on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. *Wayang golek* (9am Wednesday), Javanese singing performances (10am Friday), *wayang kulit* (9am Saturday) and classical dance (11am Sunday) are also held.

The *kraton's* entrance is on the northwest side and it is closed on national holidays and for special *kraton* ceremonies, but batik touts will tell you it's closed to lure you to Taman Sari and a batik gallery.

TAMAN SARI

Just to the west of the *kraton* is the **Water Castle** (Map p173; admission 7000Rp; ₪ 8am-2pm), which once served as a splendid pleasure park of palaces, pools and waterways for the sultan and his entourage. The Portuguese architect of this elaborate retreat, built between 1758 and 1765, was from Batavia – the story goes that the sultan had him executed in order to keep his hidden pleasure rooms secret.

The complex was damaged first by Diponegoro's Java War, and an earthquake in 1865 helped finish the job. While much of what you see today lies in ruins, the bathing pools have been restored. From the tower overlooking the pools, the sultan was able to dally with his wives and witness the goings-on below.

The entrance to the restored bathing pools is on Jl Taman. Batik touts will try to lure you to a batik gallery or pretend to be official guides – shake them off.

PASAR NGASEM

At the edge of Taman Sari, Yogya's bird market (Map p173; Jl Polowijan; ₪ 8am-6pm) is a colourful menagerie crowded with hundreds of budgerigars, orioles, roosters and singing turtledoves in ornamental cages, but pigeons are the big business here (for training, not eating). Lizards and other small animals are also on sale, as are big trays of bird feed (swarming maggots and ants). From the back of Pasar Ngasem, an alleyway leads up to the broken walls of Taman Sari for fine views across Yogya.

PASAR BERINGHARJO

Yogya's main market (Map p173; Jl A Yani; ₪ 8am-6pm), on the southern continuation of Jl Malioboro, is a lively and fascinating place. The renovated front section has a wide range of batik – mostly cheap *batik cap* (stamped batik) – while the 2nd floor is dedicated to cheap clothes and shoes. Most interesting of all, though, is the old section towards the back. Crammed with warungs and stalls selling a huge variety of fruit and vegetables, this is still very much a traditional market. The range of *rempah rempah* (spices) on the 1st floor are quite something.

MUSEUMS

On the northern side of the main square in front of the *kraton*, **Sono-Budoyo Museum** (Map p173; ☎ 376775; admission 7500Rp; ₪ 8am-1.30pm Tue-Thu, 8-11.15am Fri, 8am-noon Sat & Sun) is the pick of Yogya's museums, even if it is dusty and dimly lit. It has a first-class collection of Javanese art, including *wayang kulit* puppets, *topeng* (masks), kris and batik. It also has a courtyard packed with Hindu statuary and artefacts from further afield, including superb Balinese carvings. *Wayang kulit* performances are held here (p182).

Up until his death in 1990, Affandi, Indonesia's best-known artist internationally, lived and worked in an unusual tree-house studio overlooking the river, about 6km east of the town centre. The **Affandi Museum** (Jl Solo; admission 5000Rp; ₪ 9am-4pm Tue-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) in the grounds exhibits his impressionist works, as well as paintings by his daughter Kartika and other artists. Affandi is buried in the back garden.

Dating from 1765, **Benteng Vredeburg** (Map p173; Jl A Yani 6; admission 750Rp; ₪ 8.30am-1.30pm

Tue-Thu, 8.30-11am Fri, 8.30am-noon Sat & Sun) is a Dutch-era fort opposite the main post office. The restored fort is now a museum that houses dioramas showing the history of the independence movement in Yogyakarta. The architecture is worth a look, but the dioramas are designed for Indonesian patriots.

Near the *kraton* entrance, **Museum Kreta Kraton** (Map p173; admission 2000Rp; 9am-2pm Sat-Thu, 8am-noon Fri) has exhibits of the opulent chariots of the sultans, although the bug-eyed horse statues are almost more interesting than the main event.

Sasmitaluka Jenderal Sudirman (Map p173; Jl B Harun; admission by donation; 8am-noon Tue-Sun) is the memorial home of General Sudirman, who commanded revolutionary forces and died shortly after the siege of Yogya in 1948.

Museum Sasana Wiratama (Monumen Diponegoro; Map p173; admission by donation; 8am-noon Tue-Sun) honours the Indonesian hero, Prince Diponegoro, who was leader of the bloody but futile rebellion of 1825-30 against the Dutch. A motley collection of the prince's belongings and other exhibits are kept in the small museum at his former Yogya residence.

KOTA GEDE

Kota Gede has been famed as the hub of Yogya's silver industry since the 1930s. But this quiet old town, which is now a suburb of Yogyakarta, was the first capital of the Mataram kingdom, founded by Panembahan Senopati in 1582. Senopati is buried in the small mossy graveyard of an old mosque to the south of the town's central market. You can visit the **sacred tomb** (admission 1000Rp; 9am-noon Sun, Mon & Thu, around 1-3pm Fri), but be sure to wear conservative dress when visiting; on days when the tomb is closed there is little to see here.

Jl Kemasan, the main street leading into town from the north, is lined with busy silver workshops. Most of the shops have similar stock, including hand-beaten bowls, boxes, fine filigree and modern jewellery (see p183).

Kota Gede is about 5km southeast of Jl Malioboro. Catch bus 4, a *becak* (about 15,000Rp) or cycle there; it is flat most of the way.

OTHER SIGHTS

The small **Pakualaman Kraton** (Map p173; Jl Sultan Agung; 9.30am-1.30pm Tue, Thu & Sun), northeast of the main *kraton*, houses a small museum, a *pendopo* that can hold a full gamelan orchestra, and a curious colonial house. Outside opening times you can explore the grounds.

In the evening you can head along to the **Purawisata** (Map p173; Jl Brigjen Katamsjo), an amusement park noted more for its dance performances, but there are also rides, fun-fair games and a *pasar seni* (art market) with a basic collection of souvenirs.

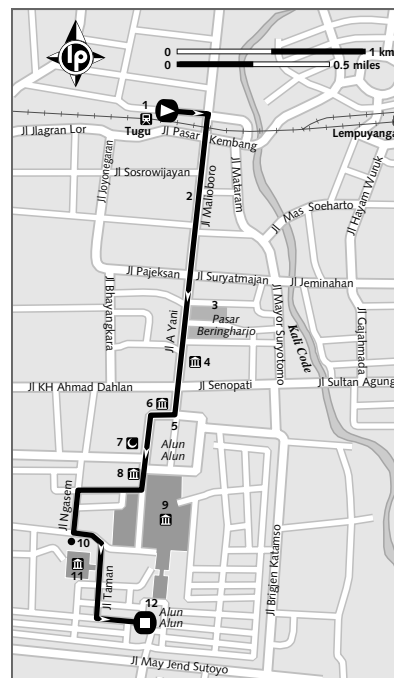
Yogya's **Gembira Loka Zoo** (admission 4000Rp; 8am-6pm), about 5km east of Jl A Yani, has its fair share of cramped cages, but on the whole it is spacious and has some interesting exotica such as some Komodo dragons, which are successfully breeding.

Walking Tour

Yogya is a very manageable city and many of its blockbuster sights can be seen on foot. A good place to start a walking tour of the city is Tugu train station (1), from where Jl Malioboro (2), Yogya's premier shopping street, is laid out in front of you. Head south along Jl Malioboro until Jl Suryatmajan, from which point Malioboro becomes Jl A Yani. Only one block south of Jl Suryatmajan is the market **Pasar Beringharjo** (3; p175), and only another block south again is the city's old Dutch fort, **Benteng Vredeburg** (4; p175).

Continuing south once more, cross Jl Senopati onto Jl Trikora and the *alun-alun* (5) will appear. Swing right and past the **Sono-Budoyo Museum** (6; p175) before heading south again, walking by the **Mesjid Besar** (7) and **Museum Kreta Kraton** (8; left). The entrance to the *Kraton* (9; p174) is only a few metres to the left.

From the *kraton*, head west until you hit Jl Ngasem, then turn left. Walk south and the city's bird market (10; p175) will be impossible to miss. Take Jl Taman east from outside the bird market; it quickly turns south and passes the **Taman Sari** (11; p175). At the end of Jl Taman turn left and make a beeline for the city's southern *alun-alun* (12). If you're with friends (or are simply feeling adventurous), have yourself blindfolded and try your luck walking between the square's two banyan trees; local folk-



WALK FACTS

Start Tugu train station

Finish alun-alun

Distance 3km

Duration two hours, excluding stops at attractions along the way

lore predicts good fortune for those who succeed.

Courses

Plenty of places in the Sosrowijayan (such as Losmen Lucy, p178) and Prawirotaman areas (such as Via Via, p181) offer short batik T-shirt courses of one or two days' duration. High art they aren't, but they provide a good introduction. The **tourist information office** (Map p173; ☎ 562000; Jl Malioboro 16; 8am-7pm Mon-Thu, 8-11.30am & 1-3pm Fri, 8am-6pm Sat) also has a list of those offering courses.

Bahasa Indonesia courses are offered in Yogya. **Puri Bahasa** (☎ 583789; Komplek Colombo, Jl Rajawali) and **Wisma Bahasa** (☎ 588409; Komplek Colombo, Jl Rajawali) are well-established

schools; the tourist information office can supply you with more options.

Tours

The tour agents on Jl Prawirotaman (Map p179) and Jl Sosrowijayan, Jl Dagen and Jl Pasar Kembang (Map p178) offer a host of similar tours at competitive prices that often include a snack and drink, but entrance fees are usually extra. Typical day tours and per-person rates (excluding entrance fees) are: Borobudur (60,000Rp); Dieng (150,000Rp); Prambanan (70,000Rp); Prambanan and Parangtritis (130,000Rp); Gunung Merapi climb from Selo (150,000Rp); and Gedung Songo and Ambarawa (150,000Rp).

Longer tours, such as to Gunung Bromo and on to Bali (300,000Rp, two days/one night) are also offered. Tours are often dependent on getting enough people to fill a minibus (usually a minimum of four), and prices vary depending on whether air-con is provided. Note that tours may also stop at batik or silver galleries to earn extra commission for tour operators.

Operators also arrange cars with driver (at some of the best rates in Java if you bargain).

Festivals & Events

Gerebeg The three Gerebeg festivals – held each year at the end of January and April and the beginning of November – are Java's most colourful and grand processions. In traditional court dress, palace guards and retainers, not to mention large floats of decorated mountains of rice, all make their way to the mosque, west of the *kraton*, to the sound of prayer and gamelan music.

Arts festival Yogya hosts this annual festival from 7 June to 7 July. Offers a wide range of shows and exhibitions. Most events are held at the Benteng Vredeburg.

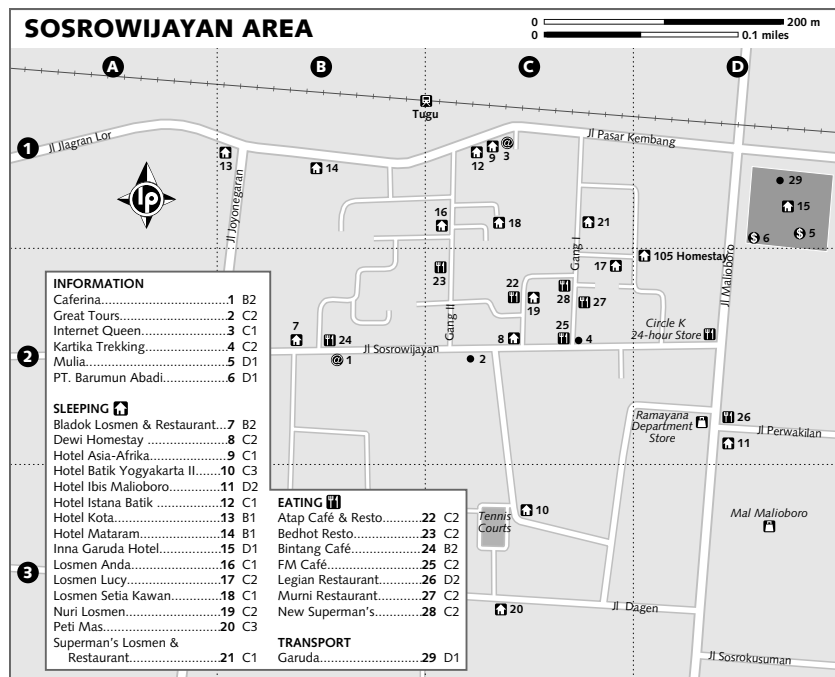
Sleeping

Yogya has more than enough losmen, guesthouses and upmarket hotels to go round, although in the high season – July, August and December – things can get crowded. Outside these times, you should have no problem finding a bed and discounts should be easy to come by.

BUDGET

Sosrowijayan Area

Most of Yogya's cheap hotels are in the Sosrowijayan area, immediately south of the train line, near Jl Malioboro. Running



between Jl Pasar Kembang and Jl Sosrowijayan, the narrow alleys of Gang Sosrowijayan I and II are lined with cheap (but often bland) accommodation and popular eating places. Despite mass tourism, the *gang* (alleys) are quiet and still have a *kampung* atmosphere.

Losmen Anda (Map p178; % 512452; r 25,000-30,000Rp) Friendly smiles come free of charge at Anda, a very basic losmen on Gang II. Rooms are a little scrungy (the better ones are upstairs), but they're cheap, and you can pass the time helping grandma with the family's evening meal.

Dewi Homestay (Map p178; % 516014; dewi.homestay@hotmail.com; r from 30,000Rp) With a true rustic look and feel, art covering the walls, four-poster beds and massive mosquito nets, Dewi is one of the better budget options in Sosrowijayan. It's just off Jl Sosrowijayan.

Losmen Lucy (Map p178; % 513429; r 35,000Rp) Just off Gang I, Lucy's is one of the better, bargain-basement options and gets good marks for cleanliness and all-round homely feel. Rooms have teeny-tiny fans,

but there's space to sit out the front to catch some air.

Losmen Setia Kawan (Map p178; % 512452; www.bedhots.com; s/d 40,000/50,000Rp, with a/c from 60,000/70,000Rp; a) Down an alley off Gang II, this losmen is in a well-kept, old-style building with plenty of charm. Rooms are simple but very attractive, with each sporting its own esoteric-style wall mural to liven things up. Communal areas (including a rooftop patio) are also lovingly designed and inviting.

Bladok Losmen & Restaurant (Map p178; % 560452; Jl Sosrowijayan 76; r 60,000Rp, with European bathroom & balcony 100,000Rp, with air-con & TV 190,000Rp; a s) With oodles of charm, good facilities and a range of snug rooms, Bladok caters to both budget and mid-range travellers, and remains a perennial favourite. It also has an excellent restaurant (p181).

Hotel Kota (Map p178; % 515844; hotelkota@eudoramail.com; Jl Jlagran Lor 1; r from 120,000Rp; a) Once a beautiful, colonial-style hotel with plenty of charm, Kota is now looking a bit washed up these days, with smudged

walls and dim light bulbs, but some of its old charisma still shines through the murk. Rooms range from small, cheapish economies to glitzy top-enders featuring all the trimmings.

Hotel Asia-Afrika (Map p178; % 566219; Jl Pasar Kembang 21; r with fan 150,000Rp, with air-con from 200,000Rp; a s) Asia-Afrika is a sensible place to start looking for hotels bordering on midrange. It has a nice garden café and rooms in good condition.

Nuri Losmen (Map p178; % 543654; s/d from 25,000/30,000Rp) In a quiet alley between Gang I and Gang II, with basic rooms and an upstairs terrace for tea-sipping and people-watching.

Superman's Losmen & Restaurant (Map p178; % 515007; r 40,000Rp) Simple losmen midway along Gang I, with very friendly staff and very basic and clean rooms. See also p181.

Prawirotaman Area

This area used to be the centre for the midrange hotels in Yogya, but many have slashed prices – and sometimes standards – in recent years.

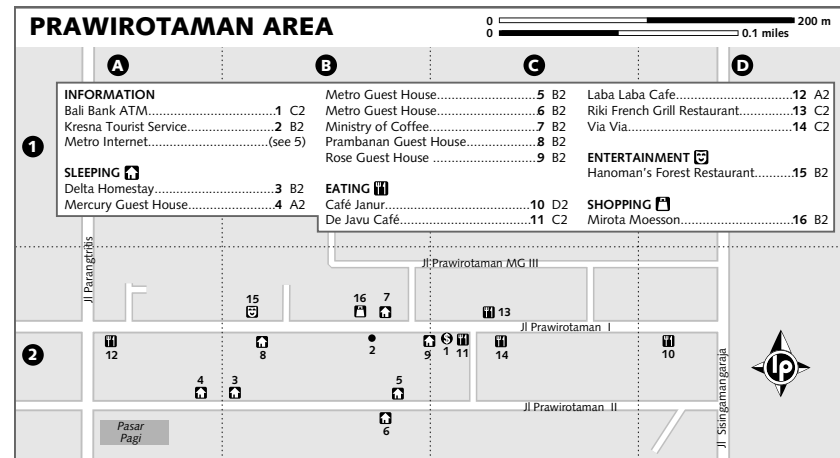
Delta Homestay (Map p179; % 081 7271047; www.dutagardenhotel.com; Jl Prawirotaman II 597A; s/d 42,500/50,000Rp, with mandi 70,000/80,000Rp, with air-con 90,000/100,000Rp; a s) This excellent place has comfy rooms in very good condition, a peaceful ambience and a central pool. It's one of the few places in town you may have problems getting into if you haven't booked ahead.

Metro Guest House (Map p179; % 372364; cafeyg2@idola.net.id; Jl Prawirotaman II 71; r 50,000-75,000Rp, with air-con & hot shower 150,000Rp; a i) Metro is a popular travellers' hang-out, with branches on both sides of the road, a range of rooms, a restaurant and an internet café. The rooms are a bit dingy, though.

Mercury Guest House (Map p179; % 370846; Jl Prawirotaman II 595; s/d with fan & hot shower 55,000/75,000Rp; s) Mercury attracts guests with its *kraton*-style architecture and a wonderful dining area, furnished with antique pieces and some floor cushions. Rooms don't share the restaurant's charm and are surprisingly simple, but are super-clean and peaceful.

Rose Guest House (Map p179; % 377991; Jl Prawirotaman I 22; s/d with fan from 60,000/75,000Rp, with air-con 110,000/120,000Rp; a s) Rose Guest House is a large establishment with clean but dark rooms centred around a swimming pool. The more expensive rooms come with a small terrace, and the staff here are friendly and accommodating. The only drawback is the rowdy birds in cages.

Prambanan Guest House (Map p179; % 376167; Jl Prawirotaman I No 14; r with cold shower/air-con 70,000/130,000Rp; a s) An attractive hotel with an airy garden and attentive staff, Prambanan is a very good option in the midrange category. Cheaper rooms are bland but the better doubles are comfortable and have bamboo trimmings and art on the walls.



Other Areas

Jl Tirtodipuran is an extension of Prawiro-taman I, on the other side of Jl Parangtritis. As well as a few restaurants and some large batik shops, it has a couple of decent hotels.

Indraloka Home Stay (Map p173; % 564341; manunggal@yogya.wasantara.net.id; Jl Cik Ditiro 18; r with breakfast, air-con & hot water from 175,000Rp; a) North of Jl Jenderal Sudirman, this true homestay has bags of charm, with antique furniture, faded, but classy, old-world décor and a small garden out back. The cheaper rooms are quite pokey, so shell out for the more expensive ones.

MIDRANGE

Sosrowijayan Area

Peti Mas (Map p178; % 561938; petimas@yahoo.com; Jl Dagen 27; s/d from 99,000/115,000Rp, with air-con, TV & hot water from 226,000/246,000Rp; a) Peti Mas is a peaceful hotel popular with families. Its rooms are clean and attractive with partially open-air bathrooms, and there's coiffed gardens and a pleasant restaurant.

Hotel Mataram (Map p178; % 581721; Jl Pasar Kembang 61; r175,000-350,000Rp; a) A glossy, business-style hotel within stumbling distance of the train station, Mataram will serve those looking for a hotel with medium facilities and prompt service. Rooms are a bit charmless but offer predictable, motel-style comfort.

Hotel Batik Yogyakarta II (Map p178; % 561828; batikcottage@yahoo.com; r/bungalows from 225,000/275,000Rp; a s) Batik Yogyakarta is an oasis in the quiet back alleys just north of Jl Dagen and is only a short stroll from Jl Malioboro. It has spacious grounds, a restaurant, plain, musty rooms and attractive bungalows. It's also popular with tour groups.

Hotel Istana Batik (Map p178; % 589853; Jl Pasar Kembang 29; r from 250,000Rp; a s) Istana Batik is a more upmarket hotel in a Javanese-style setting with a nice garden. Rooms are quite comfortable and come with hot water.

Prawirotaman Area

Ministry of Coffee (Map p179; % 7473828; moc_yogya@yahoo.com; Jl Prawirotaman I 15A; s/d from 210,000/226,000Rp; a) This brand-new boutique establishment not only has some of the most delectable coffee and cakes around, it also has the area's best-kept rooms. You'll find them roomy, stylish and heavy on the comfort factor.

Other Areas

Jogja Village Inn (Map p173; % 373031; www.jvidu.sun.co.id; Jl Menukan 5; r 346,000-579,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s) Jogja Village Inn is something of an institution in the city, and rightly so. This chic, boutique hotel has a traditional Javan feel, with top-notch rooms and a decent pool set in exotic gardens. It's quite the place for a few sundowners.

Novotel Hotel (Map p173; % 580930; admin@novotel.yogya.com; Jl Jenderal Sudirman 89; r from 370,000Rp; a s i) While style and individuality don't go hand and hand with this chain hotel, it has well-kept rooms and all the facilities you'd expect from a business hotel. A gallery and a pastry shop are also on site.

Hotel Mercure (Map p173; % 566617; info@mercure.yogya.com; Jl Jenderal Sudirman 9-11; r from 385,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s) Close to Jl P Mangkubumi and the centre of town, this is a smaller hotel with some class. There's an army of attentive staff on hand, and discounts are readily handed out.

Inna Garuda Hotel (Map p178; % 566353; www.inna.garuda.com; Jl Malioboro 60; s/d from 500,000/600,000Rp; a s) Right in the thick of things on Jl Malioboro is Inna Garuda, once the grand old man of Yogya's top-class hotels. It is now looking a bit past its use-by date, but rooms are still quite comfy.

Hotel Ibis Malioboro (Map p178; % 516974; admin@ibisyogya.com; Jl Malioboro 52-58; r from 675,000Rp; a s) This very central hotel offers homogenous, but fully functional, business-class comfort. Expect large discounts out of season.

TOP END

Yogya has a glut of luxury hotels, and heavy discounting has always been the norm. Most prices include breakfast. Many of Yogya's big hotels not listed here are stretched out along the road to Solo.

Melia Purosani Hotel (Map p173; % 589521; www.solmellia.com; Jl Mayor Suryotomo 31; r from US\$120 plus 21% tax; a s) This is a huge Spanish-owned place just to the east of Jl Malioboro. The central location and superior facilities make this one of Yogya's better hotels.

Hyatt Regency (Map p173; % 869123; www.yogjakarta.regency.hyatt.com; Jl Palagan Pelajar; r from US\$150 plus 20% tax; a s) Built in the style of Borobudur, this luxury hotel is on the northern outskirts of the city. It overlooks a golf course and has an almost rural setting.

Eating

SOSROWIJAYAN AREA

This area is inundated with cheap and cheerful eateries featuring Indonesian and Western dishes. It's also the place to join locals for a bite to eat; after 10pm, the souvenir vendors along the northern end of Jl Malioboro pack up and a *lesahan* area (where diners sit on straw mats) comes alive. Here you can try Yogya's famous *ayam goreng* (chicken deep-fried after soaking in coconut milk) and listen to young Indonesians strumming their guitars into the wee small hours.

A whole host of good warungs also line Jl Pasar Kembang, beside the train line.

Bedhot Resto (Map p178; Gang II; mains 10,000-20,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) Bedhot means 'creative' in old Javanese and is perhaps the most stylish eatery in Sosrowijayan, with art on the walls and ebullient staff. The big menu stretches from pizza and cereals to salads and sate.

Atap Café & Resto (Map p178; Jl Sosrowijayan GT 1/113; mains 15,000Rp; h dinner) Just down a small alleyway opposite Nuri Losmen, this ecofriendly café has good Indonesian food, great puddings and a crowd of trendy, earth-loving locals. Slightly less politically correct is its *Osama bin Coffee*, which comes served with a hefty slug of brandy and rum.

FM Café (Map p178; Jl Sosrowijayan 14; mains around 15,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) FM Café has seen its popularity wane, but it still has stacks of atmosphere and an eclectic, well-priced menu, ranging from nasi goreng to greasy-spoon fry-ups. Friday and Saturday nights see live bands performing.

New Superman's (Map p178; mains around 15,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) A bit further down Gang I is Superman's offshoot; it's more popular, and has pizzas, steak, and Indonesian and Chinese food.

Bintang Café (Map p178; Jl Sosrowijayan 54; mains 15,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) This imaginatively named café is easily the busiest place after sundown. The food is quite standard (Western, Chinese and Indonesian food), but the atmosphere makes up for it; expect live bands as the evening wears on.

Bladok Losmen & Restaurant (Map p178; Jl Sosrowijayan 76; mains 20,000-40,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) Bladok ranks among Sosrowijayan's best; it has plenty of Alpine-style woodwork, a wholesome and inviting air, and a mainly European menu. See also p178.

Superman's Losmen & Restaurant (Map p178; Gang I; mains around 20,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) One of the original purveyors of banana pancakes, Superman's has been around for decades. The owner, Pak Suparman, adapted his name, and likewise his food, to suit Western sensibilities. See also p179.

Also worth a mention:

Murni Restaurant (Map p178; Gang I; mains around 20,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Alcohol-free and serves tasty curries with flaky *paratha* (Indian-style fried bread) and good ice juices.

Legian Restaurant (Map p178; cnr Jl Malioboro & Jl Perwakilan; mains 20,000-40,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Serves Indonesian, Chinese, French and Italian food in a leafy roof-terrace setting overlooking Jl Malioboro.

PRAWIROTAMAN AREA

Ministry of Coffee (Map p179; % 7473828; moc_yogya@yahoo.com; Jl Prawirotaman I 15A; coffee 5000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) For quality coffee and sweets the sultan wouldn't turn his nose up at, take a pew at the Ministry of Coffee's downstairs café or upstairs terrace. See also opposite.

Via Via (Map p179; % 386557; www.viaviacafé.com; Jl Prawirotaman I 30; mains 12,000-35,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) Stripped back and stylish, Belgian-run Via Via has a mixed menu and imaginative daily specials, along with loads of information for travellers to digest. There's also terrace seating upstairs. Tours are offered downstairs.

Café Janur (Map p179; Jl Prawirotaman I 44; mains 15-30,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) With a well-endowed totem figure guarding the entrance, it's hard to miss Janur. Inside, the décor is an emporium of tribal guff. The mixed menu and cheap drinks attract a crowd of expats and tipsy locals.

Laba Laba Cafe (Map p179; Jl Prawirotaman I 2; mains 20,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Laba Laba (which means 'spider') has been attracting expats and locals for years with its lively bar and grungy atmosphere. The menu ranges from steak and fries to some decent Indonesian fare, and there's a pleasant garden out the back.

Riki French Grill Restaurant (Map p179; Jl Prawirotaman I 31; mains 20,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Riki is another restaurant-bar that fills up when the tourists are in town; the atmosphere is convivial and the steaks and waffles are rather good. Its happy hour between 4pm and 7pm gets the punters in early.

De Javu Café (Map p179; Jl Prawirotaman I 28; mains 20,000-40,000Rp;   breakfast, lunch & dinner) This sweet little caf  sports local art, a mixture of Western and Indonesian cuisine and a relaxed, refined air.

OTHER AREAS

Jimbaran (  7452882; Jl Damai; fish 8000Rp per ounce, lobster & prawns from 12,000Rp per ounce;   lunch & dinner) Combine a lazy location overlooking rice fields (or kids' football pitch, depending on the season), a speciality in seafood, and an open pagoda styled after traditional restaurants in Bali, and you have Jimbaran. Everything is priced by the ounce, but it's a hard choice between live crabs, lobsters, prawns and fresh fish on ice. Jimbaran is about 6km north of Yogya, and about 2km north of the Hyatt.

Milas (Map p173; Jl Mantrijeron MJ III 897A; mains 10-15,000Rp;   lunch & dinner Tue-Sun) A vegetarian restaurant with an Indonesian and European menu, Milas is popular with both locals and visitors for its organic produce, relaxed air and peaceful surroundings.

Warung Opera (  7181977; Jl Parangtritis, Km 6.3; mains 10,000-30,000Rp;   dinner) Warung Opera serves up excellent Indonesian dishes, but that's not what sets it apart from the competition. Here you can not only dine well, but also have your fortune told by Donny, the owner. We're not sure of his success rate, but it's fun all the same.

Omar Duwur Restaurant and Bar (  374952; Jl Mondorakan 252; mains 30,000-70,000Rp;   lunch & dinner) Omar Duwur is quite a hike from the centre of town, but if you're a lover of fine food, it's well worth the effort of getting out to Kota Gede. This remains one of Yogya's best restaurants, offering a wide selection of Western and Eastern dishes in contemporary, colonial-style surrounds.

Other places worth a look-in:

Parsley (Map p173; Jl Magelang; cakes 2000Rp;   7am-7pm) Attempts to serve cakes, pies and pastries with a healthier twist.

Gita Anjana Steak Restaurant (Map p173; Jl Diponegoro 48; mains 20,000-50,000Rp;   lunch & dinner) Not the place for vegetarians; meat feasts are the order of the day here.

Entertainment

Yogya is by far the easiest place to see traditional Javanese performing arts, with performances of one sort or another held daily.

Dance, *wayang* or gamelan is performed every morning at the *kraton* (p174), and provides a useful introduction to Javanese arts. Check with the tourist office for current listings and any special events.

Most famous of all performances is the spectacular Ramayana ballet (p193) held in the open air at Prambanan in the dry season.

WAYANG KULIT

Leather puppet performances can be seen at several places around Yogya every night of the week.

Sasono Hinggil (Map p173; South Main Square) Most of the centres offer shortened versions for tourists, but here in the *alun-alun selatan* of the *kraton*, marathon all-night performances are held every second Saturday from 9pm to 5am (15,000Rp). Bring a pillow.

Sono-Budoyo Museum (Map p173;   376775; admission 750Rp;   8am-1.30pm Tue-Thu, 8-11.15am Fri, 8am-noon Sat & Sun) This museum also holds popular two-hour performances nightly from 8pm to 10pm (15,000Rp). The first half-hour involves the reading of the story in Javanese, so most travellers skip this and arrive later.

DANCE

Most performances are based on the Ramayana or at least billed as 'Ramayana ballet' because of the famed performances at Prambanan.

Purawisata (Map p173;   375705; Jl Brigjen Katamsa) This amusement park stages Ramayana performances daily at 8pm (tickets 100,000Rp).

Ndalem Pujokusuman (Map p173; Jl Brigjen Katamsa 45) Performances are here on Monday and Friday between 8pm and 10pm, but they're not as popular as Purawisata. Tickets cost 50,000Rp.

OTHER PERFORMANCES

RRI auditorium (Map p173; cnr Jl Gejayan & Jl Colombo) Here you can see *ketoprak* performances from 8pm to midnight on the first Saturday of every month for 20,000Rp.

Hanoman's Forest Restaurant (Map p179; Jl Prawirotaman I) Hanoman's has been hosting various *wayang* performances for years, but at the time of research it had closed its doors due to a lack of interest. This may change if tourist numbers pick up again.

LIVE MUSIC

Blatz Lounge (  7488898; Jl Kaliurang, Km 6.3) The deep reds and delicious cocktails at this groovy bar are perfectly complemented by sublime live jazz every Tuesday night. If that's not enough to entice you, there are also pool tables and free internet.

Also worth a peek:

FM Caf  (Map p178; Jl Sosrowijayan 14) Regular bands on weekends; see also (p181).

Bintang Caf  (Map p178; Jl Sosrowijayan 54) Bands most nights; see also (p181).

NIGHTCLUBS

Hugo's (  484208; Sheraton Mustika Resort & Spa, Jl Adisucipto) Hugo's is the place to be seen on weekends in Yogya, when the music pumps and the enormous dance floor fills to bursting point.

Shopping

Yogya is a shopper's paradise for crafts and antiques, primarily from Java, though bits and pieces from all over the archipelago can be found here.

Jl Malioboro is one great long throbbing bazaar of souvenir shops and stalls selling cheap clothes, leatherwork, batik bags, *topeng* masks and *wayang golek* puppets. Look in some of the fixed-price shops on Jl Malioboro or nearby streets to get an idea of prices; **Mirota Batik** (Map p173;   588524; Jl A Yani 9) is good place to start looking.

The other major area to shop is Jl Tirtodipuran, the continuation of Jl Prawirotaman. This is an interesting, more upmarket shopping stretch, with galleries, art shops and expensive batik factories. You'll find furniture, antiques, and a variety of crafts and curios from Java and further afield.

BATIK

Most of the batik workshops and several large showrooms are along Jl Tirtodipuran, south of the *kraton*. Many, such as **Batik Plentong** (Map p173; Jl Tirtodipuran 48) and **Batik Winotosastro** (Map p173; Jl Tirtodipuran 54), give free guided tours of the batik process. These places cater to tour groups, so prices are very high – view the process here and shop elsewhere.

In the markets, especially Pasar Beringharjo, you'll find batik is cheaper than in the shops, but you need to be careful about quality and should be prepared to bargain.

Many other reasonably priced shops are on Jl Malioboro and Jl A Yani, but particularly good fixed-price places to try include the following:

Terang Bulan (Map p173; Jl A Yani 108)
Batik Keris (Map p173;   557893; Jl A Yani 71) A branch of the big Solo batik house; more expensive.

BATIK PAINTING

Given that the batik painting industry is Yogya's biggest blight (due to the excessive hard sell directed at tourists), perhaps the best advice is to avoid it altogether. However, batik paintings can be attractive souvenirs, and small paintings (around 300mm x 300mm) can be as cheap as 40,000Rp (although the asking price may be 400,000Rp). Most of the mass-production galleries are found around Taman Sari. It pays to shop around for something different and to bargain hard.

A few artists who pioneered and grew famous from batik painting still produce some batik.

Amri Yahya's Gallery (Map p173; Jl Gampingan 67;   Tue-Sun) Amri Yahya's gallery has a few early batik works on display, although he mostly produces abstract oil paintings these days.

ANTIQUES, CURIOS & FURNITURE

Although a few antiques can be found in the shops and markets, they are best left to collectors who know their stuff. Yogya art shops spend an inordinate amount of time defacing *wayang golek* puppets and *topeng* masks in the name of antiquity, and many other items get similar treatment.

Jl Tirtodipuran has the best selection of artefacts from all over Java and Indonesia. Prices are generally high here – bargain furiously, or get an idea of quality and look around for somewhere else to shop.

Furniture, mostly antique copies, can be found on Jl Tirtodipuran and in the back lanes nearby.

Mirota Moesson (Map p179; Jl Prawirotaman I 15) In the heart of the Prawirotaman area, this store has a large and interesting collection of furniture.

SILVER

The best area to shop for silverwork is in the silver village of Kota Gede (p176), although it can be found all over town. Fine

filigree work is a Yogya speciality, but many styles and designs are available. Kota Gede has some very attractive jewellery, boxes, bowls, cutlery and miniatures, and there are dozens of smaller silver shops on Jl Kemesan and Jl Mondorakan, where you can get some good buys if you bargain.

You can get a guided tour of the process, with no obligation to buy, at the large factories:

Tom's Silver (☎ 525416; Jl Ngeski Gondo 60) Tom's has an extensive selection and some superb large pieces, but prices are very high.

HS (Jl Mandarokan I) Marginally cheaper; always ask for a substantial discount off the marked prices.

MD (☎ 375063; Jl Pesegah KG 8/44) Down a small alley off the street; as at HS, try for discounts.

OTHER CRAFTS

Yogya's leatherwork can be excellent value for money and the quality is usually high, but you should always check the quality and stitching. Shops and street stalls on Jl Malioboro are the best places to shop for leatherwork.

Lana Gallery (Map p173; ☎ 7150465; Jl Menukan 276A; 9am-6pm Tue-Sun) Lana Gallery displays contemporary art from artists of Yogya's Fine Arts school, and is run by two of the friendliest Indonesians you'll ever meet. You're welcome to browse or buy up the whole gallery.

Swasthigita (Map p173; ☎ 378346; Ngadinegaran MJ 7/50; 9am-4pm) Just north of Jl Tirtodipuran, this is a top-rate *wayang kulit* puppet manufacturer; it also holds the occasional *wayang* show.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Yogyakarta is well served by a number of airlines, including **Garuda** (Map p178; ☎ 551515; Inna Garuda Hotel, Jl Malioboro 60), **Mandala** (Map p173; ☎ 520603; Jl Mayor Suryotomo 537A), **Adam Air** (Map p173; ☎ 580999; Jl Diponegoro 121) and **Lion Air** (Map p173; ☎ 555028; Melia Purosani Hotel, Jl Mayor Suryotomo 31). The latter also flies to Denpasar and Surabaya. Consult the Java Airfares map (p98) for prices.

BUS

Yogya's **Giwangan bus terminal** (Jl Imogiri) is 5km southeast of the city centre; city bus 4 connects the terminal with Jl Malioboro; 15 with the *kraton*.

Buses run from Giwangan all over Java and also to Bali. Normal/air-con buses go to Solo (8000/15,000Rp, two hours), Semarang (15,000/30,000Rp, 3½ hours), Bandung (65,000/95,000Rp, 10 hours), Jakarta (85,000/115,000Rp, 12 hours) and Surabaya (50,000/60,000Rp, eight hours).

For long trips it's best to take luxury buses. It's cheaper to buy tickets at the bus terminal, but it's less hassle to simply check fares and departures with the ticket agents along Jl Mangkubumi, along Jl Sosrowijayan near Kartika Trekking, or along Jl Prawiro-taman. These agents can also arrange pick-up from your hotel. Check more than one agent – some charge excessive commission. Typical fares include Denpasar (185,000Rp; 220,000Rp with toilet), Surabaya and Malang (75,000Rp), Bandung (85,000Rp) and Jakarta (90,000Rp).

Local buses also operate regularly from the main bus terminal to all the towns in the immediate area, including Borobudur (10,000Rp, 1½ hours), Parangtritis (7000Rp, one hour) and Kaliurang (37000Rp, one hour). To go to Prambanan (7000Rp), take the yellow Pemuda bus. To go to Imogiri (3000Rp, 40 minutes), take a Colt or the Abadi bus 5 to Panggang and ask the conductor to let you off at the *makam* (graves).

As well as the main bus terminal, Colts operate to the outlying towns from various subterminals. The most useful is the Terban Colt terminal (Map p173) to the north of the city centre on Jl Simanjuntak. From here Colts go to Kaliurang and Prambanan.

Buses, and particularly Colts, to the tourist attractions around Yogya are renowned for overcharging. Know the correct fare before boarding, and tender the right money, but expect to pay extra if you have luggage taking up passenger space.

MINIBUS

Door-to-door minibuses run to all major cities from Yogya. Sosrowijayan and Prawiro-taman agents sell tickets. You can also buy direct from the minibuses companies, which include **Rajawali Putra** (Map p173; ☎ 583535; Jl Jenderal Sudirman 42), **Rahayu** (Map p173; ☎ 561322; Jl Diponegoro 9A) and **Niki Vita Tour & Travel** (Map p173; ☎ 561884; Jl Diponegoro 25).

Destinations served by minibuses from Yogya include Solo (air-con 20,000Rp, two

hours), Cilacap (60,000Rp, five hours), Pangandaran (100,000Rp, eight hours), Semarang (36,000Rp, three hours), Surabaya (75,000Rp), Malang (75,000Rp), Jakarta (170,000Rp, 14 hours) and Bali (200,000Rp).

The Gunung Bromo connection (100,000Rp to 150,000Rp, 10 hours) has a reputation for terminating short of Cemoro Lawang, so don't be surprised if it does (see p248). There are also two-day tours available – Yogyakarta/Solo to Bromo and Bali – which cost around 200,000Rp from travel agencies. Some travellers have experienced problems with onward connections upon reaching Bali, so purchase your ticket from a reliable agent and check up-to-date information with other travellers.

TRAIN

Centrally located, Yogya's **Tugu train station** (Map p178; ☎ 514270) handles all business- and executive-class trains. Economy-class trains also depart from and arrive at Lempuyangan station (Map p173), 1km to the east.

The *Senja Utama Yogya* (business 100,000Rp, nine hours) departs for Jakarta at 6.30pm. The executive *Argo Lawu* (from 200,000Rp, seven hours) leaves at 9.01am.

To go to Solo, the best option is the *Prameks*, departing from Tugu at 6.50am, 9.45am, 1pm, 4.10pm and 6.52pm. It costs 65000Rp and takes just over an hour.

The overnight *Mutiara Selatan* (business 110,000Rp, six hours) leaves for Surabaya at 1.08am. Numerous other night trains from Jakarta, such as the *Bima* (executive 170,000Rp), stop in Yogya (9.40pm) on the way to Surabaya.

Heading for Bandung, the *Lodaya* (business/executive 90,000/150,000Rp, eight hours) passes through Yogya at 9.17pm. Alternatively, the *Mutiara Selatan* (business 110,000Rp, 7½ hours) leaves at 10.27pm.

From Lempuyangan train station, most of the economy-class services are overnight trains that run between Surabaya and Jakarta (40,000Rp, 11 hours) and Bandung (35,000Rp, 10 hours).

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

Taxis from Yogya's Adisucipto airport, 10km to the east, cost 45,000Rp to the city

centre, and are slightly cheaper going to the airport on the meter.

If you stroll out to the main road, Jl Solo, only 200m from the airport, you can catch a Colt that goes to Yogya's Terban Colt station (about 1.5km from Jl Sosrowijayan) for only 3500Rp.

BECAK & ANDONG

Yogyakarta has an oversupply of becak; it is impossible to go anywhere in the main tourist areas without being greeted by choruses of 'becak'. Fares cost around 2000Rp per kilometre, but the minimum fare for tourists is usually 3000Rp and the asking rate is a lot more. The trip from Jl Prawiro-taman to Jl Malioboro costs at least 7000Rp. Avoid becak drivers who offer cheap hourly rates unless you want to do the rounds of all the batik galleries that offer commission. There are also horse-drawn *andong* around town, which cost about the same or less than becak.

BICYCLE

For as little as 15,000Rp a day from hotels you can cycle around the city; or try the shops at the southern end of Gang I in Sosrowijayan. Always lock your bike and look for bicycle *parkir*, who will look after your bike for a couple of hundred rupiah.

BUS

Yogya's city buses (*bis kota*) operate on dozens of set routes around the city for a flat 2000Rp fare. They work mostly straight routes – going out and then coming back the same way.

Bus 2 is one of the more useful services. It runs from the bus terminal and turns down Jl Sisingamangaraja, past Jl Prawiro-taman, then loops around, coming back up Jl Parangtritis and on to Jl Mataram, a block from Jl Malioboro, before continuing to the university and returning to the terminal.

Bus 15 runs from the *kraton* to the Giwangan terminal and bus 4 runs from Jl Malioboro.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Travel agencies on Jl Sosrowijayan and Jl Prawiro-taman rent out cars with drivers for trips in and around town for 50,000Rp per hour, with or without petrol, depending on the travel agent. They have inflated price

A CUP OF JAVA

Java is so synonymous with coffee, one of the world's favourite drugs, sorry, *drinks*, that in some countries the term 'Java' has become a catch phrase for a cup of the hot brown stuff.

Coffee was introduced to Indonesia by the Dutch, who initially founded plantations around Jakarta, Sukabumi and Bogor. Due to the country's excellent coffee-growing conditions, plantations began springing up across Java, and even in parts of Sulawesi and Sumatra. Early on, the prominent coffee was Arabica; Arabica coffees were traditionally named after the port they were exported from, hence the common worldwide terms of Java and Mocha (from Yemen) for coffee.

Commonly thought of as a bean, coffee is actually a fruit pit or berry. Around 2000 berries are needed to make one pound of coffee. The most expensive coffee in the world, fetching US\$300 a pound, is *kopi luwak*, a fully flavoured coffee produced in Java (it is also exported from the Philippines, Vietnam and southern India). What makes *kopi luwak* – also known as civet coffee – so expensive is the process by which it gains its unusually rich flavour. The local palm civet, a cat-like animal, gorges itself on coffee berries and passes the inner pit through its digestive tract unharmed. Along the way the pits are affected by the animal's stomach enzymes and come out the other end smelling of roses (or rich coffee in this case). The coffee has been appetisingly nicknamed 'cat poop' or 'monkey poo' coffee.

Today, Indonesia is the fourth-largest producer of coffee in the world after Brazil, Colombia and Vietnam. Robusta has replaced Arabica as the leading coffee of choice, currently making up some 88% of the country's exports. For further reading on Indonesia's love affair with coffee pick up a copy of *A Cup of Java* by Gabriella Teggia and Mark Hanusz.

lists for more distant destinations, but you can usually get a car or small minibus with driver for around 400,000Rp per day.

Motorcycles can be hired for approximately 40,000Rp a day, sometimes less. An International Driving Permit is required by law, but they are not often checked.

TAXI

In Yogyakarta the taxis are metered and efficient. They cost 5000Rp for the first kilometre, then 2500Rp for each subsequent kilometre.

AROUND YOGYAKARTA

Imogiri

Perched on a hilltop 20km south of Yogyakarta, Imogiri was built by Sultan Agung in 1645 to serve as his own mausoleum. Imogiri has since been the burial ground for almost all his successors and for prominent members of the royal family, and it is still a holy place. The cemetery contains three major courtyards – in the central courtyard are the tombs of Sultan Agung and succeeding Mataram kings, to the left are the tombs of the *susuhunan* (sultan or king) of Solo and to the right those of the sultans of Yogyakarta. The tomb of Hamengkubuwono IX, the father of the present sultan, is one of the most visited graves.

Of major interest to pilgrims is the **tomb of Sultan Agung** (admission 1000Rp; 10am–1pm Sun & Mon, 1.30–4pm Fri). There is no objection to visitors joining the pilgrims at these specified times, although to enter the tombs you must don full Javanese court dress, which can be hired for 2500Rp.

It's an impressive complex, reached by a daunting flight of 345 steps. From the top of the stairway, a walkway circles the whole complex and leads to the actual hill summit, with a superb view over Yogyakarta to Gunung Merapi.

Colts and buses from Yogyakarta (3000Rp) stop at the car park, from where it is about 500m to the base of the hill and the start of the steps. Like most pilgrimage sites, there will be various demands for 'donations'. The only compulsory entry charge is payable when you sign the visitors book, inside the main compound on the hilltop.

Kasongan

This is Yogyakarta's pottery centre. Dozens of workshops produce pots and some superb figurines, including 2m-high dragons and pony-sized horses. Kasongan pottery is sold painted or unpainted – very little glazing work is done.

Catch a Bantul-bound bus and get off on the main road at the entrance to the village,

6.5km south of Yogyakarta. It is then about a 1km walk to the centre of the village and most of the pottery workshops.

Parangtritis

☎ 0274

Windswept and sandblasted, with crashing waves on one side and craggy, looming cliffs on the other, Parangtritis has all the makings of a dusty frontier town. Or at least it would do if it weren't for the thousands of local tourists who flock here every weekend. Weekends in Yogyakarta's favourite seaside escape are a whirlwind of overpriced hotels, jostling crowds and souvenir salespeople.

During the week, however, Parangtritis becomes that dusty frontier town. Prices fall, an eerie quiet descends and it becomes a half-decent place to spend the day ambling through the dunes.

SIGHTS

The seas off Parangtritis are extremely dangerous, but you can swim safely in *pemandian* (freshwater pools) at the base of the hill near the village, where spring water spills

out from the hilltop through high bamboo pipes. If you'd prefer hot springs, head for Parang Wedang just beyond the nearby village of Parangkusumo.

Trails along the hills above the sea to the east of Parangtritis lead to a meditation cave, Gua Cerme. A couple of kilometres from the town and past the Queen of the South resort is Gua Langse, used by mystics as a meditation cave.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Like so many places along the south coast, Parangtritis is a centre for the worship of Nyai Loro Kidul; during the annual festival of Labuhan staged to appease her, the sultans of Yogyakarta still send offerings to the sacred point at Parangkusumo.

SLEEPING & EATING

The centre of the village is the plaza, marked by the Sudirman monument. Leading down to the beach, the main promenade has plenty of basic hotels and *rumah makan*. Alternatively, some of the better options are on the main road, to the east of the bus



terminal. Hard bargaining is required; during the week, some places have rooms with *mandis* for as little as 20,000Rp.

Losmen Mutiara Samodra (☎ 368497; r from 30,000Rp) On the main road 200m east of the bus stop, this losmen is housed in a crumbling villa with at least a touch of Mediterranean charm. Opt for the upstairs rooms with cooler breezes.

Losmen Dinasti (☎ 368536; r 40,000Rp) With simple yet clean rooms and a homely feel, Dinasti is a top bet for a cheap bed; there is also a small restaurant.

Queen of the South (Puri Ratu Kidul; ☎ 367196; www.queen-of-the-south.com; bungalows from 450,000Rp plus 21% tax; Ⓢ) The best hotel by far is this small oasis (on weekdays at least) perched on the cliff tops high above town. It has excellent views from its fine *pendopo*-style restaurant and beach-front rooms. Its bungalows could do with a new paint job, but they're comfortable all the same; a 50% discount is sometimes available.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Buses from Yogyakarta's Giwangan bus terminal, which can also be caught on Jl Parangtritis at the end of Jl Prawirodaman, leave throughout the day for the one-hour journey. The last bus back from Parangtritis leaves at around 5.30pm. The cost is 7000Rp, which includes the small entry fee to the town (normally 1500Rp per person, 2000Rp including motorbike).

Gunung Merapi

Few of Southeast Asia's volcanoes are as evocative, or as destructive, as Gunung Merapi (Fire Mountain). Towering 2911m over the surrounding plains, this immense Fuji-esque pyramid looms over Yogyakarta, Borobudur and Prambanan like an invitation to the end of the world. It has erupted dozens of times over the past century and some observers have theorised that it was even responsible for the mysterious evacuation of Borobudur and the collapse of the old Mataram kingdom during the 11th century.

These days, Merapi is something of a deity. Every year, offerings from Yogya's *kraton* are made to appease the mountain's foul temper, in conjunction with offerings to the Queen of the South Seas at Parangtritis.

VOLCANO WARNING

As this book went to print, Gunung Merapi was once again rumbling, sending out more than 180 tremors in one week alone. Its eruption status was upgraded and 10,000 villagers were put on alert for possible evacuation. It is essential to seek local knowledge on climbing the mountain and to not attempt a climb or hike into the 'danger zone'.

But Merapi isn't so easy to appease. On 22 November 1994 it erupted, killing more than 60 people, and it has been on the boil ever since. In June 1998, pyroclastic flows raced down its western flank, damaging farmland; and in January 2001, more flows and thousands of earthquakes prompted the Volcanological Survey of Indonesia to raise the status of its warning still further. The last major eruption, in July 2004, resulted in even more flows.

Eruptions, however, have not put a stop to people living on the mountain. With a population density of 690 people per sq km, Merapi supports hundreds of small communities.

The hill resort of Kaliurang, 25km north of Yogyakarta, is the main access point for views of Merapi and makes a wonderful break from the city.

Yogyakarta travel agencies also sell night trips for drive-in views of the lava flows from Pos Babatan, on the western side of the mountain. You take the road to Muntilan and then Pos Babatan is a 5km walk up the mountain. Unless Merapi is in full force, it is unlikely you'll see great streams of lava as shown in the tour photos.

CLIMBING GUNUNG MERAPI

When Merapi is quiet, climbing to the summit is possible from the small village of Selo, on the northern side of the mountain. Even then *extreme caution* is advised. At the time of writing, the top of the mountain was closed to visitors.

During quiet periods, a 1.30am start from Selo is necessary to reach the summit for dawn (a four-hour trip). After a 2km walk through the village to Pos Merapi, the abandoned volcanology post, the steady but steep climb begins. It is a tough, demand-

ing walk but manageable by anyone with a reasonable level of fitness.

The last stages are through loose volcanic scree, but guides may stop short of the summit. Check with your guide whether it is possible to go to the top before setting off. Treks from Selo are not always well organised. Guides should warn against climbing if it looks dangerous. While they don't want to endanger lives, they may be prepared to take risks in order to be paid. Even during quieter periods, Merapi can suddenly throw out a stream of lava; in September 2002 an Indonesian student was killed when he got lost and fell into a ravine. There are two vents where lava can be seen, but it is not advisable to approach them.

Check the latest situation in Kaliurang, but at the time of writing the climb to the peak from Kaliurang had been strictly off limits since 1994 because of volcanic activity. **Christian Awuy** (☎ 081 75412572), owner of Vogels Hostel, has organised climbs for years and is an essential first reference point.

Alternatively, you can contact the **Merapi Volcano Observatory** (☎ 0274- 514180, 514192; Jl Cendana 15) or **Kartika Trekking** (p174) in Yogyakarta.

Kaliurang

☎ 0274

Kaliurang, 25km north of Yogyakarta, is the nearest hill resort to the city. At 900m it has a cool, refreshing climate. During the monsoon, Kaliurang often sits in a thick blanket of cloud, but on clear days the views of Merapi are magical.

All visitors to Kaliurang must pay a 1000Rp entrance fee.

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

The **Ullen Sentalu Museum** (☎ 895161; admission 15,000Rp; ⌚ 9am-4pm Tue-Sun) is a surprise find on the slopes of Merapi. It devotes itself entirely to the richness of Javanese culture, and is one of the best museums on the island. Unusually, it focuses heavily on notable women of Java, particularly the wives of sultans, through pictures and stories. Batik also takes pride of place; here you can gauge the subtle differences between Yogya and Solo designs, alongside those from coastal towns to the north. Once you've had your

fill of culture, the museum's peaceful restaurant is a fine place to while away an hour or two. Admission includes a two-hour tour of the private collection.

Day-trippers can explore the excellent **forest park** (Hutan Wisata Kaliurang; admission 1000Rp; ⌚ 8am-4pm) on the slopes of the mountain. Maps at the park entrance show areas you are allowed to explore. Heed them and don't venture further; in a sudden eruption lava can flow down the mountain at 300km/h. At the time of writing you could take the 15-minute walk to the Promojiwo viewpoint for views of Merapi and then on to the Tlogo Muncar waterfall, which is just a trickle in the dry season, and then back to the entrance.

Vogels Hostel arranges **mountain walks** to see the lava flows. The five-hour return trek starts at 4am and climbs 1400m up the mountain to see the glowing lava at its best (50,000Rp per person). Overnight camping trips (150,000Rp), village tours (100,000Rp) and bird-watching walks (50,000Rp) can also be arranged. A minimum of four people is required for all trips.

SLEEPING & EATING

Kaliurang is a downmarket resort, but it has more than 100 places to sleep.

Vogels Hostel (☎ 895208; Jl Astamulya 76; dm 10,000Rp, d with shared facilities 20,000-25,000Rp, bungalows with bath 75,000-100,000Rp) Vogels is a travellers institution and has been serving up the same mixture of cheap accommodation, hearty food and excellent information for years. The owner, Christian Awuy, is a particular authority on Merapi and its many moods.

Christian Hostel (r 40,000Rp) This offshoot of Vogels is just down the hill from its owner. Rooms are simple and clean but lack character. There are good views from the upstairs terrace.

Hotel Satriafi (☎ 895128; Jl Kesehatan 193; r with/without hot water & TV from 95,000/75,000Rp) Rooms at Satriafi are clean but generally quite basic, but they're more upmarket than those at Vogels. It gets cold at night in Kaliurang, so taking a room with hot water wouldn't be a bad idea.

Villa Taman Eden (☎ 895443; r with TV & hot water 150,000-200,000Rp; Ⓢ) One kilometre south of Vogels, Taman Eden is the closest thing Kaliurang has to a resort. The rooms teeter on

the edge of smart, but standards have been falling in the last few years.

Restaurant Joyo (Jl Astimulya 63; mains around 10,000Rp; 1 lunch & dinner) Across the road from Vogels, Joyo is half shop, half restaurant, with good Chinese and Indonesian food and a hodgepodge collection of traditional art.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Colts from Yogyakarta's Terban Colt station to Kaliurang cost 7000Rp; the last leaves at 4pm. If you have your own transport, you can follow the quieter, *Solo Alternatif* from here to Prambanan. From Pakem, buses go to Prambanan as well as to Tempel, from where another bus does the run to Borobudur.

A taxi from Malioboro will cost around 65,000Rp.

Selo

On the northern slopes of Gunung Merapi, 50km west of Solo, Selo has a few basic homestays where guides can be arranged for the Merapi climb. The views of the mountain from the village are superb.

From Selo it is a four-hour trek to the volcano's summit (see p188).

The host at popular **Pak Auto** (r per person 20,000Rp) has been guiding trips to the top for years. Accommodation is very basic but clean. Elderly Pak Darto rarely ventures far these days, but he can offer good advice and arrange other guides. Prices are variable, depending on the guide, your fitness, how many people are in the group and the risk factor. Count on around 50,000Rp to 100,000Rp for two to three people.

Hotel Agung Merapi (r 60,000Rp) is a crumbling place that is a slight step up from Pak Auto even though standards are poor; it also has a restaurant.

Selo is most easily reached from Solo: take a bus to Magelang, stopping at Selo (7000Rp, two hours) on the way. However, the route from Yogyakarta is far more beautiful. Take a Magelang bus to Blabak (5000Rp) and then a Colt or bus to Selo (5000Rp). Travel agents in Solo and Yogyakarta arrange Merapi climbing trips via Selo.

PRAMBANAN

☎ 0274

On the road to Solo 17km northeast of Yogyakarta, the temples at Prambanan

village are the best remaining examples of Java's period of Hindu cultural development. Not only do these temples form the largest Hindu temple complex in Java, but the wealth of sculptural detail on the great Shiva temple makes it easily the most outstanding example of Hindu art.

All the temples in the Prambanan area were built between the 8th and 10th centuries AD, when Java was ruled by the Buddhist Sailendras in the south and the Hindu Sanjayas of Old Mataram in the north. Possibly by the second half of the 9th century, these two dynasties were united by the marriage of Rakai Pikatan of Hindu Mataram and the Buddhist Sailendra princess Pramodhavardhani. This may explain why a number of temples, including those of the Prambanan temple complex and the smaller Plaosan group, reveal Shivaite and Buddhist elements in architecture and sculpture. These two elements are also found to some degree in India and Nepal.

Following this creative burst over a period of two centuries, the Prambanan Plain was abandoned when the Hindu-Javanese kings moved to East Java. In the middle of the 16th century there is said to have been a great earthquake which toppled many of the temples. In the centuries that followed, their destruction was accelerated by treasure hunters and locals searching for building materials. Most temples have now been restored to some extent, and like Borobudur, Prambanan made the Unesco World Heritage list in 1991.

Orientation & Information

The Prambanan temples (☎ 496401; adult/student US\$10/6; temple complex 1 6am-6pm, last admission at 5.15pm) are usually visited as a day trip from Yogyakarta (17km away), but they can also be visited from Solo (50km away). The main temple complex lies on the Yogyakarta-Solo highway, opposite Prambanan village. From the main entrance on the southeastern side, it is a short walk to Candi Shiva Mahadeva, the largest of the temples, locally called Candi Loro Jonggrang (Slender Virgin Temple). Behind it, on the western side near the highway, is the outdoor theatre where the Ramayana ballet is performed.

To the north of the Shiva Mahadeva temple, which is flanked by the smaller Brahma

and Vishnu temples, is the archaeological museum. Further north are smaller, partly renovated temples leading to Candi Sewu. A 'minitrain' (5000Rp) from the museum loops to Candi Sewu. All of these temples form the main Prambanan complex.

On the left after passing through the main gate there is a small information desk with info on the site and Ramayana performances. As at Borobudur, the admission price includes camera fees and admission to the museum. Hiring a guide can be a good investment at 40,000Rp for a one-hour tour for one to 20 people. There is also an audio-visual show every 30 minutes (2000Rp).

Most of the outlying temples are within a 5km radius of Prambanan village. You'll need at least half a day to see them on foot, or they can be explored by bicycle or motorcycle if you ride to Prambanan. A standard entry fee of 5000Rp applies in most of the outlying temples.

As with any of Java's major tourist attractions, the best time to visit Prambanan is early morning or late in the day when it's quiet, though you can never expect to

get Prambanan to yourself. Very few people visit the other sites away from the main grouping of temples, and the walk to the outlying temples can be as much a pleasure as the temples themselves.

Sights

PRAMBANAN TEMPLES

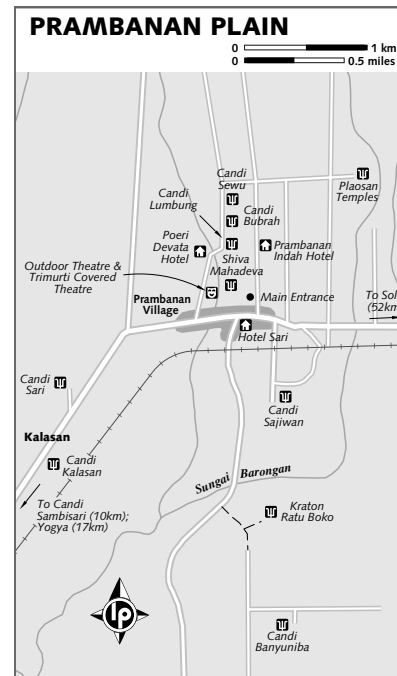
The huge Prambanan complex was erected in the middle of the 9th century – around 50 years later than Borobudur – but little is known about its early history. It's thought that it was built by Rakai Pikatan to commemorate the return of a Hindu dynasty to sole power in Java.

Prambanan was in ruins for years, and while efforts were made in 1885 to clear the site, it was not until 1937 that reconstruction was first attempted. Of the original group, the outer compound contains the remains of 244 temples. Eight minor and eight main temples stand in the highest central courtyard.

Candi Shiva Mahadeva

This temple, dedicated to Shiva, is not only the largest of the temples, it is also the finest. The main spire soars 47m and the temple is lavishly carved. The 'medallions' that decorate its base have a characteristic Prambanan motif – small lions in niches flanked by *kalpatara* (trees of heaven) and a menagerie of stylised half-human and half-bird *kinnara* (heavenly beings). The vibrant scenes carved onto the inner wall of the gallery encircling the temple are from the Ramayana – they tell how Lord Rama's wife, Sita, is abducted and how Hanuman the monkey god and Sugriwa the white monkey general eventually find and release her. To follow the story, ascend the main eastern stairway and go around the temple clockwise.

In the main chamber at the top of the eastern stairway, the four-armed statue of Shiva the Destroyer is notable for the fact that this mightiest of Hindu gods stands on a huge lotus pedestal, a symbol of Buddhism. In the southern cell is the pot-bellied and bearded Agastya, an incarnation of Shiva as divine teacher; in the western cell is a superb image of the elephant-headed Ganesha, Shiva's son. In the northern cell, Durga, Shiva's consort, can be seen killing the demon buffalo. Some



people believe that the Durga image is actually an image of the Slender Virgin, who, legend has it, was turned to stone by a man she refused to marry. She is still the object of pilgrimage and her name is often used for the temple group.

Candi Brahma & Candi Vishnu

These two smaller temples flank the large Candi Shiva Mahadeva. Candi Brahma to the south, carved with the final scenes of the Ramayana, has a four-headed statue of Brahma, the god of creation. Reliefs on Candi Vishnu to the north tell the story of Lord Krishna, a hero of the Mahabharata epic. Inside is a four-armed image of Vishnu the Preserver.

Candi Nandi

This small shrine, facing Candi Shiva Mahadeva, houses one of Prambanan's finest sculptures – a huge, powerful figure of the bull Nandi, the vehicle of Shiva.

Candi Sewu

The 'Thousand Temples', dating from around AD 850, originally consisted of a large central Buddhist temple surrounded by four rings of 240 smaller 'guard' temples. Outside the compound stood four sanctuaries at the points of the compass, of which Candi Bubrah is the most southern one.

The renovated main temple is interesting for the unusual finely carved niches around the inner gallery, with shapes resembling those found in the Middle East. These niches would once have held bronze statues, but plundering of the temple went on for many years and many statues have been whisked away.

Candi Sewu lies about 1km north of the Shiva Mahadeva temple, past the small, partly renovated Candi Lumbung and Candi Bubrah.

PLAOSAN TEMPLES

This northeastern group of temples is 3km from the Prambanan complex. It can be reached on foot by taking the road north from the main gate, going past Candi Sewu at the end of the main complex, and then taking a right turn. Stay on this road for about 1km.

Built around the same time as the Prambanan temple group by Rakai Pikatan, the

Plaosan temples combine both Hindu and Buddhist religious symbols and carvings. The temples are comprised of the main Plaosan Lor (Plaosan North) compound and the smaller Plaosan Kidul (Plaosan South), just a couple of hundred metres away.

Plaosan Lor comprises two restored, identical main temples, surrounded by some 126 small shrines and solid stupas, most of which are now just a jumble of stone.

Two giant *dwarapala* (temple guardian statues) stand at the front of each main temple. The main temples, notable for their unusual three-part design, are two-storey, three-room structures, with an imitation storey above and a tiered roof of stupas rising to a single, larger one in the centre. Inside each room are impressive stone Bodhisattvas on either side of an empty lotus pedestal, and intricately carved *kala* (dragon) heads above the many windows. The bronze Buddhas that once sat on the lotus pedestals have been removed.

Plaosan Kidul has more stupas and the remnants of a temple, but little renovation work has been done.

SOUTHERN GROUP

Candi Sajiwan

Not far from the village of Sajiwan, about 1.5km southeast of Prambanan village, are the ruins of this Buddhist temple. Around the temple's base are carvings from the Jataka (episodes from the Buddha's various lives).

Kraton Ratu Boko

Perched on top of a hill overlooking Prambanan, Kraton Ratu Boko (Palace of King Boko), a huge Hindu palace complex dating from the 9th century, is believed to have been the central court of the mighty Mataram empire. Little remains of the original complex. Renovations, while only partially successful, have included new stonework. You can see the large gateway, walls, the platform of the main *pendopo*, Candi Pembakaran (Royal Crematorium) and a series of bathing places on different levels leading down to the nearby village. The view from this site to the Prambanan Plain is magnificent, especially at sunset, and worth the walk.

To reach Ratu Boko, travel 1.5km south on the road from Prambanan village to just southwest of where the river crosses the road. Near the 'Yogya 18km' signpost a steep rocky path leads up to the main site. Altogether it is about a one-hour walk. The site can be reached by car or motorcycle via a much longer route that goes around the back of the mountain.

WESTERN GROUP

There are three temples in this group between Yogyakarta and Prambanan, two of them close to Kalasan village on the main Yogyakarta road. Kalasan and Prambanan villages are 3km apart, so it is probably easiest to take a Colt or bus to cover this stretch.

Candi Kalasan

Standing 50m off the main road near Kalasan village, this temple is one of the oldest Buddhist temples on the Prambanan Plain. A Sanskrit inscription of AD 778 refers to a temple dedicated to the female Bodhisattva, Tara, though the existing structure appears to have been built around the original one some years later. It has been partially restored during this century and has some fine detailed carvings on its southern side, where a huge, ornate *kala* head glowers over the doorway. At one time it was completely covered in coloured shining stucco, and traces of the hard, stonelike 'diamond plaster' that provided a base for paintwork can still be seen. The inner chamber of Kalasan once sheltered a huge bronze image of Buddha or Tara.

Candi Sari

About 200m north from Candi Kalasan, in the middle of coconut and banana groves, the Sari Temple has the three-part design of the larger Plaosan temple but is probably slightly older. Some students believe that its 2nd floor may have served as a dormitory for the Buddhist priests who took care of Candi Kalasan. The sculptured reliefs around the exterior are similar to those of Kalasan but are in much better condition.

Candi Sambisari

A country lane runs to this isolated temple, about 2.5km north of the main road. Sambisari is a Shiva temple and possibly the

latest temple at Prambanan to be erected by the Mataram empire. It was discovered by a farmer in 1966. Excavated from under ancient layers of protective volcanic ash and dust, it lies almost 6m below the surface of the surrounding fields and is remarkable for its perfectly preserved state. The inner sanctum of the temple is dominated by a large lingam and yoni (stylised penis and vagina), typical of Shiva temples.

Sleeping

Very few visitors stay at Prambanan given its proximity to Yogyakarta. There are plenty of hotels but most are pretty seedy.

Hotel Sari (% 496595; s/d with mandi 30,000/35,000Rp) Sari is about as basic as you can get near the temples, but the traffic outside can be very noisy.

Prambanan Indah (% 497353; Jl Candi Sewu 8; r with fan/air-con 70,000/156,000Rp, ste 291,000Rp; a) Prambanan is close to the main temple (you can see the top of it from the front rooms) and is one of the bigger places here. It has a handful of economy rooms; most come with air-con.

Poeri Devata Hotel (% 496435; cottages from 350,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s) Down a quiet country lane at the northwest corner of the temple complex, this is the most exclusive choice, with gardens, a restaurant, and views of the temples.

Entertainment

Ramayana Ballet (% 496408; www.borobudurpark.com) Held at the outdoor theatre just west of the main temple complex, the famous *Ramayana Ballet* is Java's most spectacular dance-drama. The story of Rama and Shinta unfolds over four successive nights, twice or three times each month from May to October (the dry season), leading up to the full moon. With the magnificent floodlit Candi Shiva Mahadeva as a backdrop, nearly 200 dancers and gamelan musicians take part in a spectacle of monkey armies, giants on stilts, clashing battles and acrobatics.

Performances last from 7.30pm to 9.30pm. Tickets are sold in Yogyakarta through the tourist information office (p172) and travel agencies (p172) at the same price you'll pay at the theatre box office, but they usually offer packages that include transport direct from your hotel for 20,000Rp to 30,000Rp extra. Tickets

cost 30,000Rp for economy seats, 75,000Rp for 1st-class seats and 100,000Rp for VIP seats (padded chairs up the front). There are no bad seats in the amphitheatre – all have a good view and are not too far from the stage, but the cheapest seats are stone benches side on to the stage.

Alternatively, the *Ramayana Ballet Full Story* is a good two-hour performance (condensing the epic into one night), and alternates with the four-part episodic performances. It features only 50 performers but is still a fine spectacle, held at the Trimurti Covered Theatre from November to April. Performances start at 7.30pm every Tuesday and Thursday.

Getting There & Away

BICYCLE & MOTORCYCLE

You can visit all the temples by bicycle from Yogya. The most pleasant route, though it's a longer ride, is to take Jl Senopati out past the zoo to the eastern ring road, where you turn left. Follow this right up to Jl Solo, turn right and then left at Jl Babarsari. Go past the Sahid Garden Hotel and follow the road anticlockwise around the school to the Selokan Mataram. This canal runs parallel to the Solo road, about 1.5km to the north, for around 6km to Kalasan, about 2km before Prambanan.

To view the western temples you really need to come back via the Solo road. The turn-off north to Candi Sambisari from the Solo road crosses the canal before leading another 1km to the temple. You can visit the temple, backtrack to the canal path and continue back to Yogyakarta.

If you are coming by motorcycle, you can combine the visit with a trip to Kaliurang. From Kaliurang, instead of going back to the main Yogyakarta–Solo road, take the *Solo Alternatif* route signposted in the village of Pakem, about halfway between Yogyakarta and Kaliurang. From there the road passes through some beautiful countryside, before tipping you onto the main highway just before Prambanan's main entrance.

BUS

From Yogyakarta, take the bus (7000Rp, 30 minutes) from the main bus terminal, or from the Sosrowijayan area take bus 4 along Jl Mataram and get off at the Jl Cik Ditiro/Jl Terbau corner and then take a bemo to

Prambanan bus terminal. From Solo, buses take 1½ hours and cost 5600Rp.

SOLO (SURAKARTA)

☎ 0271 / pop 525,000

Solo, a traditional and unhurried city 65km northeast of Yogyakarta, often plays second fiddle to its more conspicuous neighbour. But this is just plain unfair. With its backstreet *kampung*, wide thoroughfares, laid-back locals and rich cultural heritage, Solo has more than enough to warrant at least an overnight visit. Plus the usual cries of 'Hello mister', 'Becak, becak' and 'Come to my gallery' – so ingrained in many of Java's cities – are less frequent here, as are the tourists; more often than not you won't bump into another traveller as you wander the alleyways and markets of this attractive city.

In many ways, Solo is also Java writ small, incorporating its vices and virtues and embodying much of its heritage. On the downside, the island's notoriously fickle temper tends to flare in Solo first – the city has been the backdrop for some of the worst riots in Java's recent history. This fact will come as quite a surprise to most visitors, who will find the locals some of the friendliest on this crowded island. On the upside, the city's long and distinguished past as a seat of the great Mataram empire means that it competes with Yogyakarta as the hub of Javanese culture.

As well as visitors to its two beautiful palaces, Solo attracts many students and scholars to its academies of music and dance. The city is an excellent place to see traditional performing arts, and traditional crafts, especially batik, are also well represented, as Solo is a major textile centre.

History

Surakarta's founding in 1745 has a mystical history. Following the sacking of the Mataram court at Kartosuro in 1742, the *susuhunan*, Pakubuwono II, decided to look for a more auspicious site. According to legend, 'voices' told the king to go to the village because 'it is the place decreed by Allah and it will become a great and prosperous city'.

Pakubuwono II died after only four years in the city, and his heir, Pakubuwono III, managed to lose half of his kingdom to

the court of Yogyakarta. Pakubuwono X (1893–1938), however, had more luck. He revived the prestige of the court through the promotion of culture and gave no time to fighting rival royals.

Following WWII, the royal court fumbled opportunities to play a positive role in the revolution, and lost out badly to Yogyakarta, which became the seat of the independence government. The palaces of the city soon became mere symbols of ancient Javanese feudalism and aristocracy.

With the overthrow of Soeharto, Solo erupted following the riots in Jakarta in May 1998. For two days rioters went on a rampage, systematically looting and burning every shopping centre and department store.

Brows still furrow whenever you mention Surakarta (Solo) elsewhere in Java, but the golden arches and Colonel Sanders are back on the billboards and fancy new shopping malls are gradually rising from the ashes of the old. Solo, with its links to extremist groups such as Jemaah Islamiah, remains a politically volcanic city, however, and no-one can predict when the next eruption might take place.

Orientation

Jl Slamet Riyadi, the broad and busy avenue running east–west through the centre of Solo, is the main thoroughfare; most hotels and restaurants are on or just off it.

Solo's Balapan train station is in the northern part of the city, about 2km from the city centre; the main bus terminal, Tirtanadi, is 1.5km north again. The Gilingan minibus terminal is near the bus terminal.

The oldest part of the city is centred around the Kraton Surakarta to the southeast.

Information

Banks with ATMs line Jl Slamet Riyadi and offer far better rates than most hotels.

BumiNet (Jl Ahmad Dahlan 39; per hr 6000Rp) Internet access handy to most travellers accommodation.

Main post office (Jl Jenderal Sudirman; 11 8am–7pm) Efficient and open daily for most postal services.

Solonet (Jl Slamet Riyadi 388; per hr 4500Rp) For internet access.

Telkom wartel (Jl Mayor Kusmanto) Near the post office, and has a Home Country Direct phone. Other wartel can be found around town.

Tourist office (☎ 711435; Jl Slamet Riyadi 275; 11 8am–4pm Mon–Sat) Extremely helpful office with some useful pamphlets, a map of Solo, and information on cultural events and places to visit. It also has desks at the bus and train stations which can help with ticket bookings.

Sights

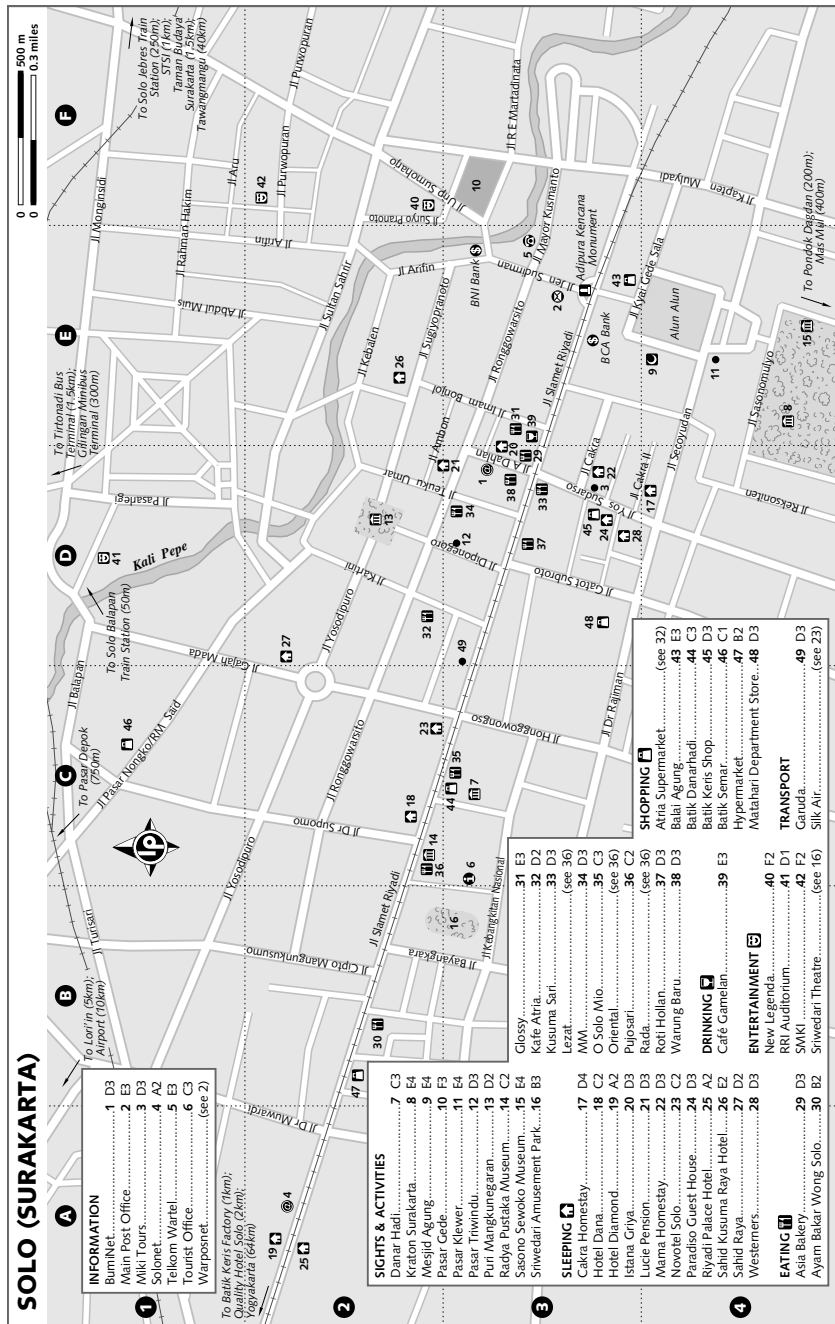
KRATON SURAKARTA

In 1745 Pakubuwono II moved from Kartosuro to **Kraton Surakarta** (Kraton Kasunanen; ☎ 656432; admission 8000Rp; 11 9am–2pm Tue–Fri, 9am–3pm Sat & Sun) in a day-long procession that transplanted everything belonging to the king, including the royal banyan trees and the sacred Nyai Setomo cannon (the twin of Si Jagur, p104, in old Jakarta), which now sits in the northern palace pavilion. Ornate European-style decorations were later added by Pakubuwono X, the wealthiest of Surakarta's rulers, between 1893 and 1939.

The main entrance to the kraton fronts the *alun-alun*. Here, at the main entrance, the Pagelaran is the largest audience hall, where the *susuhunan* held court in front of his people. Over the street behind the Pagelaran is the *kraton* proper, though the main gateway is not open to the public and entry is from around the eastern side at the museum. Much of the *kraton* was destroyed by fire in 1985, attributed by the Solonese to the *susuhunan*'s lack of observance of tradition. Many of the inner buildings, including the *pendopo*, were destroyed and have been rebuilt. One that has survived is the distinctive tower known as **Panggung Songgo Buwono** (recently enjoying some much-needed restoration), which was built in 1782 and looks like a cross between a Dutch clock tower and a lighthouse. Its upper storey is a meditation sanctum where the *susuhunan* is said to commune with Nyai Loro Kidul (Queen of the South Seas).

A heavy carved doorway leads through from the museum across the inner courtyard of shady trees to the *pendopo*, but most of the *kraton* is off limits and is in fact the *dalem* (residence) of the *susuhunan*. The main sight for visitors is the **Sasono Sewoko museum**. Its exhibits include fine silver and bronze Hindu–Javanese figures, Javanese weapons, antiques, carriages and other royal heirlooms.

Admission includes entry to the *kraton* complex and museum, and guides can be hired for an extra 20,000Rp. Children's



dance practice can be seen on Sunday from 10am to noon, while adult practice is from 1pm to 3pm.

PURI MANGKUNEGARAN
 In the centre of the city and dating back to 1757, Puri Mangkunegaran (☎ 644946; admission 10,000Rp; 11 8.30am-2pm Mon-Sat, 8.30am-1pm Sun) is the home of the second house of Solo. Technically a *puri* (palace) rather than a *kraton* (a *kraton* is occupied by the first ruling house), it was founded after a bitter struggle against Pakubuwono II, launched by his nephew Raden Mas Said (an ancestor of Madam Tien Soeharto, the late wife of the former president). Though much smaller in scale and design, this palace is better maintained and obviously wealthier than the more important Kraton Surakarta. It also tends to have better organised tours. Members of the royal family still live at the back of the palace.

The centre of the palace compound is the *pendopo*, bordered on its northern side by the *dalem*, which now forms the palace museum. The pavilion has been added to over the centuries and is one of the largest in the country. Its high rounded ceiling was painted in 1937 and is intricately decorated with figures of the Javanese zodiac, each painted in its own mystical colour. In Javanese philosophy yellow guards against sleepiness, blue against disease, black against hunger, green against desire, white against lust, rose against fear, red against evil and purple against wicked thoughts. The pavilion contains one of the *puri*'s oldest sets of gamelan instruments, known as *Kyai Kanyut Mesem* (Drifting in Smiles).

The museum here is a real delight but can only be visited on a guided tour (around 20,000Rp). Most of the exhibits are from the personal collection of Mangkunegara VII. Among the items on display are gold-plated dresses for the royal Srimpi and Bedoyo dances, jewellery and a few oddities, which include huge Buddhist rings and gold genital covers – one for a queen, and a decidedly small penis cover for a king.

At the pavilion, you can see excellent music and dance practice sessions on Wednesday from 10am until noon.

Dinner with the royal family can also be arranged through *puri* staff or via Herwasto

Kusomo (☎ 642637). Tickets cost US\$30 per head for a minimum of 25 guests.

RADYA PUSTAKA MUSEUM
 This small museum (Jl Slamet Riyadi; admission 1000Rp; 11 9am-1pm Tue-Sun), next to the tourist office, has good displays of gamelan instruments, jewelled kris, *wayang* puppets from Thailand and Indonesia, a small collection of *wayang beber* (scrolls that depict *wayang* stories) and Raja Mala, a hairy puppet figurehead from a royal barge. Offerings must be made regularly to Raja Mala; otherwise, it is said, it will exude a pungent odour. The museum often closes earlier than the official closing time listed here.

MARKETS
Pasar Klewer (Jl Secoyudan; 11 8am-6pm), supposedly the largest batik and textile market in Indonesia, is the ever-crowded three-storey textile market near Kraton Surakarta. This is the place to buy batik (mainly *batik cap*) – and it helps if you know your stuff and are prepared to bargain.

Pasar Triwindu (Jl Diponegoro; 11 9am-4 or 5pm Mon-Sat), Solo's flea market, is always worth a browse. It sells antiques and all sorts of bric-a-brac, and is the place to pick up that fancy light fitting you've always wanted. An ever-increasing amount of the market is also devoted to car and motorcycle parts.

Pasar Gede (Jl Urip Sumoharjo; 11 8am-6pm) is the city's largest general market, selling all manner of produce, particularly fruit and vegetables.

At the northwestern end of Jl Raden Mas Said, **Pasar Depok** (11 8am-5pm Mon-Sat) is Solo's squawking bird market.

OTHER SIGHTS
 Directly behind Batik Danarhadi, **Danar Hadi** (☎ 714253; Jl Slamet Riyadi 216; admission 15,000Rp; 11 9.30am-2.30pm Mon-Sat) is a small museum big on batik, with row after row of traditional textile. Entry includes a guided tour in English, which endeavours to explain the history of many pieces. Old photos also help to paint a picture of the history of batik, but the real gem is watching women create the textile on site.

On the western side of the *alun-alun*, **Mesjid Agung**, featuring classical Javanese architecture, is the largest and most sacred mosque in Solo.

Solo's Sriwedari Amusement Park (admission 3000Rp; 11 5-10pm Mon-Fri, 5-11pm Sat, 9am-10pm Sat) has fair rides, sideshow stalls and other dated diversions. The main reason to come is for the nightly *wayang orang* performances and other cultural shows that are held regularly.

Courses

Traditionally, Solo is well known as a meditation centre, but the number of courses offered have been dwindling of late. The tourist office (p195) still lists a couple of places on its books for interested parties, though.

Mama Homestay (right) The eponymous Mama offers a one-day introductory batik course for 60,000Rp (you supply the T-shirt), although she is getting old these days and her English is limited.

Warung Baru (opposite) Never to be outdone, Baru also offers batik courses (70,000Rp, including T-shirt).

Tours

Various travel agents around town run tours, including **Miki Tours** (☎ 653278; Jl Yos Sudarso 17), and many guesthouses and hotels can book a variety of tours. They include tours to Candi Sukuh and the hill resort Tawangmangu (100,000Rp), and one-day trekking tours to Gunung Merapi (350,000Rp) and Gunung Lawu (250,000Rp). Most require a minimum of two people.

Bicycle tours to sites outside the city limits are a perennial favourite in Solo. For 60,000Rp to 75,000Rp a full-day tour takes you through beautiful countryside to 15 destinations, including stops to watch batik production, gamelan making, and tofu, *arak* (colourless, distilled palm wine) and rice-cracker processing. **Warung Baru** (opposite), **Istana Griya**, **Mama**, **Westerners** (right) and **Miki** tours all offer such tours.

Festivals & Events

As a historic centre, Solo plays host to a number of annual events. The following two are of the most interest:

Kirab Pusaka (Heirloom Procession) Held on the first day of the Javanese month of Suro (which can fall any time from March to May) since 1633, these colourful processions start at Puri Mangkunegaran in the early evening and continue late into the night.

Sekaten This festival marks the birth of the Prophet Muhammad and is held in the Islamic month of Maurud (from May to July). First staged in 1478, the event comprises two

ceremonies with a week in between. The closing ceremony sees a fair erected in the *alun-alun* and culminates in the cutting up and sharing out of a huge rice mountain.

Sleeping BUDGET

Solo has an excellent, though ever-decreasing, selection of friendly homestays. Almost all offer good travel information, tours, bus bookings, bicycles, breakfast, and free tea and coffee.

Pondok Dagdan (☎ 669324; Jl Carangan Baluarti 42; r without mandi 25,000Rp) In the shadow of Kraton Surakarta, this quintessential homestay benefits from a welcoming owner and a peaceful setting. Rooms, which are built around a leafy courtyard, are very basic and popular with foreign students and English teachers.

Lucie Pension (☎ 653375; Jl Ambon 12; s/d 30,000/40,000Rp) Near Puri Mangkunegaran, this proper homestay has friendly owners (no English) and a handful of spotless rooms with tatami-style mats and mattresses on the floor. The terrace out front is perfect for watching the comings and goings of the *kampung*.

Westerners (☎ 633106; Kemlayan Kidul 11; r 40,000Rp) On the first alley north of Jl Secoyudan off Jl Yos Sudarso, this friendly, well-run and very secure losmen is Solo's original homestay. It's a little dog-eared these days but highly adequate.

Mama Homestay (☎ 652248; Kauman Gang III; s/d with breakfast 35,000/45,000Rp) Basic rooms that share *mandis* in tumbling surrounds; standards aren't high, but there's a supremely homey atmosphere.

Paradiso Guest House (☎ 652960; Kemlayan Kidul 1; r without mandi 30,000Rp, with mandi 50,000-60,000Rp) Not to be confused with **Westerners** (a misleading 'Westerners' sign hangs over the gate), which is further down the same alley, **Paradiso** is a homely place, with a *pendopo*-style sitting area and slightly smudged, all-white rooms. It's deathly quiet in the off season.

Istana Griya (☎ 632667; istanagriya@yahoo.com; Jl Ahmad Dahlan 22; r with fan/air-con from 70,000/100,000Rp; a s) **Istana Griya** is high on the list of top places to stay in Solo due to its quiet location, knowledgeable and friendly staff, and colourful, spotless and comfy rooms. A wide range of tours and activities can be arranged here.

Cakra Homestay (☎ 634743; Jl Cakra II/15; r with/without mandi 75,000/65,000Rp, with air-con 100,000Rp; a s) Occupying a charming, traditional property down an alley on the opposite side of Jl Yos Sudarso, **Cakra** wins the prize for one of the best-looking hostels in Central Java. It loses marks on the rooms, which are basic, but gains them back with free game-plan performances on random evenings, and staff with extensive knowledge of Javanese culture.

MIDRANGE

Many of the hotels in this bracket are strung along or just off Jl Slamet Riyadi, west of the city centre. Standards generally don't match the price, however.

Hotel Dana (☎ 711976; danasolo@indo.net.id; Jl Slamet Riyadi 286; r/ste with breakfast 225,000/450,000Rp) This fine colonial hotel has undergone extensive renovation, not all of it sympathetic, but it still has a modicum of grace and decent rooms, most with private sitting areas.

Riyadi Palace Hotel (☎ 717181; riyadi@indo.net.id; Jl Slamet Riyadi 335; r 225,000-555,000Rp) **Riyadi** is certainly no palace, but it has well-appointed rooms and a business feel; rooms at the back of the hotel are in better shape.

Hotel Diamond (☎ 733888; Jl Slamet Riyadi 392; r with air-con 230,000Rp, ste 1,000,000Rp; a) This newly renovated motel-style hotel across the street from the **Riyadi** Palace has rooms that are a touch better than most, a glossy lobby and shiny fittings. Discounts are readily offered.

Sahid Raya (☎ 0800 271002, 644144; sahidsl@indosat.net.id; Jl Gajah Mada 82; r from 350,000Rp; a s) This upmarket hotel generally caters to business clients, and has well-kept rooms and staff who can help you with most queries regarding Solo.

Novotel Solo (☎ 724555; reservation@novotelsolo.com; Jl Slamet Riyadi 272; r from 385,000Rp; a s) **Novotel** is one of the most popular mid-range/top-end hotels because of its excellent central position and quality facilities. Its bar, which has nightly cover-band performances, is a busy late-evening haunt.

Sahid Kusuma Raya Hotel (☎ 646356; www.sahidkusuma.com; Jl Sugiyopranoto 20; r from 370,000Rp; a i s) An opulent old-style resort designed around a former Solonese palace, **Kusuma Raya** is a grand choice for those looking for comfort. While the main build-

ing is getting on a bit, most rooms are renovated; it has lashings of stylish charm. Published room rates may be discounted up to 25%.

Quality Hotel Solo (☎ 731312; Jl Ahmad Yani 40; r from 385,000Rp; a s) This hotel is popular with business types due to its top facilities and professional staff. It's 3km west of the city centre.

TOP END

Solo isn't loaded with top-end hotels, but there are a couple of luxury options around.

Lor'in (☎ 724500; Jl Adisucipto 47; r from US\$75; a s) **Lor'in** is a stylish, resort-style hotel that is the most luxurious of all on offer. It is 5km from town, on the airport road. Rooms are rarely discounted, but posted prices are already good value.

Eating

Indulging in Solo's street food should be everyone's list of things to do. Roaming hawkers pack the streets at night advertising their wares by screeching, striking buffalo bells or clattering cutlery. Of the plethora of dishes on offer, try *nasi gudeg* (unripe jackfruit served with rice, chicken and spices), *nasi liwet* (a local speciality incorporating rice cooked in coconut milk and eaten with a host of side dishes) or *sabi* (mini rice puddings served on a crispy pancake with banana, jackfruit or chocolate topping).

If you're looking for a quick fix head to **Pujosari**, a collection of warungs next to the tourist office. The best of the bunch include **Lezat**, which stays open 24 hours and does a mean *ayam kampung* (village chicken), **Rada**, which specialises in dim sum, and **Oriental**, which dishes up some fine Chinese.

Asia Bakery (Jl Slamet Riyadi; cakes around 2000Rp; 11 7am-7pm) This small, sparkling bakery will satisfy anyone's sweet tooth, with sticky buns and stacks of sugary delights.

Warung Baru (☎ 656369; Jl Ahmad Dahlan 23; mains from 8500Rp; 11 breakfast, lunch & dinner) This backpacker institution has some of the best bread in the city, but the rest of the enormous menu is often a letdown. Still, the atmosphere is convivial, the owners are more than friendly and tours can be organised over a bite to eat.

Kusuma Sari (☎ 656406; Jl Yos Sudarso 81; mains around 10,000Rp; 𠂆 lunch & dinner) Kusuma Sari is a stripped-back and spotless diner. It attracts Solonese by the dozen with pseudo-Western cuisine and mountains of ice cream.

Glossy (Jl Imam Bonjol 1; mains around 15,000Rp; 𠂆 lunch & dinner) This small and easy-going eatery close to Solo's backpacker quarter is big on hot-plate steaks, coffee and freshly squeezed juices; the menu has extensive lists of all three. Glossy also supports local artists by moonlighting as a gallery.

MM (Jl Ronggowarsito; mains around 15,000Rp; 𠂆 lunch & dinner) MM is popular with students for its cheap, good hot-plate steaks, relaxed air, live music on weekends, and open setting. If you've got the runs, it's not the place to head, though – the toilet is just a bare floor with accompanying water tap.

Mas Mul (Jl Veteran; 𠂆 3-11pm) At the southern entrance to the *kraton* is this, one of Solo's snake restaurants. For 25,000Rp, you can select a live cobra for sateing or frying, and can take the skin home as a gruesome souvenir. Those wishing to booster their virility can then opt to drink the snake's blood with wine or Red Bull.

O Solo Mio (☎ 727264; Jl Slamet Riyadi 253; pizzas around 30,000Rp; 𠂆 lunch & dinner) This place is as close as you'll get to a slice of little Italy in the heart of Solo. With a wood-fired pizza oven, fashioned from bona fide Gunung Merapi stone, O Solo Mio produces excellent pizzas, but you'll also find ciabatta, pasta and cappuccino on the menu.

Also-rans include the following:

Roti Hollan (Jl Slamet Riyadi 135; mains around 10,000Rp; 𠂆 lunch & dinner) With a restaurant upstairs and a bakery downstairs (plus beer at both), this dowdy place caters to most eating wishes.

Ayam Bakar Wong Solo (Jl Slamet Riyadi 299; mains 15,000Rp; 𠂆 lunch & dinner) Fans of barbecued chicken pack this place.

Kafe Atria (cnr Jl Ronggowarsito & Jl Kartini; mains around 30,000Rp; 𠂆 lunch & dinner) Decent grills and meat feasts can be had in this café above the Atria supermarket.

Drinking

Solo isn't the town to drink up large and party into the wee small hours, but there are a couple of places to down a few brewskies.

Café Gamelan (Jl Slamet Riyadi 58) With outdoor seating, constant entertainment from

busy Jl Slamet Riyadi, and staff willing to sit and chat a while, Gamelan is a good bet for a beer in the evenings. Just avoid the food.

MM (Jl Ronggowarsito; 𠂆 lunch & dinner) MM is the place to mingle with Solo's student crowd on the weekends; many flock here for the live music and buzzing atmosphere.

Entertainment

CULTURAL PERFORMANCES

Solo is an excellent place to see traditional Javanese performing arts.

At the back of Sriwedari Amusement Park, **Sriwedari Theatre** (𠂆 performances 8pm) has a long-running *wayang orang* troupe. Though it's no longer a premier troupe, it only costs 3000Rp to sample this unique vaudeville-style of telling the classics, complete with singing, comedy and action drama. You can come and go as you please, and performances are staged from 8pm to 10pm nightly except Sunday.

RRI auditorium (☎ 641178; Jl Abdul Rahman Saleh 51) RRI holds various cultural performances, which are popular and often excellent. The station has *wayang orang* on the second Tuesday of the month from 8pm to midnight and *ketoprak* performances on the fourth Tuesday of the month from 8pm to midnight.

Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia (STSI; ☎ 647658) This arts academy located at the Kentingan campus in Jebres, in the northeast of the city, has dance practice from 7.30am to 2pm Monday to Thursday, from 7.30am to 11am on Friday and from 7.30am to noon on Saturday.

SMKI (☎ 632225; Jl Kepatihan Wetan) The high school for the performing arts also has dance practice from around 8am to noon Monday to Thursday and Saturday, and 8am to 11am Friday.

Taman Budaya Surakarta (TBS; ☎ 635414; Jl Ir Sutami 57) This, the cultural centre to the east of the city, holds all-night *wayang kulit* performances. Ki Mantep Sudarsono is one of Indonesia's most famous *dalang* and often performs in Solo. Private dance lessons are also available here.

Puri Mangkunegaran (☎ 644946; 𠂆 8.30am-2pm Mon-Sat, 8.30am-1pm Sun) and **Kraton Surakarta** (Kraton Kasunan; ☎ 656432; 𠂆 9am-2pm Tue-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat & Sun) each have traditional Javanese dance practice. **Balai Agung** (Jl Kyai Gede Sala; 𠂆 9am-5pm Mon-Sat) offers *wayang kulit*

performances every Tuesday night from 8pm, and **Cakra Homestay** (☎ 634743; Jl Cakra 11/15) hosts the occasional gamelan performance at 8pm.

Solo also plays host to regular art exhibitions (ask the tourist office for the current listings).

NIGHTCLUBS

Hedonists can also find a few lively night-spots for an evening of deafening bump-and-grind.

New Legenda (Jl Suryo Pranoto; admission 15,000Rp; 𠂆 8pm-2am) Like most Javanese clubs New Legenda is incredibly dark and incredibly loud, but it's a riot of a night out. Just look for the lascivious-looking Statue of Liberty.

Shopping

Solo is one of Indonesia's main textile centres, producing not only its own unique, traditional batik but every kind of fabric for domestic use and export.

For everyday shopping, check out the markets or the shops on Jl Secoyudan or head to **Matahari department store** (cnr Jl Gatot Subroto & Jl Dr Rajiman), which offers everything you would expect.

The best of the modern supermarkets include the rebuilt **Hypermarket** (Jl Slamet Riyadi) and the newer **Atria** (Jl Ronggowarsito). For everyday shopping, check out the markets or the shops on Jl Secoyudan.

BATIK

The following are all large, well-established manufacturers with showrooms for their range of sophisticated work.

Batik Keris factory (☎ 714400; 𠂆 8am-5pm Mon-Sat) In Lawiyan, west of the city, this is one place to see the batik process up close. Its shop (Jl Yos Sudarso 62) has icy air-con, a café and two full floors of fixed-price batik bags, skirts and shirts.

Batik Danarhadi (Jl Slamet Riyadi 261) Danarhadi is another big Solonese manufacturer. It has a good range of batik fabrics and ready-made clothes.

Batik Semar (Jl Adisucipto 101) Semar is good for modern cotton and beautiful silk batiks.

Pasar Klewer (Jl Secoyudan; 𠂆 8am-6pm) Near Kraton Surakarta, Pasar Klewer has hundreds of stalls selling fabrics.

CURIOS

Kris and other souvenirs can be purchased from street vendors at the eastern side of the gem *alun-alun* near Kraton Surakarta. The gem sellers have a mind-boggling array of semiprecious stones.

Jl Dr Rajiman (Secoyudan), which runs along the southern edge of the *alun-alun*, is the goldsmiths street. Buy gold in the Chinese shops and have its weight and purity verified by the streetside gold testers along Jl Dr Rajiman and the side street of Jl Reksniten near the *kraton*.

Pasar Triwindu (Jl Diponegoro; 𠂆 9am-4 or 5pm Mon-Sat) All kinds of bric-a-brac plus a few genuine antiques are sold at Solo's fun flea market – fine porcelain, puppets, *batik tulis* (hand-painted or literally 'written' batik), pens, lamps and furniture. Many of the antiques are newly aged, so be prepared to bargain hard.

Balai Agung (Jl Kyai Gede Sala; 𠂆 9am-5pm Mon-Sat) Here, on the north side of the *alun-alun* in front of the Kraton Surakarta, you can see high-quality *wayang kulit* puppets being made (and put through their paces). Gamelan sets are also on sale, but these are produced in Bekonang village, 5km east of Solo.

Vendors at Sriwedari Amusement Park also sell souvenirs.

Getting There & Away

AIR

On Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, **Silk Air** (☎ 724604/5; www.silkair.com; Novotel Hotel, Jl Slamet Riyadi 272) flies to Singapore for US\$214 return (one way is US\$50 more expensive). At the time of writing, domestic services were limited to two daily flights to Jakarta with **Garuda** (☎ 630082; Hotel Cakra; Jl Slamet Riyadi 201).

BUS

The Tirtanadi bus terminal is 3km from the centre of the city. Only economy buses leave from here to destinations such as Prambanan (5600Rp, 1½ hours), Yogyakarta (8500Rp, two hours) and Semarang (11,700Rp, 2½ hours). Buses also travel to a number of destinations in East Java, including Pacitan (15,000Rp, four hours), Surabaya (31,600Rp, six hours) and Malang (42,600Rp, seven hours).

Near the bus terminal, the Gilingan mini-bus terminal has express air-con minibuses

to almost as many destinations as the larger buses. Door-to-door minibuses go to Yogyakarta (25,000Rp), Semarang (35,000Rp), Surabaya or Malang (85,000Rp), Denpasar (210,000Rp) and Jakarta (160,000Rp). Homestays, cafés and travel agents also sell these tickets.

TRAIN

Solo is located on the main Jakarta–Yogyakarta–Surabaya train line and most trains stop at Balapan (☎ 714039), the main train station.

The quickest and most convenient way to get to Yogyakarta is on the *Prameks* (business 6500Rp, one hour), which departs from Balapan five times a day at 5.45am, 8.25am, 11.35am, 2.41pm and 5.43pm.

Express trains to Jakarta include the *Argo Lawu* (executive 210,000Rp, 7½ hours, once daily at 8.10am), which is the most luxurious day train; the *Senja Utama* (business 100,000Rp, 10 hours, once a day at 6pm); and the executive *Bima* (from 200,000Rp, nine hours, once daily at 9pm).

The *Lodaya* (business/executive 100,000/150,000Rp, nine hours) departs for Bandung at 8pm and the *Sancaka* (business/executive 60,000/85,000Rp, five hours) swings through Balapan at 8.14am and 4.58pm on its way from Yogyakarta to Surabaya.

For Semarang, catch the *Pandan Wangi* (business 13,000Rp, two hours) at 5.15am and 1.30pm.

Jebres train station in the northeast of Solo has a few economy-class services to Surabaya and Jakarta, but if you're saving pennies, the bus is a more comfortable option.

Getting Around

A taxi to/from Adi Sumarmo airport, 10km northwest of the city centre, costs 50,000Rp, or you can take a bus to Kartosuro and then another to the airport. Around town, reliable, metered *Kosti Solo* taxis (☎ 856300) can be called or hailed on the street and cost 5000Rp for the first kilometre and 2500Rp per kilometre thereafter. Becak can be hired for 30,000Rp to 35,000Rp per hour, or will cost around 7000Rp from the train station or bus terminal into the centre; otherwise take the orange minibus 06 (2000Rp) to Jl Slamet

Riyadi. Public buses run up and down Riyadi and cost 2000Rp.

Many homestays and travellers cafés can arrange bike hire for around 10,000Rp to 15,000Rp; a motorcycle – Solo is one of Java's quietest cities traffic-wise – will cost around 60,000Rp. Cars with drivers can be arranged for around 350,000Rp per day, not including petrol.

AROUND SOLO

Sangiran

Fifteen kilometres north of Solo, Sangiran is an important archaeological excavation site (so important it gained World Heritage status in 1996), where some of the best examples of fossil skulls of prehistoric 'Java Man' (*Pithecanthropus erectus*) were unearthed by a Dutch professor in 1936.

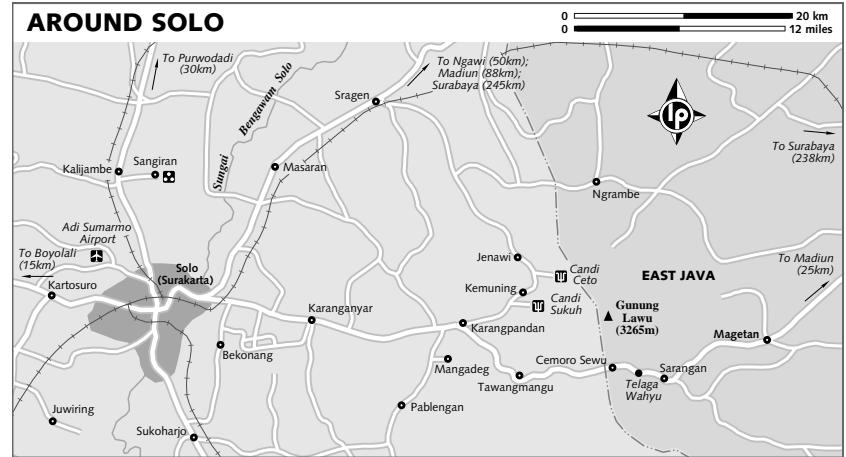
The town's main (if not only) attraction is its small museum (admission 10,000Rp; 11 9am–4pm Tue–Sun), with a few skulls (one of *Homo erectus*), various pig and hippopotamus teeth, and fossil exhibits, including huge mammoth bones and tusks. Souvenir stalls outside sell bones, 'mammoth tusks' carved from stone and other dubious fossil junk. Guides will also offer to take you to the area where shells and other fossils have been found in the crumbling slopes of the hill.

Take a Purwodadi bus from Solo's main bus terminal to Kalijambe (3000Rp). Ask for Sangiran and you will be dropped at the turn-off, 15km from Solo. It is then 4km to the museum (10,000Rp by *ojek*).

Gunung Lawu

Towering Gunung Lawu (3265m), lying on the border of Central and East Java, is one of the holiest mountains in Java. Mysterious Hindu temples dot its slopes and each year thousands of pilgrims seeking spiritual enlightenment climb its peak.

Although popular history has it that when Majapahit fell to Islam, the Hindu elite all fled east to Bali, Javanese lore relates that Brawijaya V, the last king of Majapahit, went west. Brawijaya's son, Raden Patah, was the leader of Demak and led the conquering forces of Islam against Majapahit, but rather than fight his own son, Brawijaya retreated to Gunung Lawu to seek spiritual enlightenment. There he achieved nirvana as Sunan Lawu, and today pilgrims come to



the mountain to seek his spiritual guidance or to achieve magic powers.

The unique temples on the mountain – the last Hindu temples built in Java before the region converted to Islam – show the influence of the later *wayang* style of East Java, though they incorporate elements of fertility worship. The most famous temple is Candi Sukuh; Candi Ceto is another large complex that still attracts Hindu worshippers.

CLIMBING GUNUNG LAWU

Colts between Tawangmangu and Sarangan pass Cemoro Sewu (5000Rp), 5km from Sarangan on the East and Central Java border. This small village is the starting point for the 6.7km hike to the summit of Gunung Lawu. Thousands of pilgrims flock to the summit on 1 Suro, the start of the Javanese new year, but pilgrims and holidaying students make the night climb throughout the year, especially on Saturday night. Most start around 8pm, reaching the peak at around 2am for meditation.

To reach the top for a sunrise free of clouds, start by midnight at the latest, though superfit hikers can do the climb in as little as four hours. It is a long, steady hike, but one of the easiest mountains in Java. The stone path is easy to follow – bring a strong torch (flashlight). Alternatively, guides can make a night climb easier and can lead you to the various pilgrimage sites along the way. Guides in Cemoro

Sewu cost around 80,000Rp; in Sarangan try at the Hotel Nusa Indah. Sign in at the PHKA post before starting the climb (admission to walk 2000Rp).

Candi Sukuh

One of Java's most mysterious and striking temples, Candi Sukuh (admission 10,000Rp; 11 9am–5pm) stands 900m above sea level on the slopes of Gunung Lawu, 36km east of Solo. It is a large truncated pyramid of rough-hewn stone, which is curiously Inca-like, and while the sculpture is carved in the *wayang* style found particularly in East Java, the figures are crude, squat and distorted. The temple isn't wildly erotic as is sometimes suggested, but there are fairly explicit and humorous representations of a stone penis or two and the elements of a fertility cult are quite clear.

Built in the 15th century during the declining years of the Majapahit empire, Candi Sukuh seems to have nothing whatsoever to do with other Javanese Hindu and Buddhist temples, and the origins of its builders and strange sculptural style remain a mystery. It is the most recent Hindu-Buddhist temple in the region, yet it seems to mark a reappearance of the pre-Hindu animism that existed 1500 years before. It's a quiet, isolated place with a strange, potent atmosphere.

At the gateway before the temple are a large stone lingam and yoni. Flowers are still often scattered here, and there's a story

that these symbols were used mainly by villagers to determine whether a wife had been faithful or a wife-to-be was still a virgin. The woman had to wear a sarong and stride across the lingam – if the sarong tore, her infidelity was proven. Other interesting cult objects stand further in among the trees, including a tall-standing monument depicting Bima, the Mahabharata warrior hero, with Narada, the messenger of the gods, both in a stylised womb. Another monument depicts Bima passing through the womb at his birth. In the top courtyard three enormous flat-backed turtles stand like sacrificial altars.

From the site the views to the west and north across terraced fields are superb. A paved trail leads downhill most of the way to Tawangmangu.

To get there, take a bus bound for Tawangmangu from Solo to Karangpandan (5000Rp), then a Kemuning minibus (3000Rp) to the turn-off to Candi Sukuh; from here it's a steep 2km walk uphill to the site or a 10,000Rp *ojek* ride. For 25,000Rp, *ojeks* will take you to both Sukuh and Ceto.

Candi Ceto

Further up the slopes of Gunung Lawu, Candi Ceto (admission 10,000Rp; 11 9am-5pm) dates from the same era as Candi Sukuh. Combining elements of Shivaism and fertility worship, it is a larger temple than Sukuh, and is spread over terraces leading up the misty hillside. It's a Spartan complex with little carving. The closely fitted stonework, some of it new, gives the temple a medieval atmosphere. Along with Sukuh, it is reputed to be the most recent Hindu temple in Java, built when the wave of Islamic conversion was already sweeping the island.

Because of the effort required in reaching Ceto, few visitors make it here – which is one of its attractions. Ceto is 9km by road past the Sukuh turn-off. See Candi Sukuh for transport details.

Tawangmangu

☎ 0271

Tawangmangu, a hill resort on the western side of Gunung Lawu, is a popular weekend retreat for Solonese. There isn't much here to attract tourists, but it's a pleasant enough

place to escape the city heat and partake in hiking on the slopes of the mountains.

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

On the back road in Tawangmangu, about 2km from the bus terminal, Grojogan Sewu (admission 3500Rp; 11 6am-6pm), a 100m-high waterfall, is a favourite playground for monkeys. This is perhaps the most famous waterfall in Java, though apart from its height it isn't very spectacular. It's reached by a long flight of steps down a hillside, and you can swim in the very chilly and dirty swimming pool at the bottom. From the bottom of the waterfall a walking trail leads to the path to Candi Sukuh; *ojek* also hang out here on weekends.

Trekkers can take an interesting 2½-hour walk to Candi Sukuh, 6km along a paved path from Tawangmangu. This path is steep in parts but is also negotiable by motorbike.

SLEEPING & EATING

Prices and quality rise as you head up the hill, a long grunt from the bus terminal. There are plenty of losmen on Jl Grojogan Sewu, a quieter street running between the waterfall and Jl Raya Lawu.

Wisma Yanti (☎ 697056; Jl Raya Lawu 65; r with-out mandi 30,000Rp, main house r 75,000Rp, whole house 250,000Rp) Its rooms may not exude the most charm, but this homestay has a peaceful ambience and a nice garden to relax in, and you may be invited for sate with the owners in the evening.

Pondok Garuda (☎ 697239; r with hot water 50,000-200,000Rp) About 500m uphill from the bus terminal, Garuda is a large hotel with a variety of rooms, all of which are a good size and come with the all-important hot water. If you're sensitive to noise, it may not be the best bet (a mosque is next door) and prices increase by 20% at weekends.

Hotel Wahyu Sari (☎ 697470; Jl Grojogan Sewu 6; r 70,000Rp) Of the small hotels near the waterfall, this is one of the best. Rooms are fairly basic, but they're clean and comfortable.

Komajaya Komaratih Hotel (☎ 697125; Jl Raya Lawu 150-151; r 102,000-282,000Rp) Like Pondok Indah, the owners of this hotel just love their kitsch statues of everything from Snow White to Mickey Mouse. The English-speaking staff are very friendly and

rooms are of a better standard than most in these parts.

Pondok Indah (☎ 697024; Jl Raya Lawu 22; r/villas 120,000/240,000Rp) Pondok Indah is a good option for families; it has a children's playground and a plethora of Disney-character statues decorating the front lawn. Rooms are well kept and come with hot water.

Sapto Argo (Jl Raya Lawu; mains from 7000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) Argo has good, cheap Indonesian dishes and serves the local speciality, *sate kelinci* (rabbit sate).

Lesahan Pondok Indah (Jl Raya Lawu; mains 10,000-30,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) This is a more tranquil spot, with excellent food to enjoy while seated cross-legged on bamboo mats or on bamboo seats.

For cheaper eats, the road near the waterfall is inundated with warungs.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Buses travel to Solo (7500Rp) and less-frequent Colts go to Sarangan (9000Rp). Minibuses (2000Rp) loop through town from the bus terminal up the main road, across to the waterfall and back around to the bus terminal. They are frequent on Sunday, but on other days expect to wait forever until they are jam-packed.

Sarangan

☎ 0351

An interesting alternative to backtracking to Solo is to take a Colt to Sarangan, 18km from Tawangmangu on the mountain road to Madiun. It is just over the provincial border in East Java, though most foreign visitors come via Solo. On weekends, local crowds pack the place, as happy as clams with a short speedboat ride around the town's 'lake', which in most countries equates to a 'pond'. A 2500Rp fee is payable at the entrance to the town.

The vistas en route are far more spectacular than the town of Sarangan itself, which is just another crowded holiday resort, albeit one with the aforementioned muddy lake.

At 1287m, however, the climate is fresh and the views far more impressive than in Tawangmangu. Sarangan is also a good base for tackling the ascent of Gunung Lawu, which rises almost vertically from the outskirts of town. In fact, the roads are so steep here that the roadsides between Sarangan

JAVA MAN

Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) spawned a new generation of naturalists in the 19th century, and his theories sparked acrimonious debate across the world. Ernst Haeckel's *The History of Natural Creation* (1874) expounded on Darwin's theory of evolution and surmised the evolution of primitive humans from a common ape-man ancestor, the famous 'missing link'.

One student of the new theories, Dutch physician Eugene Dubois, went to Java in 1889 after hearing of the uncovering of a skull at Wajak, near Tulung Agung in East Java. Dubois worked at the dig, uncovering other human fossils closely related to modern man. In 1891 at Trinil in East Java's Ngawi district, Dubois unearthed an older skullcap, along with a femur and three teeth he later classified as originating from *Pithecanthropus erectus*, a low-browed, prominent-jawed early human ancestor, dating from the Middle Pleistocene epoch. His published findings of 'Java Man' caused such a storm in Europe that Dubois even reburied his discovery for 30 years.

Since Dubois' findings, many older examples of *Homo erectus* (the name subsequently given to *Pithecanthropus erectus*) have been uncovered in Java. The most important and most numerous findings have been at Sangiran, where in the 1930s Ralph von Koenigswald found fossils dating back to around 1 million BC; in 1936, at Perning near Mojokerto, the skull of a child was discovered and was purported to be even older. Most findings have been along Sungai Bengawan Solo in Central and East Java.

Geochronologists have now dated the bones of Java's oldest *Homo erectus* specimens at 1.7 million years, but also postulate that the youngest fossils may be less than 40,000 years old. This means that *Homo erectus* existed in Java at the same time as *Homo sapiens*, who arrived on the island some 60,000 years ago, and reignites the debate about whether humankind evolved in Africa and migrated from there, or whether humans evolved on several continents concurrently. Those interested in learning more should pick up a copy of Carl Swisher, Garniss Curtis and Roger Lewin's extremely readable book, *Java Man*.

and Tawangmangu are often littered with overheating cars billowing steam. If you are driving, take care.

SLEEPING

Many hotels are on the main road as you enter town.

Hotel Merah (☎ 888182; Jl Raya Telaga; r from 125,000Rp) Rooms at the Merah are rather bland and clinical, but they have direct views onto the town's small lake, and the top floor, which has been converted into a huge terrace, is just made for sundowners.

Hotel Nusa Indah (☎ 888021; Jl Raya Telaga 171; r with hot water from 150,000Rp; a) This friendly hotel is well kept and can arrange English-speaking guides (200,000Rp) for climbing Gunung Lawu. Ask for a room at the back with bird's-eye views of East Java.

Hotel Sarangan (☎ 888022; saranga_hotel@plasa.com; r from 230,000Rp; i) At the top of the village, Hotel Sarangan has excellent views of the lake and East Java, as well as cheery English-speaking staff. Most rooms sleep four or more people, and have their own sitting rooms with open fireplaces.

Telaga Mas International (☎ 888762; Jl Raya Telaga; r 350,000-700,000Rp) Sarangan's biggest hotel is located right on the lake and is staffed by a friendly bunch. Rooms, however, are incredibly drab for the price.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Colts make the run to Tawangmangu (9000Rp), passing Cemoro Sewu for the climb to Gunung Lawu, but they only leave when full and waits can be eternal on slow days.

Mangadeg

Near Karangpandan, a road branches south from the main Solo–Tawangmangu road about 5km to Mangadeg, the burial hill of Solo's royal Mangkunegoro family. Make a small donation and visit the graves or simply take in the superb views.

A couple of kilometres away in the same sacred hills, the lavish Astana Giribangun is the Soeharto family burial palace, where the former president's wife, Madame Tien Soeharto, is buried.

Just past Mangadeg is Pablengan, the former bathing pools of the Mangkunegoro, which has dilapidated, ancient bath-

ing pavilions fed by seven types of spring water.

NORTH COAST

Central Java's north coast features little on the itineraries of most tourists, who tend to opt for the more prominent attractions in and around Yogyakarta and Solo. And while there isn't a huge amount to see and do in this steamy corner of the island, it is not without its charm.

For starters, the towns dotting the north coast are steeped in history. For many centuries the north coast was the centre for trade with merchants from Arabia, India and China, who brought with them not only goods but also ideas and cultures. In the 15th and 16th centuries the area was a springboard for Islam into Java, and the tombs of the country's great saints all lie between Semarang and Surabaya (with the exception of Sunan Gunungjati in Cirebon).

For those looking for authentic arts and crafts, the north coast will also please. Pekalongan is celebrated for its batik, while Jepara is a major centre for wooden furniture. If the sweet smell of *kretek* (clove cigarettes) is to your liking, then a trip to Kudus, the birthplace of the *kretek*, may appeal.

Central Java's capital, Semarang, is located here, and while it won't hold your interest for too long, it is a gateway to the splendid (and often forgotten) Karimunjawa islands and peaceful mountains between it and Yogyakarta.

PEKALONGAN

☎ 0285 / pop 325,000

On the north coast between Semarang and Cirebon, Pekalongan (its name is said to be derived from the Chinese *a-pek-along-an*, meaning 'a place for catching fish') is known as Kota Batik (Batik City), and its batiks are some of the most sought-after in Indonesia. It is less formal, more colourful and more innovative in design than the traditional styles of Yogyakarta and Solo.

Pekalongan is a steamy city that sees few tourists, but it does have a neglected, old-fashioned atmosphere and an ethnically diverse population, which may appeal to some. While the main street, Jl Gajah Mada/Hayam Wuruk, can bustle, Pekalon-

gan is relatively quiet for its size (and a dry city at that).

Information

BIl bank (Bank Internasional Indonesia; Jl Diponegoro 4) For changing money.

Main post office (Kantor Pos dan Giro) Opposite the Balai Kota on the *alun-alun*.

Telkom office (Jl Merak 2) Next door to the main post office. You can make international telephone calls here.

Tourist office (☎ 423221; Jl Angkatan 45; 7am-2pm Mon-Thu, 7-11am Fri) Just north of Jl Gajah Mada; unfortunately it isn't much help.

Sights

Pekalongan's microscopic **Batik Museum** (Jl Majapahit 7A; admission free; 9am-1pm Mon-Sat), 2km south of the train station, has a few examples of batik, with explanations in Bahasa Indonesia. Of more interest is the **bird market** (Jl Kurinci) nearby.

The most interesting area of town is to the north, along Jl Blimbing with its old Chinese quarter; here you'll find a Chinese temple and old terraced houses. To the east, Jl Patiunus and the streets leading off it, make up the **Arab quarter**, another good area for batik (see right). Not far to the south is the town's main batik market, **Pasar Banjarsari**.

Facing the surprisingly quiet and pretty *alun-alun*, the Mesjid Jami Yasmaja has impressive Arabic architecture enclosing an older Javanese-style mosque.

Sleeping & Eating

Budget hotels are directly opposite the train station on Jl Gajah Mada.

Hotel Damai (☎ 422768; Jl Gajah Mada 7; r with fan from 37,000Rp, with air-con 110,000Rp; a) The best of a bunch of budget options with prison-like rooms on Jl Gajah Mada, Damai has the added bonus of being directly opposite the train station.

Nirwana Hotel (☎ 422446; Jl Dr Wahidin 11; r with fan/air-con from 105,000/210,000Rp; a s) Nirwana is top dog in town when it comes to hotels, with pleasant rooms, an outdoor coffee shop and one of Pekalongan's better restaurants.

Hotel Istana (☎ 428029; Jl Gajah Mada 23; r with fan 110,000Rp, with air-con from 156,000Rp; a) This is an excellent midrange hotel, with clean rooms and a quiet ambience despite having

a disco on the premises (which is about the only nightlife in town).

Purimas Bakery (Jl Hayam Wuruk; cakes from 2000Rp; 1 breakfast, lunch & dinner) Purimas is Pekalongan's favourite bakery, with good cakes, pastries, cold drinks and a sit-down area. There are branches on Jl Gajah Mada and Jl Cempaka.

Es Teler 77 (Jl Raya Dr Cipto 66; mains from 6000Rp; 1 lunch & dinner) This spotless franchise affair with garish green and yellow seats serves fine local dishes in a relaxed alfresco setting.

Shopping

Pekalongan batik is constantly evolving and new designs are more suited to Western and modern Indonesian tastes. Traditional batik is still popular, however, and Indonesians are often required to don it for formal occasions.

Street peddlers casually wave batik from the doorways of hotels and restaurants – mostly cheap clothes and poor-quality sarongs, but you might get lucky. Shops around town, many on Jl Hayam Wuruk, sell clothes, lengths of cloth, and sarongs in cotton and silk.

Pasar Banjarsari (Jl Sultan Agung; 1 8am-5pm) On the ground floor of new Plaza Pekalongan, this market has lost some of its character with its recent move, but it's still a fun place to pick up cheap (albeit often poor-quality) batik.

Huza (Jl Kenanga 7; 1 9am-4pm Mon-Fri) Locally recommended as one of the best places in town for quality and price, Huza has an extensive range of batik on offer.

Tobal (Jl Teratai 24; 1 9am-4pm Mon-Fri) Tobal is a large rag-trade business that produces clothes for the export market; you can view the process.

Most of the traditional batik is produced in the villages around Pekalongan. In the batik village of Kedungwuni, 17km south of town, Oey Soe Tjoen's workshop is famous for its intricate *batik tulis*. You can see it being made every day of the week except Friday.

Getting There & Away

Pekalongan is located on the main Jakarta–Semarang–Surabaya road and train route. There is also a road linking Pekalongan and the Dieng Plateau.

Pekalongan's bus terminal is about 4km southeast of town, 2000Rp by Colt or 7000Rp by becak. Buses from Cirebon can drop you off in town on their way through. Frequent buses go to Semarang (normal/air-con 15,000/25,000Rp, three hours); buses also go to Cirebon (18,000/25,000Rp, four hours), but often you will first have to take a bus to Tegal and then another to Cirebon.

As Pekalongan is midway for most trains running between Semarang and Jakarta, it's not the best place to pick up tickets, but it is possible.

The *Senja Bisnis* (9.28pm) and *Fajar Bisnis* (9.35pm) expresses run from Semarang to Jakarta (business 75,000Rp) and stop in the town, as does the luxury *Argo Muria* (5.24pm, 200,000Rp).

Getting Around

Pekalongan has plenty of becak, and anything between 500Rp and 7000Rp will get you most places in town. Orange bemos run all over Pekalongan for a standard 2000Rp. For Kedungwuni, take a bemo down Jl Mansyur.

SEMARANG

% 024 / pop 1.4 million

The bustling, north-coast port of Semarang is a schizophrenic city, embodying the polarity of modern Java. On one side, this old, Dutch administrative centre is still deeply traditional, with rambling colonial architecture and vibrant Chinese and Arab quarters. On the other side, the commercial area around Simpang Lima (Five Ways), with its shopping malls, clogged freeways and business hotels, is emblematic of Java's sudden and dramatic shift into the 21st century.

It may well be the provincial capital of Central Java, but Semarang lacks the pull of Solo and Yogyakarta. It does, however, have some appealing corners and is a good starting point for trips along the north coast or south to the central mountains.

Orientation

Semarang has two parts: 'old' Semarang is on the coastal plain, sandwiched between the two Banjir canals, while the new town sprawls southwards. An important hub in the old town is the Pasar Johar on the roundabout at the top of Jl Pemuda.

Jl Pemuda, Semarang's premier boulevard in Dutch times, is still a major artery and shopping street, though nowadays the busy, commercial hub of Simpang Lima square is the real centre of Semarang.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

GAMA Warnet (Jl Gajah Mada 58; 6500Rp per hr; 11 24hr)

MEDICAL SERVICES

RS Saint Elizabeth (% 8310076; Jl Kawi) The best hospital and first choice of the sizable Semarang expat community is in the Candi Baru district.

MONEY

All the banks listed here have ATMs.

ABN Amro (Jl Jenderal A Yani) Just off Simpang Lima.
BCA bank (Bank Central Asia; Jl Pemuda 90-92) You can change most currencies here.

POST & TELEPHONE

Main post office (Jl Pemuda; 11 8am-8pm Mon-Sat) On a busy intersection near the Chinese market.

Telkom office (Jl Jenderal Suprpto 7) Like the post office, close to the Chinese market.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Central Java tourist office (% 3515451; Jl Pemuda 147; 11 7.30am-4pm Mon-Fri) Has information on Semarang and the entire Central Java Region; may also provide internet access in the future.

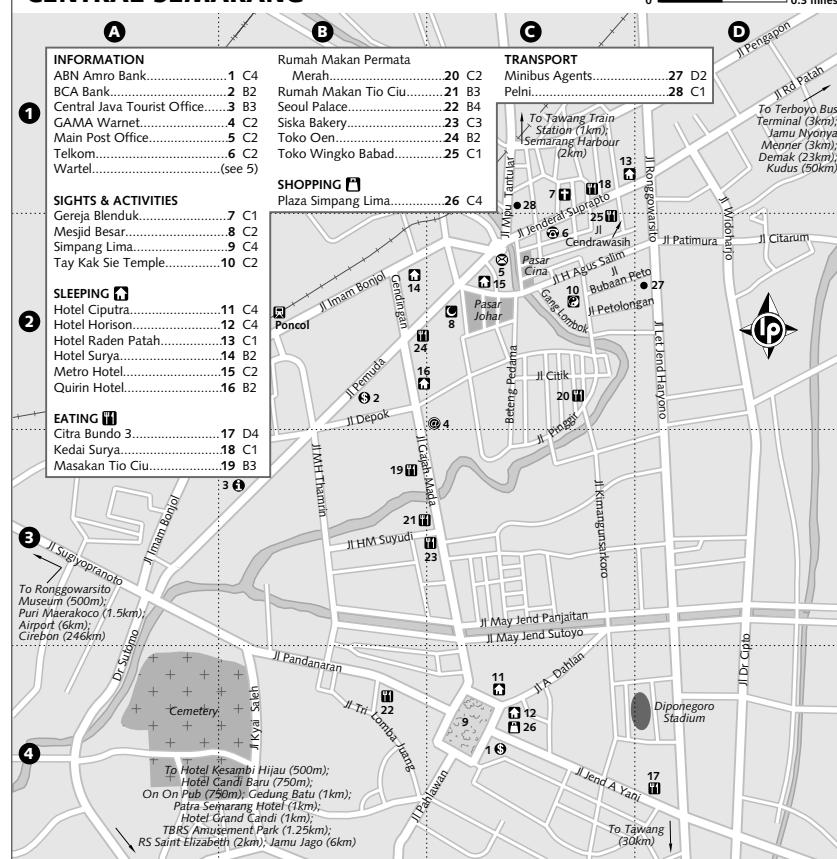
Sights

OLD CITY

Semarang's old city, also known as *Outstadt*, is the highlight of any visit. The broad, colonial sweep of Jl Jenderal Suprpto plays host to many of the city's most impressive historic buildings, including the spires and solid walls of the Dutch church **Gereja Blenduk** (Jl Jenderal Suprpto); built in 1753, it still holds services. This area was the main port during colonial times, and towards the river from the church there are old Dutch warehouses with shuttered windows, flaking plaster and peeling paint. Just south of here along the canal behind the post office is a fading equatorial Amsterdam – albeit without the coffee shops.

Further south you plunge into the narrow streets of Semarang's old *Chinatown*. Though Chinese characters are rarely on show (the Chinese language was long discriminated

CENTRAL SEMARANG



against by law), Semarang is Indonesia's most Chinese city.

Chinatown's highlight is the brightly painted **Tay Kak Sie Temple** (Gang Lombok), which dates from 1772. The temple is on the small alley running along the river off Jl Pekojan. **Pasar Cina** (Chinese Market; 11 7am-4pm), also called **Pasar Gang Baru**, is a fascinating mix of Chinese and Indonesian market flair.

Back towards the centre of the city, **Pasar Johar** (Jl H Agus Salim; 11 7am-5pm) is Semarang's most intriguing market. Facing the market is Semarang's **Mesjid Besar** (Grand Mosque).

GEDUNG BATU (SAM PO KONG TEMPLE)

This well-known Chinese temple (admission free; 11 24hr) stands 5km southwest of the

centre of the city. It was built in honour of Admiral Cheng Ho, the famous Muslim eunuch of the Ming dynasty, who led a Chinese fleet on seven expeditions to Java and other parts of Southeast and West Asia in the early 15th century. Cheng Ho has since become a saint known as Sam Po Kong and is particularly revered in Melaka, Malaysia. He first arrived in Java in 1405 and is attributed with helping to spread Islam. This temple is also revered by Muslims.

The main hall of the temple complex is built around an inner chamber in the form of a huge cave flanked by two great dragons, hence the temple's popular name, *gedung batu* (stone building). Inside the cave is an idol of Sam Po Kong.

To get to Gedung Batu, take the Damri bus 2 from Jl Pemuda to Karang Ayu (a suburb west of central Semarang), and then a Daihatsu to the temple. It takes about half an hour from central Semarang.

JAMU (HERBAL MEDICINES)

Semarang is known for its two large *jamu* manufacturers: **Jamu Nyonya Meneer** (☎ 6583088; Jl Raya Kaligawe, Km 4), near the bus terminal; and **Jamu Jago** (☎ 7472762; Jl Setia Budi 273), 6km south of the city on the Ambarawa road. Both have museums (admission free; 11 8am-3pm Mon-Fri) and tours of the factories are available upon request.

OTHER SIGHTS

Often referred to as ‘Taman Mini Jawa Tengah’, the 24-hectare Puri Maerakoco theme park (admission 3000Rp; 11 9am-7pm) is Semarang’s version of Jakarta’s Taman Mini, with 35 traditional pavilions representing each of Central Java’s *kabupaten* (regencies). While mostly of interest to domestic tourists, it’s worth a look if you will be exploring Central Java in depth. It is out near the airport, and not accessible by public transport.

Semarang harbour is worth a look to see *pinisi* and other traditional ocean-going vessels that dock at Tambak Lorok wharves.

Ronggowarsito Museum (Jl Abdulrachman; admission 2500Rp; 11 8am-4pm), approximately 2km before the airport, is a provincial museum with antiquities from all over the state. One of the most interesting exhibits is a recycled stone panel from the Mantingan mosque. One side shows Islamic motifs, while the reverse shows the original Hindu-Buddhist scene.

Simpang Lima is a square that houses Semarang’s cinema complexes and big malls. Crowds congregate in the evenings and browse aimlessly through shops that display countless consumer items that few can afford.

Sleeping BUDGET

Hotel Raden Patah (☎ 3511328; Jl Jenderal Suprpto 48; r with/without mandi 40,000/30,000Rp) This basic hotel in the heart of the colonial district is perfect for those looking for a bed and nothing else. Rooms at the rear of the quiet inner courtyard are the most attractive.

Hotel Kesambi Hijau (☎ 8312528; Jl Kesambi 7; r from 93,750Rp; a) This hotel occupies the upper echelons of Semarang’s budget hotels and is draped across the rising hills to the south of the city. Even some of the cheaper rooms have views and balconies. The only drawback is the mosque next door.

Hotel Candi Baru (☎ 8315272; Jl Rinjani 21; r with/without air-con from 140,000/60,000Rp; a) In a magnificent, rambling old villa with peeling paint, the occasional ghost and panoramic vistas over the city, Candi Baru is full of shabby character. Rooms are enormous and there are plenty of terraces for enjoying the evening heat and a cold beer.

Hotel Surya (☎ 3540355; Jl Imam Bonjol 28; r with air-con & hot water from 140,000Rp; a) This smart, modern hotel would comfortably sit in the midrange section if the room prices weren’t so low. Rooms are a little on the dark side (that could be a bonus depending on your viewpoint), but they’re very clean, and staff are generous to a fault.

MIDRANGE

Hotel Quirin (☎ 3547063; Jl Gajah Mada 44-52; economy s/d 165,000/198,000Rp, deluxe r 250,000-340,000Rp; a) Quirin is a pleasant motel-style affair with a supremely central location. There’s a basic restaurant on site and rooms are medium-sized, clean and quite adequate for most travellers’ needs.

Metro Hotel (☎ 3547371; metroht@indo.net.id; Jl H Agus Salim 3; r from 250,000Rp; a) Metro is perfectly placed for easy explorations of Semarang’s old town and Chinese quarter. Rooms range from small, windowless boxes with air-con to plush top-end jobbies; they’re all spotless.

Hotel Ciputra (☎ 8449888; www.hotelciputra.com; Simpang Lima; r from 500,000Rp; a) Ciputra may be looking a little dated these days, but it still has well-presented rooms and facilities that border on top end. It’s located in the heart of Semarang’s modern, glitzy district.

Patra Semarang Hotel (☎ 8414141; www.patra-jasa.com/semarang; Jl Sisingamangaraja; r from 600,000Rp plus 21% tax; a s) Patra Semarang was undergoing substantial renovations when we visited, so expect to find brand-new rooms when you do. The fine view of Semarang will still be the same, as will the range of sporting facilities. Discounts are readily available.

TOP END

Semarang has more than enough top-end hotels, most of which cater to business types.

Hotel Horison (☎ 8450045; www.horisonhotel.com; Jl Ahmad Dahlan; r from 650,000-750,000Rp, ste 950,000-2,000,000Rp plus 21% tax; a) Horison is a multistorey hotel supremely handy for shopaholics; it’s attached to Plaza Simpang Lima. Rooms are of the highest standard. With the hotel’s spa, massage centre, three restaurants and two bars, you may never venture out onto the steamy city streets.

Hotel Grand Candi (☎ 8416222; gchotel@indosat.net.id; Jl Sisingamangaraja 16; r from US\$120 plus 21% tax; a s i) Grand Candi is indeed grand – it’s Semarang’s most luxurious hotel. Its highlights include an elevated location, a plethora of facilities, first-class rooms and professional staff. Ask for a discount, or pay in rupiah and instantly receive one.

Eating

Unlike many of Java’s large cities, Semarang doesn’t have a major concentration of good restaurants. If anything, most are quite average, and spread throughout the city. With such a large Chinese population, this is, however, the place to sample Chinese food.

For cheap eats at night, it’s a toss-up between Simpang Lima and Pasar Johar. The former often pips the later for atmosphere, though; dozens of *kaki lima* (food carts) set up around the huge square, serving a bit of everything and offering traditional *lesahan* dining (on straw mats). Plaza Simpang Lima also has an extensive food court on the 4th floor.

Toko Wingko Babad (Jl Cendrawasih 14; cakes 2000Rp; 11 breakfast & lunch) Any self-respecting Javan city would be nothing without a quality bakery, and Semarang is no exception. This place bakes local specialities such as *wingko babad*, delicious coconut cakes – buy them hot here.

Kedai Surya (Jl Let Jenderal Suprpto 34; mains 15,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) In the heart of the old town is this basic Indonesian eatery housed in a towering, colonial warehouse. Try the frog cooked in spicy flour.

Masakan Tio Ciu (Gajah Mada 71; mains 15,000-30,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) The smaller and simpler cousin of its namesake, Rumah Makan Tio Ciu, this is yet another Sema-

rang restaurant specialising in seafood and Chinese, but why stop when you’re onto a good thing? Service is friendly and quick, and the food piping hot.

Toko Oen (Jl Pemuda 52; mains from 20,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) Toko Oen is a quintessential colonial teahouse showing its age, but it’s allowed to; it’s been around since 1936. It’s still a calm spot to sample local Chinese and Indonesian food while watching Chinese businessmen discuss future dealings and old gentlemen sip hot tea. Plus, the jars of cookies are just too good to pass over.

Rumah Makan Tio Ciu (Jl Gajah Mada; mains around 25,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) Tio Ciu is an open-air restaurant with some of the finest seafood and Chinese in the city, and is all steam and sizzling woks in the evenings.

Seoul Palace (Jl Pandanaran 109; mains 30,000Rp; 11 dinner) This is the city’s choicest Korean eatery and has excellent meat- and fish-feast barbecues served in colourful surroundings.

Also recommended:

Siska Bakery (Jl Gajah Mada 99; cakes 2000Rp; 11 breakfast & lunch) The place to go for all things sticky and sweet.

Citra Bundo 3 (Jl Jenderal A Yani 184; mains 10,000-20,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) Cheap and cheerful local fare can be had at this garish eatery.

Rumah Makan Permata Merah (Jl Pinggir 86-92; mains 10,000-30,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) For authentic Chinese (it has one of the few Chinese signs in Semarang).

Drinking

On On Pub (Jl Rinjani 21) At the Hotel Candi Baru, this is one of Semarang’s liveliest bars. It has pool, darts and pub grub in an old-world, colonial setting.

Entertainment

TBRS amusement park (☎ 8311220; Jl Sriwijaya 29, Tegalwareng) This amusement park holds *wayang orang* performances every Saturday from 7pm to midnight, and *wayang kulit* every Thursday Wage and *ketoprak* every Monday Wage of the Javanese calendar (5000Rp).

Getting There & Away

AIR

There are limited flights out of Semarang, but schedules and destinations change regularly. At the time of writing, **Garuda** (☎ 8454737), in the Hotel Horison (left),

had six flights a day to Jakarta; Adam Air (☎ 3584000) and Sriwijaya also operate one flight per day. See the Java Airfares map (p98) for prices.

BOAT

For ferry information, the Pelni office (☎ 3540381/6722; Jl Mpu Tantular 25; 7am-noon & 1-2pm Mon-Thu, 8am-noon Fri & Sat) is near Tawang train station. Pelni's *Lawit*, *Leuser* and *Binaiya* ferries run between Semarang and the Kalimantan ports of Sampit (economy/1st class 123,500/384,000Rp), Kumai (108,500/335,000Rp), Pontianak (162,000/513,000Rp) and Banjarmasin (3rd/2nd class 230,500/274,500Rp). Other Pelni-operated boats include the *Wilis* to Ketapang (Banyuwangi) (economy/2nd class 126,000/303,500Rp) and the *Ciremai* to Makassar (economy/1st class 233,000/740,000Rp).

BUS

Semarang's Terboyo bus terminal is 4km east of town, just off the road to Kudus. Destinations for normal/air-con buses are Yogyakarta (20,000/30,000Rp, three hours), Pekalongan (15,000/25,000Rp, three hours), Cirebon (35,000/45,000Rp, six hours) and Surabaya (35,000/50,000Rp, nine hours). There are also economy-only buses to Kudus (6000Rp, one hour), Jepara (9000Rp) and Wonosobo (20,000Rp, four hours).

Agents for luxury buses and express minibuses are located near Losmen Jaya and include *Rahayu* agent (☎ 3543935; Jl Let Jenderal Haryono 9) and *Nusantara Indah* agent (☎ 3553984; Jl Let Jenderal Haryono 9B).

Air-con minibuses travel to destinations across the island, including Pekalongan (35,000Rp), Wonosobo (35,000Rp), Solo (35,000Rp), Yogyakarta (40,000Rp), Surabaya (100,000Rp) and Jakarta (150,000Rp). Air-con minibuses to Denpasar cost 160,000Rp.

TRAIN

Semarang lies on the main Jakarta–Cirebon–Surabaya train route. Tawang (☎ 3544544) is Semarang's main station.

Good trains heading for Jakarta (8pm) and Semarang (8am) are the *Senja Bisnis* and *Fajar Bisnis* (business 75,000Rp, seven hours). The luxury *Argo Muria* does the run

in six hours and costs 200,000Rp. It leaves Tawang at 5am and 4pm respectively. The *Sembrani* (executive 180,000Rp, six hours) passes through Semarang at 11.05pm en route to Jakarta from Surabaya and at 11.39pm going the other way (110,000Rp, four hours).

Most of the economy-class services depart from Semarang's Poncol train station. The *Tawangjaya* (36,000Rp, nine hours) for Jakarta leaves at 6.40pm. All economy-class trains to Surabaya are overnight trains, such as the *Kertajaya* (28,000Rp, 4½ hours), which leaves at 1am.

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

Ahmad Yani airport is 6km to the west of town. A taxi into town costs 30,000Rp and around 20,000Rp when returning to the airport using the taxi meter.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

City buses charge a fixed 2000Rp fare and terminate at the Terboyo bus terminal. Buses 1, 2 and 3 run south along Jl Pemuda to Candi Baru. Minibuses cost the same and operate all around town.

A becak from Tawang train station or the bus terminal to Hotel Metro will cost about 7000Rp, as will most rides from around town.

Semarang has metered taxis, which congregate around the big hotels, Simpang Lima and the post office. You can call *Kosti taxis* (☎ 7613333) in advance; a minimum of 10,000Rp is charged.

AMBARAWA

☎ 0298

The market town of Ambarawa, 28km south of Semarang, will be of interest to train spotters; it's the site of the **Ambarawa Train Station Museum** (Museum Kereta Api Ambarawa; admission 3000Rp; 7am-4pm). Originally the Koenig Willem I station, opened in 1873, the museum has exhibits of rail memorabilia and steam locomotives built between 1891 and 1928.

Though the line has closed, groups of up to 100 passengers can charter a train for the 18km round trip from Ambarawa to Bedono for 2,200,000Rp. Book through the **Ambarawa train station** (☎ 591035) a few days in advance.

The museum is a couple of kilometres outside town, just off the road to Magelang. Ambarawa has hotels, but nearby Bandungan is a nicer place to stay.

Nestled in the heart of 22 hectares of coffee plantation, at an altitude of 900m, and surrounded by eight volcanoes, **Losari Coffee Plantation** (☎ 596333; www.losaricoffeeplantation.com; Desa Losari, Grabag; villa from US\$275 plus 21% tax; a s) has arguably the most glorious location of any resort in Java. But it's not only the scenery that will impress. Each of the resort's 18 villas are individually decorated with lavish touches of Mediterranean and Javanese flair, and feature stunning views of the countryside. And there's plenty to do if lazing by the pool doesn't appeal: take a tour of the plantation; soak up some steam in the Hamam, the resort's Turkish bath; or sample the plantation's organic tea and coffee in the historic Club House. Losari is located near Grabag, some 12km southwest of Ambarawa. From Ambarawa, it's best to take a taxi (30,000Rp) to the resort.

Ambarawa can be reached by public bus from Semarang (6000Rp, one hour), and Yogyakarta (20,000Rp, 2½ hours) via Magelang.

BANDUNGAN

☎ 0298

Bandungan is a pleasant hill resort at 980m, but the main attraction is the nearby Gedung Songo temples. It is one of the best places in the area to base yourself for exploration of the temples and to escape the heat of the north coast.

In town, **Hotel Parahita** (☎ 711017; r 50,000Rp), just down the back road to Semarang from the market, has basic rooms and a friendly owner who speaks no English.

Hotel Rawa Pening Eltricia (☎ 711445; r from 120,000Rp, cottages from 200,000Rp; s), 1km west of town, is perched on a hill with fine views and a terraced garden. Rooms are in good nick, and it has a lovely old colonial-style restaurant and a tennis court.

Buses make the run directly from Semarang to Bandungan (10,000Rp). If you are coming from the south, get off at Ambarawa and take a Colt to Bandungan (2000Rp).

GEDUNG SONGO TEMPLES

These nine (Gedung Songo means 'nine buildings' in Javanese) small Hindu temples

(admission 2500Rp; 7am-5pm) are scattered along the tops of the foothills around Gunung Ungaran. The architecture may not be overwhelming, but the setting is superb. The 1000m perch gives one of the most spectacular views in Java – south across shimmering Danau Rawa Pening to Gunung Merbabu and, behind it, smouldering Gunung Merapi; and west to Gunung Sumbing and Gunung Sundoro.

Built in the 8th and 9th centuries AD and devoted to Shiva and Vishnu, five of the temples are in good condition after major restoration in the 1980s; however, most of the carvings were lost. A hill path goes past three temple groupings – the temples at the third grouping are the most impressive. Halfway up, the trail leads down to a ravine and hot sulphur springs, and then up again to the final temple and its expansive views. The 3km loop can be walked in an hour, but allow longer to savour the atmosphere. Horses can also be hired.

Arrive early in the morning for the best views. A couple of small hotels with rooms for around 35,000Rp are just outside the gate. Camping inside the temple complex is also possible, for a small fee.

The temples are about 6km from Bandungan. Take a Sumawono bus (2000Rp) 3km to the turn-off to the temples. Buses also run from Semarang and Ambarawa (4000Rp). The final 3km uphill to Gedung Songo (4000Rp) can be tackled either by foot or *ojek* (10,000Rp).

DEMAK

Demak was the springboard from which Islam made its leap into Java. As the capital of the island's first Islamic state, it was from here that the Hindu Majapahit kingdom was conquered and much of Java's interior was converted.

The town's economic heyday has now passed and even the sea has retreated several kilometres, leaving this former port curiously landlocked. But the role this small town, 25km east of Semarang, once played has not been forgotten, and Demak's **Mesjid Agung** remains one of the archipelago's foremost Muslim pilgrimage sites.

Constructed in 1466, this is Java's oldest mosque. Legend tells how it was built from wood by the *wali songo* in a single night. Four main pillars in the central hall

were originally made by four of the Muslim saints, and one pillar, erected by Sunan Kalijaga, is said to be made from scraps of timber magically fused together.

The history of the mosque is outlined in the small museum (admission by donation; 11 8am-5pm) to the side. Some of the original woodwork, including magnificent carved doors, is on display.

The tombs of Demak's rulers are next to the mosque; the tomb of Raden Trenggono (leader of Demak's greatest military campaigns), however, attracts the most pilgrims. During Grebeg Besar, when various heirlooms are ritually cleansed, thousands of pilgrims visit Demak (the date is different each year; check with the Semarang's Central Java tourist information office, p208).

The mosque is on the main road in the centre of town and through-buses from either Semarang or Kudus (5000Rp) can drop you on the doorstep.

KUDUS

☎ 0291

Kudus takes its name from the Arabic word *al-Quds* (holy) – it's the only town in Java to have an Arabic name – and was founded by the Muslim saint Sunan Kudus. It is therefore an important pilgrimage site but, like much of Java, retains links with its Hindu past and the slaughter of cows is still forbidden within the town.

The town itself, however, holds little charm for passing tourists, unless they're huge fans of Indonesia's famous *kretek*. This is where the first cigarettes were produced, and today Kudus is still a stronghold of *kretek* production.

Information

For money, try either the **BII bank** (Bank Internasional Indonesia; Jl Dr Lukmonohadi), which has an ATM, or the **BCA bank** (Bank Central Asia; Jl Dr Ramelan). The **tourist office** (☎ 435958; Komplek Kriday Wisata, Jl Gor Werga Wetan; 11 7am-2pm Mon-Thu, 7-11am Fri, 7am-12.30pm Sat) is in the east of town (look out for the concrete animals), but can't help with much.

Sights

OLD TOWN

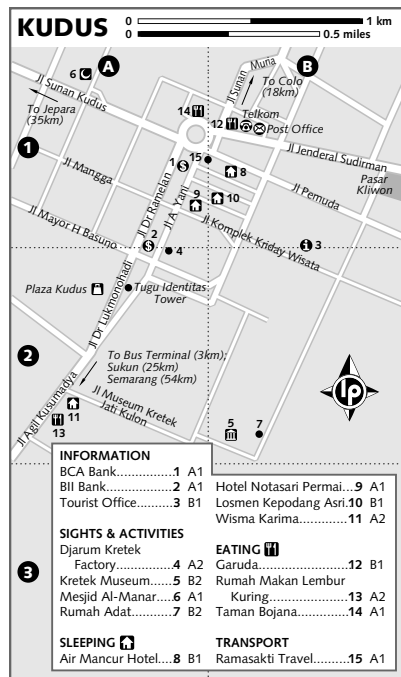
West of the river, **Kauman**, the oldest part of town, has narrow streets and a Middle

Eastern atmosphere. Here you'll find the **Mesjid Al-Manar** (also known as Al-Aqsa); constructed in 1549 by Sunan Kudus, it is famous for its tall red-brick *menara* (minaret), which may have originally been the watchtower of the Hindu temple the mosque is said to be built on.

In the courtyards behind the mosque, the imposing **Tomb of Sunan Kudus** is shrouded with a curtain of lace. The narrow doorway, draped with heavy gold-embroidered curtains, leads through to an inner chamber and the grave. During **Buka Luwur**, held once a year on 10 Muharram of the Islamic calendar, the curtains around the tomb are changed and thousands of pilgrims flock to Kudus for the ceremony.

KRETEK PRODUCTION

Djarum, which started in 1952, is the third-biggest *kretek* producer in Indonesia. It's possible to tour its modern factory (☎ 431901; Jl A Yani 28); tours leave at 9am Monday to Friday and are free of charge. **Sukun**, outside the town, still produces *rokok klobot*, the original *kretek* rolled in corn leaves.



KRETEK CIGARETTES

If Java has a smell, it is the sweet, spicy scent of the clove-flavoured *kretek*. The *kretek* has only been around since the early 20th century, but today the addiction is nationwide and accounts for 90% of the cigarette market, while sales of *rokok putih* (cigarettes without cloves) are languishing. So high is the consumption of cloves used in the *kretek* industry that Indonesia, traditionally a supplier of cloves in world markets, has become a substantial net importer from other world centres.

The invention of the *kretek* is attributed to a Kudus man, Nitisemito, who claimed the cigarettes relieved his asthma. He mixed tobacco with crushed cloves rolled in *rokok klobot* (corn leaves) – this was the prototype for his Bal Tiga brand, which he began selling in 1906.

Kudus became the centre for the *kretek* industry and at one stage the town had more than 200 factories, though today less than 50 cottage industries and a few large factories remain. Rationalisation in the industry has seen *kretek* production dominated by big producers, such as Sampoerna in Surabaya, Gudang Garam in Kediri, and Djarum in Kudus. Nitisemito became a victim of the industry he started and died bankrupt in 1953.

Although filtered *kretek* are produced by modern machinery – Djarum churns out up to 140 million a day – nonfiltered *kretek* are still rolled by hand on simple wooden rolling machines. The best rollers can turn out about 7000 cigarettes in a day.

As to the claim that *kretek* are good for smoker's cough, cloves are a natural anaesthetic and so do have a numbing effect on the throat. Any other claims to aiding health stop there – the tar and nicotine levels in the raw, slowly cured tobaccos are so high that some countries have banned or restricted their import.

Filtered *kretek* now dominate the market. There are now 'mild' versions on offer, but for the *kretek* purist, the conical, crackling, nonfiltered *kretek* has no substitute – the *Dji Sam Soe* ('234') brand is regarded as the Rolls Royce of *kretek*.

The **Kretek Museum** (donations accepted; Jl Museum Kretek Jati Kulon; 11 8am-2pm Sat-Thu) has exhibits of a number of interesting photographs and implements used in *kretek* production, (almost all of the explanations are in Bahasa Indonesia). Next door, **Rumah Adat** is a traditional wooden Kudus house exhibiting the fabulous carving work the town is noted for.

Sleeping

Wisma Karima (☎ 431712; Jl Museum Kretek Jati Kulon 3; r with/without mandi 40,000/32,500Rp, with air-con 85,000Rp; a) Karima is one of the town's better budget options, with well-presented rooms and welcoming owners, although it is near a busy road.

Hotel Notasari Permai (☎ 437245; Jl Kepodang 12; r 100,000Rp, with air-con, TV & minibar from 175,000Rp; a s) Notasari is one step up from most hotels in Kudus; rooms are bright and clean and the entire place exudes a friendly, wholesome feel. It also has a restaurant.

Also recommended:

Air Mancur (☎ 432514; Jl Pemuda 70; r from 50,000Rp) Worn rooms but surprisingly peaceful location given busy Jl Pemuda.

Losmen Kepodang Asri (☎ 433795; Jl Kepodang 17; r 50,000Rp) Central, with newly spruced rooms.

Eating

Local specialities include *soto Kudus* (chicken soup) and *jenang Kudus*, a sweet that's made of glutinous rice, brown sugar and coconut.

Garuda (Jl Jenderal Sudirman 1; mains 20,000-40,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) Near the *alun-alun*, this is the town's swishest Chinese restaurant, with an extensive menu of Asian delights.

Rumah Makan Lembur Kuring (Jl Agil Kusumadya 35; mains 15,000-30,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) Makan Lembur Kuring has all Kudus' restaurants beat for ambience even though it's big and popular. Good Sundanese and Javanese food is served here under a shady pagoda.

The best place for cheap eats and a range of local specialities is **Taman Bojana**, a food-stall complex with more than a dozen stalls downstairs (and every ATM under the sun).

Getting There & Away

Kudus is on the main Semarang to Surabaya road. The bus terminal is about 4km

south of town. City minibuses run from behind the bus terminal to the town centre (2000Rp), or you can take an *ojek* or becak.

Buses go from Kudus to Demak (3000Rp, 30 minutes) and Semarang (6000Rp, one hour), while brown-and-yellow minibuses go to Colo for 8000Rp. Buses to Jepara (10,000Rp, 45 minutes) leave from the Jetak subterminal, 4km west of town (2000Rp by purple minibus).

For minibuses, try Ramasakti Travel (☎ 432153; Jl A Yani 110).

AROUND KUDUS

The small hill resort of Colo, 700m up the slopes of Gunung Muria, is 18km north of Kudus. Colo is famed for its Tomb of Sunan Muria (Raden Umar Said), one of the nine *wali songo* buried here in 1469. (The *wali songo* are the nine holy men who propagated the Islam religion in Java.) Built in the 19th century, the mosque surrounding the tomb is high on a ridge overlooking the plains to the south. Pilgrims pray at the tomb, and during Buka Luwur, held in Colo on 16 Muharram of the Islamic calendar, up to 10,000 pilgrims line the road to the top.

A waterfall, Air Terjun Monthel, is 1.5km away or about a half-hour stroll from the village.

Local artist Mustaqim paints and sculpts out of his Taqim Arts Studio in the village of Kajar, 1km from Colo. Visits can be arranged through the tourist office (p214) in Kudus.

JEPARA

☎ 0291

Famed as the best woodcarving centre in Java, Jepara's expansive furniture business has brought it all the trappings of booming prosperity. It's also as sleepy as an afternoon becak driver and more affluent than many of Java's small towns, making it a tranquil spot to take a break from the road.

If you are just here for the furniture, the road into town passes more woodcarving workshops than you can shake a table-leg at. The best tactic is to keep an eye out for potential bargains on the bus in and go back armed with your wallet, and a mind to haggle, later.

Information

The town's **tourist office** (☎ 591493; Jl AR Hakim 51; 7am-2pm Mon-Thu, 7-11am Fri) is in the western part of town and is not particularly helpful.

Sights

Raden Ajeng Kartini, a 19th-century writer and progressive thinker, was the daughter of the *bupati* (regent) of Jepara. She grew up in the *bupati's* residence, on the east side of the *alun-alun*, and it is sometimes possible to visit Kartini's rooms – if you contact the tourist office first. It was in this residence that Kartini spent her *pingit* ('confinement' in Javanese), when girls from 12 to 16 were kept in virtual imprisonment and forbidden to venture outside the family home. The small **Museum RA Kartini** (admission 1500Rp; 7am-4pm Mon-Sat, 9am-4pm Sun), on the north side of the *alun-alun*, has memorabilia from the family home, and a smattering of folk art.

Heading north from the museum, cross the river and veer left up the hill to the old Dutch Benteng VOC. Over the last 50 years the fort's stonework has been pillaged, but the site has good views across town to the Java Sea. The cemetery nearby has some Dutch graves.

The most popular seaside recreation park is **Pantai Kartini**, 3km west of town. From there you can rent a boat (60,000Rp return) to nearby **Pulau Panjang**, which has excellent white-sand beaches. Café SA (opposite) offers fishing trips to the island as well.

Sleeping

Pondok Wisma Kota Baru (☎ 593356; Pantai Kartini; r with/without air-con 60,000/40,000Rp; a) This small homestay is within eyesight of the ocean at Kartini Beach and offers comfy, spotless rooms with shared *mandis* away from the city.

Hotel Elim (☎ 591406; Jl Dr Soetomo 13-15; r 50,000Rp, with hot water, air-con & TV from 110,000Rp; a) Elim is an attractive option with a good spread of rooms (with shared *mandis*) in better-than-average condition and a pleasant outdoor restaurant.

Kalingga Star (☎ 591054; Jl Dr Soetomo 16; r with air-con 90,000Rp, ste from 135,000Rp; a) A couple of doors down from Hotel Elim, Kalingga Star is a notch up in size, but not looks. Inside, it's all white tiles and plastic flow-

ers; nonetheless the spacious rooms are quite good.

Hotel Jepara Indah (☎ 593548; jeparaindah@hotmail.com; Jl HOS Cokroaminoto 12; r 250,000-360,000Rp; a s) Jepara Indah is the town's most plush residence for visitors; its service and facilities are aimed at the business crowd and rooms are above average.

Eating

All of the hotels in Jepara have decent restaurants.

Café SA (☎ 081 79552266; Pantai Kartini; fish per 100g 4000Rp; 7 lunch & dinner) With the sea splashing at the edge of its individual huts and its seafood as fresh as you can get, SA is ideal for dinner and a few sundowners.

Pondok Rasa (Jl Pahlawan 2; mains 8000-20,000Rp; 7 lunch & dinner) Just across the river from the *alun-alun*, Rasa has a pleasant garden and good Indonesian food served *lesahan* style.

Rumah Makan Citra (cnr Jl Ringn Jaya & Soeprapto; mains around 15,000Rp; 7 lunch & dinner) Close to the tourist office, this is another of Jepara's flashier restaurants and dishes up delicious seafood.

Shopping

Intricately carved *jati* (teak) and mahogany furniture and relief panels are on display at shops and factories all around Jepara. However, the main furniture centre is the village of **Tahunan**, 4km south of Jepara on the road to Kudus, where it's wall-to-wall furniture.

Brightly coloured ikat weavings using motifs from Sumba are sold in Bali, but they are actually crafted in the village of **Torso**, 14km south of Jepara and 2km off the main road. Other original designs are also produced and men instead of women perform the weaving, allowing broader looms to be used. Srikandi Ratu and Lestari Indah are two workshops with fixed-price showrooms.

Pecangaan, 18km south of Jepara, produces rings, bracelets and other jewellery from *monel* (stainless-steel alloy).

Getting There & Around

Frequent buses make the trip from Jepara to Kudus (10,000Rp, 45 minutes) and Semarang (10,000Rp, 1½ hours). A few buses also go to Surabaya, but Kudus has more

connections. Air-con buses to Jakarta cost 80,000Rp.

Becak are cheap and the best way to get around town. From the terminal, about 1km west of the town centre, 5000Rp will get you to anywhere in town.

AROUND JEPARA Mantingan

The mosque and tomb of Ratu Kali Nyamat, the great warrior-queen, are in Mantingan village, 4km south of Jepara. Kali Nyamat twice laid siege to Portugal's Melaka stronghold in the latter part of the 16th century.

The mosque, dating to 1549, was restored some years ago and the tomb lies to the side of it. The mosque is noted for its Hindu-style embellishments and medallions.

Mantingan is easily reached from Jepara. *Angkudes* (minibuses) from the bus terminal can drop you outside the mosque for 2000Rp.

Beaches

Jepara has some pleasant, white-sand beaches. **Pantai Bandengan** (aka Tirta Samudra), 8km northeast of town, is one of the best beaches on the north coast. The main public section can be littered, but a short walk away the sand is clean, the water clear and the swimming safe. To get there from Jepara, take a brown-and-yellow bemo (2000Rp) from Jl Pattimura. On weekdays you may have to charter a whole bemo for around 20,000Rp.

KARIMUNJAWA

☎ 0297

Distant and undeveloped, Karimunjawa consists of 27 islands, scattered 80km north of Semarang. This is one of Java's last forgotten corners and also one of its least-visited treasures.

Relatively difficult to reach and with only limited facilities, the archipelago is still little more than a pinprick on the tourist trail. And yet that is its charm. With brilliant white beaches, iridescent seas and only a trickle of visitors each year, these tiny islands are everything that hectic, crowded Java isn't.

Orientation

The main island, **Pulau Karimunjawa**, is home to most of the islanders and the majority of

the archipelago's facilities. It is also the site of the islands' only real town, Karimunjawa, and, despite widespread mangroves, some reasonable beaches. A small airport is located on adjacent Pulau Kemujan.

Information

The islands don't have a tourist office per se, but a small information booth at the harbour is usually open to greet boats. Pulau Karimunjawa is home to both a telecom and a post office.

Sights & Activities

If you can find one of the rangers, they may be able to organise a hike up Pulau Karimunjawa's 600m peak, Gunung Gendero, but the real attractions lie offshore. The uninhabited islands of Menjangan Besar and Menjangan Kecil both have sweeping white sands, good snorkelling and are within easy reach of Karimunjawa town.

Further out, Pulau Menyawakan is the site of Karimunjawa's only major resort. Pulau Nyamuk, Pulau Parang, Pulau Bengkoang and Pulau Genting are all home to small, traditional communities. The reefs around many of these islands offer good diving and snorkelling, which can be arranged through the Kura Kura Resort on Pulau Menyawakan.

As a marine park, many parts of Karimunjawa are off limits. Pulau Burung and Pulau Geleang are home to nests of sea eagles and are strictly protected.

The islands can experience violent weather in January and February; during this time, flights and boat trips can be badly disrupted.

Sleeping & Eating

The main village of Karimunjawa has a handful of homestays and one *wisma* (guesthouse); the tourist office (p208) in Semarang can supply you with names and contact numbers.

Wisma Wisata (☎ 312118; r 50,000Rp) On the *alun-alun*, Wisata is the pick of the crop of the cheaper accommodation, with beer, clean rooms and a good spot near the harbour.

Prapatan (☎ 312227; Jl Dermaga Baru; r 50,000Rp) Prapatan is a cheerful homestay in Karimunjawa's main village; for an extra 40,000Rp, the host will also provide three meals a day.

Pak Cuming (r 50,000Rp) For something unusual, rent out a room on a fishing platform 1km offshore. You'll have to ask around the village for information, as the owner has no telephone.

Melati Karimunjawa Hotel (☎ 312253; info_wisata@yahoo.com; r with fan/air-con 96,000/272,000Rp; a) Melati is a quite decent hotel near the main town on Pulau Karimunjawa. It is spotless, friendly, surrounded by plenty of greenery and has a good open-air eatery with sea views. It's advisable to book ahead for weekend stays.

Kura Kura Resort (Jepara ☎ 0291-595932; www.kurakuraresort.com; minimum 2 nights from US\$175; a s) Kura Kura is Karimunjawa's only luxury hotel. It's situated on its own private island, with a bar, restaurant, PADI-certified dive and water sports facilities, and about 800m of fine, white sand. Prices are per person per night and include good-quality bungalow accommodation, flights (or speedboat connections) and meals. Hefty supplements are charged if boats or planes from the mainland aren't full (a minimum of three people is needed for planes to take off).

Ibu Joyce (Jl Pattimura) This friendly shop owner speaks English and runs a shop selling food and beer; she will cook meals if asked in advance and is savvy about all things Karimunjawa.

Melati hotel has the best restaurant in town, and Ester's (mains around 20,000Rp; 1 lunch & dinner) on the *alun-alun* has a basic, seafood-oriented menu.

Getting There & Away

At the time of writing, Kura Kura Resort operated the only planes flying into Karimunjawa. Most flights shuttle guests between the resort and Semarang or Yogyakarta, and last-minute deals can be as low as 350,000Rp and 500,000Rp respectively. Four-seater Cessnas can also be chartered.

The *Muria* sails to Karimunjawa (economy/VIP 25,000/40,000Rp, six hours) from Pantai Kartini in Jepara on Wednesday and Saturday at 9am, returning from Karimunjawa on Monday and Thursday at the same time.

The faster *Kartini I* (economy/executive 100,000/130,000Rp, 3½ hours) leaves from Semarang at 9am on Saturday and returns

at 2pm Sunday from Karimunjawa. Tickets can be reserved on ☎ 024-7602952.

From Pulau Karimunjawa, it costs around 300,000Rp to charter a wooden boat for a day trip to the outer islands or 50,000Rp for the short hop to Pulau Menjangan Besar and Kecil.

There are no buses or *angkot* operating on the islands, but *ojek* or mopeds (50,000-70,000Rp per day) can be hired to get around the main island's 22km of roads.

EAST JAVA

The least densely populated of Java's provinces, East Java (Java Timur) is a wild, rolling region with dizzying peaks, smoking volcanoes and unspoiled panoramas. While the regional capital, Surabaya, has all the accoutrements of a booming Indonesian city, including six-lane freeways, multiplexes and a trademark traffic problem, this is Java at its natural, naked best.

For most visitors, this rugged face of East Java is synonymous with the sublime Bromo-Tengger Massif, incorporating the volcanic peaks of Gunung Bromo (2392m) and Gunung Semeru (3676m) – Java's highest mountain. But while these puffing giants are the region's undisputed highlights, this is also the place to leave both the road and the madding crowds far behind and throw yourself right into Java's untamed parts.

Baluran National Park is the most accessible of Java's wildlife reserves, but the southern route through East Java is the most scenic. It is worth making the effort to get to the more remote areas, such as the stunning crater lake of Kawah Ijen and the national parks – Meru Betiri, where there is a protected turtle beach, and Alas Purwo, which is hallowed among surfers for its gigantic reef breaks. Just off the coast near Surabaya in the northeast is the rugged island of Madura, a place where traditions are particularly strong and famous bull races, known as *kerapan sapi*, are staged during August and September.

SURABAYA

☎ 031 / pop 2.6 million

There's no denying that Surabaya is big, noisy, polluted and intimidating. As Indonesia's second-largest city and the home

of the country's navy, Surabaya is a colossal port peppered with cranes, corporate buildings and crowded spaces. Against the calm of rural East Java, it is pandemonium writ large.

But while Surabaya has all the trappings of a modern city, it too has its contrasts. Brightly daubed becak still cut blindly through the waves of Japanese saloon cars, and the claustrophobic streets of the city's old town hum with the sights, sounds and smells of earlier times.

For most foreign visitors, the city is merely a place to change buses or trains for Bali. For locals, however, Surabaya is closely linked to the birth of the Indonesian nation, as it was here that the battle for independence began. To them, Surabaya is Kota Pahlawan (City of Heroes), and statues commemorating independence are scattered all over the city.

Orientation

The centre of the sprawl is the area around Jl Pemuda, which runs west from Gubeng train station, Plaza Surabaya and a number of big hotels and banks. Jl Pemuda runs into Jl Tunjungan/Jl Basuki Rahmat, another main commercial street, where you'll find Tunjungan Plaza.

The old city is centred around Jembatan Merah (Red Bridge) and Kota train station to the north. Further north is Tanjung Perak harbour. Surabaya's zoo is 5km south of the city centre, and the main bus terminal, Purabaya, is just outside the city limits, 10km south.

Information

BOOKSHOPS

Gramedia (1 9am-5pm Mon-Sat) On the 1st floor of Tunjungan Plaza.

CULTURAL CENTRES

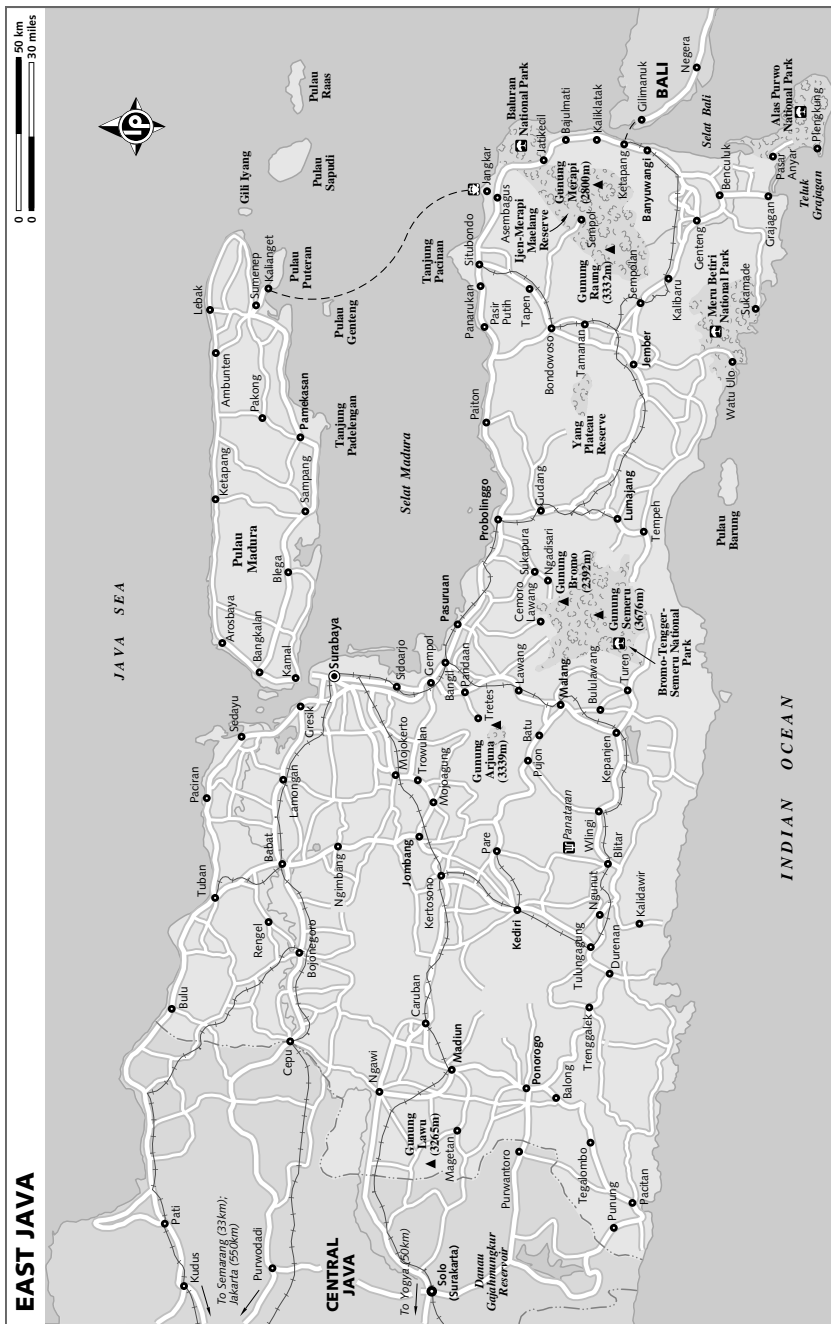
French Cultural Centre (☎ 5678639; Jl Darmokali 10-12; 1 8am-8pm Mon-Fri) At the French consulate.

Goethe Institut (☎ 5343735; Jl Taman Ade Irma Suryani Nasution 15; 1 7.30am-3.30pm Mon-Thu, 7.30-11.30am Fri)

INTERNET ACCESS & TELEPHONE

All the following have internet access and telephone booths.

Transnet (cnr Jl Pemuda & Jl Basuki Rahmat; per hr 6000Rp; 1 24hr)



Wartel (per hr 10,000Rp; 12 24hr) On the 5th floor next to the Tunjungan 21 Cinema in Tunjungan Plaza.

Wasantara-net office (per hr 4000Rp; 12 8am-9pm Mon-Sat, 9am-7pm Sun) Next door to the main post office; can be loud and chaotic.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Rumah Sakit Darmo (96 5676253; Jl Raya Darmo 90) Hospital with English- and Dutch-speaking doctors.

MONEY

Jl Pemuda has plenty of banks with ATMs, as does **Jl Tunjungan**.

BNI Bank (Bank Negara Indonesia; Jl Pemuda) Usually offers good rates.

POST

Main post office (Jl Kebon Rojo; 12 7.30am-7.30pm Mon-Sat) Inconveniently located 4km north of the city centre.

TOURIST INFORMATION

East Java Regional Tourist Office (96 8531822; Jl Wisata Menanggal; 12 7am-2pm Mon-Fri) About 3km south of the centre; has a few brochures on the province.

Surabaya City Tourist Office (96 5617907; Jl Adityawarman 110; 12 7am-2pm Mon-Fri) About 2km south of the centre behind the zoo.

Sights

OLD CITY

Even though much of Surabaya's historical centre is literally falling to pieces, the old city easily wins the 'Most Attractive Neighbourhood' prize. With crumbling Dutch architecture, strong Chinese influences and an Arab quarter, it's also the most interesting and idiosyncratic.

A good place to start exploring the old city is **Jembatan Merah**, the so-called 'Red Bridge' that saw fierce fighting during Indonesia's battle for independence. **Jl Jembatan Merah**, running south of the bus terminal along the canal, is a grungy replica of Amsterdam, but worthy (although rundown) examples of Dutch architecture can be seen here. The area further south around the post office and **Pelni** office also has some fine buildings, though the most impressive is the Indo-European-style **Gedung PTP XXII** government office building, just west of **Jl Jembatan Merah**, along **Jl Merak Cendrawasih**.

To the east of **Jembatan Merah** is Surabaya's **Chinatown**, with hundreds of small businesses and warehouses. **Becak** and hand-

pulled carts are still the best way to transport goods in the crowded, narrow streets. **Pasar Pabean** (Jl Pabean) is a sprawling, darkly lit market, where you can buy everything from Madurese chickens to Chinese crockery.

Further east, near the canal, the stunningly atmospheric **Kong Co Kong Tik Cun Ong temple** (Jl Dukuh) is primarily Buddhist, but has a variety of Confucian and Taoist altars if you can see them through the plumes of incense smoke.

The highlight of a visit to the old city is **Mesjid Ampel** (Jl Ampel Suci), in the heart of the Arab quarter. From the **Kong Co Kong Tik Cun Ong temple**, proceed north along **Jl Nyamplungan** and then take the second left down **Jl Sasak**. A crowd of **becak** marks the way to the mosque. Through the arched stone entrance is **Jl Ampel Suci**, a narrow, covered bazaar with perfumes, sarongs, *peci* (black Muslim felt hats) and other religious paraphernalia for sale. Follow the pilgrims past the beggars to the mosque. This is the most sacred mosque in Surabaya; it was here that **Sunan Ampel**, one of the *wali songo* who brought Islam to Java, was buried in 1481. Pilgrims chant and present rose-petal offerings at the grave behind the mosque.

From the old city you can then head north to the **Kalimas harbour**, where brightly painted *pinisi* from Sulawesi and Kalimantan unload their wares.

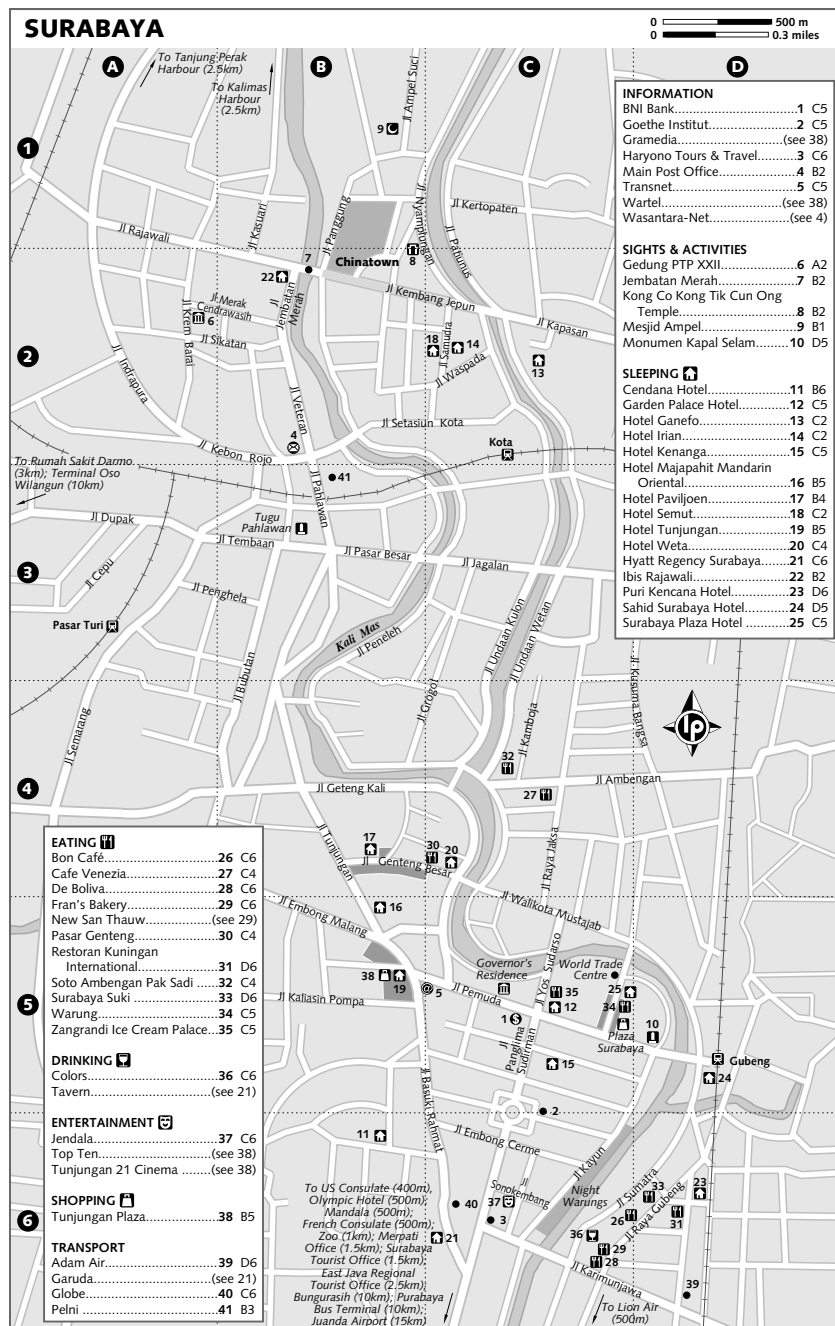
SURABAYA ZOO

South of the city centre, **Surabaya Zoo** (Kebun Binatang; Jl Diponegoro; admission 7500Rp; 12 7am-5pm) has the usual collection of lions, tigers and reptiles, as well as an eccentric concrete statue of a shark tussling with a crocodile, the city's unofficial symbol (*sura* means 'shark' and *baya* means 'crocodile'). The animals look typically nonchalant, but the park is well laid out, with large open enclosures. If you're not planning to visit **Komododo**, the dragons are worth a visit.

Sunday is crowded and entertainment is often featured in the afternoon. Any bus that is heading down **Jl Panglima Sudirman**, such as **P1** (2000Rp), will take you to the zoo; alternatively you can take an **M bemo** (2000Rp).

MONUMEN KAPAL SELAM

In keeping with Indonesia's fascination with all things military, Surabaya's foremost



stretch of renovated, waterside real estate centres around the hulk of the *Pasopati*, a Russian submarine (Jl Pemuda; admission 5000Rp; 9am-9pm) commissioned into the Indonesian navy in 1962. The *Pasopati* itself is well maintained and there is a small landscaped park with a couple of cafés popular with young smoochers.

Sleeping BUDGET

Plenty of cheap hotels can be found near Kota train station. It's an interesting area, but it's a long way from the city centre, so few travellers stay this far north.

Hotel Ganefo (% 3711169; Jl Kapasan 169-171; r with shared/private mandi 65,000/75,000Rp, with air-con 90,000Rp; a) If you love sipping tea and whiling away the day in old-worldly surroundings, then Ganefo may be for you. Its fantastic colonial lobby and terrace are perfect for late-afternoon tea drinking, but the rooms are quite cell-like, with iron beds.

Hotel Paviljoen (% 5343449; Jl Genteng Besar 94; r 66,000Rp, with air-con from 104,000Rp; a) This airy colonial villa has fallen on hard times, but it's still one of the most pleasant budget hotels in town. The helpful managers speak English and Dutch and the elderly owner has read just about any book you can put in front of him. On the downside, the basic rooms are inundated with mosquitoes.

Olympic Hotel (% 5343216; Jl Urip Sumoharjo 65-67; r 70,000Rp, with air-con 85,000Rp, bigger VIP r 98,000Rp; a) South of the city centre, Olympic is reminiscent of a derelict hospital. Inside, however, some of the rooms are surprisingly good. Ask the friendly receptionist for a good look around and ask for a discount.

Puri Kencana Hotel (% 5033161; Jl Kalimantan 9; r from 100,000Rp; a) Puri Kencana is a small, semi-stylish hotel handy to the Gubeng train station, with a range of decent rooms (no hot water though) and friendly staff.

Hotel Semut (% 3524578; Jl Samudra 9-15; d from 145,000Rp; a) With a hint of style and a swathe of Chinese furniture, Semut will appeal to travellers looking for a room with more class than most budget options. Rooms are sizable and face a large veranda around a central quadrangle.

Hotel Kenanga (% 5341359; Jl Embong Kenongo 12; s/d from 150,000/160,000Rp; a) Kenanga may have changed its name, but the hotel itself

has yet to reinvent itself; it occupies a quiet spot just off Jl Pemuda and has highly adequate but bland rooms. Breakfast is not included in the price.

MIDRANGE

Surabaya has a wide selection of midrange accommodation. Competition is fierce, particularly at the higher end.

Cendana Hotel (% 5455101; www.cendanahotel.com; Jl Kombes Pol M Doeryat 6; r from 275,000Rp; a) Cendana is one of the newer hotels in Surabaya and is a good bet. It has well-appointed rooms and is located just far enough away from the city's main streets to offer some respite from the noise.

Hotel Weta (% 5319494; hotelweta@hotmail.com; Jl Genteng Kali 3-11; r from 315,000Rp; a) Weta is arguably the best of Surabaya's midrange options. Its high-rise views overlook the murky Kali Mas River across the city landscape, and rooms are well polished and come with a bathtub for soaking those weary bones.

Garden Palace Hotel (% 5344056; Jl Yos Sudarso 11; s/d from 348,000/363,300Rp plus 21% tax; a) This older four-star hotel sure isn't a palace and there isn't much evidence of a garden, but generous discounts can make this a good buy. It also has a cheaper three-star wing.

Surabaya Plaza Hotel (% 5316833; www.primeplazahotels.com; Jl Pemuda 31-37; r from 375,000Rp; a i) This is one of Surabaya's ritzier establishments and is well located in the thick of things. Rooms range from standard to plush suites.

Ibis Rajawali (% 3539994; cnr Jl Rajawali & Jl Jembatan Merah; r from 380,000Rp; a) Rajawali is a fine choice if you're looking to stay in the north of town. The entire place, from the reception to the rooms, is stylish and businesslike, and discounts are often handed out.

Sahid Surabaya Hotel (% 5031106; sahidsub@telkom.net; Jl Sumatra 1-15; r from 400,000Rp; a) Only a stone's throw from Gubeng train station, Sahid Surabaya is perfect for travellers arriving late into town and looking for a hotel with its fair share of creature comforts. It has also received a number of readers' recommendations.

Hotel Tunjungan (% 5466666; www.tunjungan-hotel.com; Jl Tunjungan 102-104; r from 550,000Rp; a s) From the outside this high-rise three-star hotel doesn't look like it could

make the cut, but inside things are quite different. Rooms are in very good condition and come with all the trimmings, and who can deny the attraction of a rooftop pool and restaurant?

TOP END

Surabaya has a glut of luxury hotels and competition is cut-throat. Most cater to Indonesian business types.

Hyatt Regency Surabaya (☎ 5311234; Jl Basuki Rahmat 124-128; r from US\$70 plus 21% tax; a i) The five-star Hyatt has long been one of Surabaya's plushiest hotels. Discounts are often offered, but prices rise substantially during peak times.

Hotel Majapahit Mandarin Oriental (☎ 545 4333; www.mandarinoriental.com; Jl Tunjungan 65; r from US\$72 plus 21% tax; a s) This superb colonial hotel built in 1910 has all the trimmings of a top-class establishment, and more charm than most. It's easily Surabaya's finest, and is a tranquil spot in such a busy city. Ask for a discount.

Eating

Surabaya has a huge array of eating options which cover all price ranges. For cheap eats, **Pasar Genteng** (Jl Genteng Besar; mains 8000Rp; 11 9am-9pm) has good night warungs. Late-night munchies can be had at the off-shoot of Jl Pemuda, opposite the Plaza Surabaya, which buzzes with food-stall activity around the clock, or the strip of warungs with their backs to the river along Jl Kayun. Try *rawon*, a thick black beef soup Surabaya is famous for. For something more Western, Tunjungan Plaza has a colossal selection of squeaky-clean restaurants and fast-food outlets.

Zangrandi Ice Cream Palace (Jl Yos Sudarso 15; ice cream 2000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) Zangrandi is a well-established parlour favoured by Surabayan 20-somethings. Relax in planters chairs at low tables and try to ignore the traffic noise.

Soto Ambengan Pak Sadi (Jl Ambengan 3A; mains 20,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) If you're looking for chicken dishes, then look no further than Pak Sadi's. But don't overlook the famed lemon grass and coriander Madurese chicken soup, which is sublime.

Cafe Venezia (☎ 5343335; Jl Ambengan 16; mains 30,000-60,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) Venezia is an old-school establishment in a venerable

Dutch villa. The menu is a smorgasbord of tastes, ranging from steaks to Korean barbecue and Japanese dishes. The ice cream is particularly good too.

The area south of Gubeng station, particularly along Jl Raya Gubeng, has some of the city's better restaurants.

New San Thauw (☎ 5035776; Jl Raya Gubeng 64; fish & crab from 9000Rp per 100g; 11 lunch & dinner) San Thauw offers seafood that only comes fresher directly from the sea; walk in the door, choose your meal from the tank and wait patiently for the food to arrive.

De Boliva (☎ 5963202; Jl Raya Gubeng 36; mains 30,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) Housed in a beautifully converted Dutch villa, De Boliva is a stylish restaurant with a menu touching on the four corners of the globe. Don't pass over the excellent sorbet and vitamin-rich smoothies.

Surabaya Suki (☎ 5015979; Jl Raya Gubeng; mains 30,000-100,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) This very popular Chinese restaurant has a vast menu that features excellent but expensive shark soup and abalone. An extensive vegetarian selection is also featured.

Restoran Kuningan International (☎ 5035103; Jl Kalimantan 14; mains 40,000-200,000Rp; 11 dinner) Kuningan is another of Surabaya's top-class restaurants, housed in a converted Dutch villa. The large, mixed menu specialises in seafood, indicated by the huge stained-glass window over the front entrance sporting a gigantic lobster.

Also recommended:

Fran's Bakery (Jl Raya Gubeng 64; cakes 2000-5000Rp; 11 breakfast & lunch) Caketastic for those with a sweet tooth.

Bon Café (Jl Raya Gubeng 46; mains 20,000-40,000Rp; 11 lunch & dinner) Has a big menu of mostly Western dishes and grills.

Drinking

Most of the big hotels have bars that double as nightclubs; Tavern in the Hyatt Regency (left) rates as one of the best with locals. If you're looking for cheap drinks, a chat with Surabayans and some quality live music, don't pass over Colors (opposite).

Entertainment

CULTURAL PERFORMANCES

Jendala (☎ 5314073; Jl Sonokembang 4-6) This restaurant, in a beautiful colonial lodge, has a varied programme of so-called 'culture-

tainment', ranging from theatre to dance to disco.

NIGHTCLUBS

Surabayans love their nightclubs, and pack them out on weekends. **Top Ten** (Tunjungan Plaza; Jl Tunjungan; 11 8pm-3am) is one of the better ones, and can be found in Surabaya's largest shopping centre.

LIVE MUSIC

Colors (☎ 5030562; www.colorspub.com; Jl Sumatra 81; 11 5pm-3am) Colors is a small venue that's big on live music. The bartenders and some locals will treat you like a long-lost cousin, and if you turn up early enough, you may get the chance to perform some karaoke with live backing. Bands play nightly until 2am.

CINEMA

Cinema complexes are found all around the city.

Tunjungan 21 (Tunjungan Plaza, Jl Tunjungan; tickets 17,000-25,000Rp) This large cinema complex shows recent Hollywood releases in English.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Surabaya has a number of international connections, though services are rapidly diminishing. The most-popular flights head to Singapore (US\$220).

Surabaya is an important hub for domestic flights, including those coming from Bandung and Jakarta. Airlines operating out of Surabaya include the following:

Adam Air (☎ 5055111; Jl Biliton 44-46) Has desk at airport as well.

Garuda (☎ 08071-427832 24hr booking line: 546 8505; Hyatt Regency, Jl Basuki Rahmat 124-128) Also offers flights to Singapore.

Lion Air (☎ 503611; Jl Sulawesi 75)

Mandala (☎ 5610777; Jl Raya Diponegoro 91D)

Travel agencies sell domestic tickets at a small discount and international tickets with a bigger cut. See the Java Airfares map (p98) for prices.

Agencies include **Haryono Tours & Travel** (☎ 5325800; Jl Panglima Sudirman 93; 11 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat).

BOAT

Surabaya is an important port and a major transport hub for ships to the other islands.

Boats depart from Tanjung Perak harbour; bus P1 from outside Tunjungan Plaza heads here.

Popular Pelni connections run to Sulawesi, with several ships running direct to Makassar (economy/1st class 161,500/507,000Rp), and Pontianak (195,000Rp to 617,000Rp) in Kalimantan. See the Transport chapter (p872) or head to the Pelni ticket office (☎ 3521044; www.pelni.co.id; Jl Pahlawan 112; 11 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat & Sun) for more information.

Ferries to Kamal on Madura (4000Rp, 30 minutes) leave every half-hour from Tanjung Perak, at the end of Jl Kalimas Baru.

BUS

Most of Surabaya's buses operate from the main Purabaya bus terminal, 10km south of the city centre at Bungurasih. Crowded Damri buses run between the bus terminal and the city centre – the P1 service (2000Rp) from the bus terminal is best and can drop you at the Jl Tunjungan/Jl Pemuda intersection. A metered taxi costs around 30,000Rp. Buses along the north coast to Kudus (normal/patas 25,000/45,000Rp, eight hours) and Semarang (35,000/50,000Rp, nine hours) depart from Terminal Oso Wilangun, 10km west of the city.

Buses from Purabaya head to Malang (9500/15,000Rp, two hours), Probolinggo (12,000/20,000Rp, three hours), Banyuwangi (33,000/50,000Rp, six hours), Solo (28,000/50,000Rp, 6½ hours) and to Yogyakarta (35,000/60,000Rp, eight hours). Buses also operate from Purabaya bus terminal to Madura.

Luxury buses from Purabaya also do the long hauls to Solo, Yogyakarta, Bandung and Denpasar. Most are night buses leaving in the late afternoon/evening. Bookings can be made at Purabaya bus terminal, or travel agencies in the city centre sell tickets with a mark-up. The most convenient bus agents are those on Jl Basuki Rahmat. Intercity buses are not allowed to enter the city, so you will have to go to Purabaya to catch your bus.

MINIBUS

Door-to-door minibuses will collect passengers from their hotels, which saves a slog to the terminal, but they aren't always

quicker because of the time spent driving between pick-ups.

Destinations and sample fares include Malang (40,000Rp), Denpasar (150,000Rp), Solo (65,000Rp), Yogyakarta (75,000Rp) and Semarang (80,000Rp). Hotels can make bookings and arrange pick-up or you can try the agencies along Basuki Rahmat.

TRAIN

From Jakarta, trains taking the fast northern route via Semarang arrive at the Pasar Turi train station southwest of Kota train station. Trains taking the southern route via Yogyakarta, and trains from Banyuwangi and Malang, arrive at Gubeng and most carry on through to Kota. **Gubeng train station** (☎ 5033115) is much more central and sells tickets for all trains.

Most Jakarta-bound trains leave from **Pasar Turi** (☎ 5345014), including the luxury *Argo Anggrek* (from 200,000Rp, nine hours), which leaves at 8.15am and 8.15pm, and the *Gumarang* (business/executive 130,000/180,000Rp, 11 hours), departing at 5.05pm.

From Gubeng, the slower *Bima* (executive 220,000Rp, 13 hours) departs at 4pm for Jakarta via Yogyakarta, and the business *Mutiara Selatan* (120,000Rp, 13 hours) at 4.35pm for Bandung.

The *Sancaka* is the best day train for Yogyakarta, leaving Gubeng at 7.30am and 3pm for Solo (four hours) and Yogyakarta (five hours). It costs 60,000/85,000Rp in business/executive class to either destination. The faster 1.15pm *Sri Tanjung* (21,000Rp, six hours) is a reasonable economy-class service to Yogyakarta's Lempungan train station via Solo, but schedules change regularly.

Apart from services to the main cities, trains leave Gubeng for Malang (6000Rp, two hours) at 4.40am, 8am, 10.45am and 4.20pm and most continue on to Blitar. The *Mutiara Timur* goes to Banyuwangi (business/executive 40,000/55,000Rp, six hours) via Probolinggo at 9.10am and 10.45pm.

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

Taxis from Juanda airport (15km) operate on a coupon system and cost 40,000Rp to the city centre; from the city centre expect to pay around 80,000Rp. The Damri airport

bus (7000Rp) runs infrequently between 8am and 3pm and goes to Purabaya bus terminal and then on to the city centre.

BUS

Surabaya has an extensive Damri city bus network, with normal buses (2000Rp flat rate) and *patas* buses (3000Rp per journey). They can be very crowded, especially the normal buses, and are a hassle if you have luggage.

One of the most useful services is the *patas* P1 bus, which runs from Purabaya bus terminal past the zoo and into the city along Jl Basuki Rahmat. It then turns down Jl Bubutan and continues on to the Tanjung Perak harbour. In the reverse direction, catch it on Jl Tunjungan. The normal buses also cover the same route.

Surabaya also has plenty of bemo labelled A, B and so on, and all charge 2000Rp, depending on the length of the journey. Bemo M runs to the zoo.

TAXI

Surabaya has air-con metered taxis charging 4000Rp for the first kilometre and 2500Rp for subsequent kilometres. Reliable **Bluebird taxis** (☎ 3721234) can be called in advance.

Cars with drivers can be hired from **Globe** (☎ 5481111; Jl Basuki Rahmat 147), or ask in your hotel. Rates start at 400,000Rp per day plus petrol.

TROWULAN

Trowulan was once the capital of the largest Hindu empire in Indonesian history. Founded by Singosari prince Wijaya in 1294, it reached the height of its power under Hayam Wuruk (1350–89), who was guided by his powerful prime minister, Gajah Mada. During this time Majapahit received tribute from most of the regions encompassing present-day Indonesia and even parts of the Malay Peninsula.

Its wealth was based on its control of the spice trade and the fertile rice-growing plains of Java. The religion was a hybrid of Hinduism – with worship of the deities Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma – and Buddhism, but Islam was tolerated, and Koranic burial inscriptions found on the site suggest that Javanese Muslims resided within the royal court. The empire came to a catastrophic end in 1478 when the city fell to the north-

coast power of Demak, forcing the Majapahit elite to flee to Bali and opening Java up to the Muslim conquest.

The remains of the court are scattered over a large area around the village of Trowulan, 12km from Mojokerto. The Majapahit temples were mainly built from red clay bricks that quickly crumbled. Many have been rebuilt and are relatively simple compared to the glories of structures such as Borobudur, but they do give a good idea of what was once a great city. It's possible to walk around the sites in one day, or you can hire a becak. Given the heat and the fact that the temples are spread over a large area, a car is ideal.

One kilometre from the main Surabaya–Solo road, the **Trowulan Museum** (admission 2000Rp; 11 7am–3.30pm Tue–Sun) houses superb examples of Majapahit sculpture and pottery from East Java. Pride of place is held by the splendid statue of Kediri's King Airlangga-as-Vishnu astride a huge Garuda, taken from Belahan. It should be your first port of call for an understanding of Trowulan and Majapahit history, and it includes descriptions of the other ancient ruins in East Java.

Some of the most interesting ruins include the **Kolam Segaran** (a vast Majapahit swimming pool); the gateway of **Bajang Ratu**, with its strikingly sculptured *kala* heads; the **Tikus Temple** (Queen's Bath); and the 13.7m-high **Wringinlawang Gate**. The **Pendopo Agung** is an open-air pavilion built by the Indonesian army. Two kilometres south of the pavilion, the **Troloyo cemetery** is the site of the oldest Muslim graves found in Java, the earliest dating from AD 1376.

Getting There & Away

Trowulan can be visited as a day trip from Surabaya, 60km to the northeast.

From Surabaya's Purabaya bus terminal take a Jombang bus (6000Rp, one hour), which can drop you at the turn-off to the museum; a becak tour of the sites will cost around 50,000Rp with bargaining.

PULAU MADURA

pop 3 million

Separated from Surabaya by a narrow channel, the island of Madura is a flat, rugged expanse of land with few hills and fewer visitors. It is famous for its colourful bull

races, *kerapan sapi*, and its virility drink, *jamu madura*, a spicy concoction meant to put fire in men's veins. It also has several historical sites, some passable beaches and an unwavering traditional culture.

Madurese men claim that the name Madura is derived from *madu* (honey) and *dara* (girl), and Madurese women are, so the story goes, known throughout Java for their sexual prowess. Madura is, however, a very traditional and devoutly Islamic society. The sarong and *peci* are still the norm – mall fever has not found its way to Madura. In general, the Madurese are rugged *kasar* people according to the Javanese, and are said to be adept at wielding knives when disputes arise. While the Madurese can be disconcertingly blunt at times, and in remote areas you may attract a crowd of curious onlookers, they can also be extremely hospitable.

The island is about 160km long by 35km wide. Its southern side is lined with shallow beaches and cultivated lowland, while the northern coast alternates between rocky cliffs and great rolling sand-dune beaches, the best of which is at Lombang. At the extreme east is a tidal marsh and vast tracts of salt around Kalianget. The interior is riddled with limestone slopes, and is either rocky or sandy, so agriculture is limited.

HISTORY

In 1624 the island was conquered by Sultan Agung of Mataram and its government united under one Madurese princely line, the Cakraningrats. Until the middle of the 18th century the Cakraningrat family fiercely opposed Central Javanese rule and harassed Mataram, often conquering large parts of the kingdom. The famous Prince Raden Trunojoyo even managed to carry off the royal treasury of Mataram in 1677, which was restored only after the Dutch intervened and stormed Trunojoyo's stronghold at Kediri.

By the beginning of the 1700s, however, the Dutch had secured control of the eastern half of Madura. The Cakraningrats then agreed to help the Dutch put down the rebellion in Central Java that broke out after the Chinese massacre in 1740, but in the end fared little better than their Javanese counterparts. Although Cakraningrat IV attempted to contest the issue, a treaty was

eventually signed in 1743 in which Pakubuwono II ceded full sovereignty of Madura to the Dutch. Cakraningrat fled to Banjarmasin and took refuge on an English ship, but was robbed, betrayed by the sultan and finally captured by the Dutch and exiled to the Cape of Good Hope (South Africa).

Under the Dutch, Madura continued as four states, each with its own regent. Madura was initially important as a major source of colonial troops, but in the second half of the 19th century it acquired greater economic value as the main supplier of salt to Dutch-governed areas of the archipelago.

South Coast

The first port of call for most visitors is Kamal, a scruffy town of little importance to sightseers. Many head directly to Bangkalan, the next town north of Kamal, to watch the bull races. If you've time to kill before a race, **Museum Cakraningrat** (h 8am-2pm Mon-Sat) will entertain you for an hour or so with displays on Madurese history and culture.

Sampang, 61km from Bangkalan, also stages bull races and is the centre of the regency of the same name. **Camplong**, 9km further east, is a safe and popular, if grungy,

swimming beach on the south coast. The Pertamina storage tanks nearby do nothing for its visual appeal, but it is a breezy oasis from the hot interior of Madura.

About another 15km further east is the pleasant (for Madura) town of Pamekasan, the island's capital. Bull races are held in and around Pamekasan every Sunday from the end of July until early October; during October each year it throbs with the festivities of the **Kerapan Sapi Grand Final**. The **BCA bank** (Bank Central Asia; Jl Jokotole; h 9am-2pm Mon-Fri), just east of the *alun-alun*, changes money and allows cash advances on credit cards.

About 35km east of Pamekasan, before Bluto, is **Karduluk**, a woodcarving centre.

SLEEPING

Bangkalan has a couple of hotels. **Hotel Ningrat** (% 031-3095388; Jl Kahaji Muhammed Kholil 113; s/d 50,000/60,000Rp, r 100,000Rp, with air-con 180,000Rp; a), on the main road south of town, is one of the island's best hotels – though that's not saying much. All in all, its rooms are comfortable but small, with the bigger air-con variety decorated in traditional Madurese style. Closer to the town centre is the very basic **Hotel Melati** (% 031-3096457; Jl

Majen Sungkono 48; r from 20,000Rp); it's back from the street down an alleyway.

In Camplong, the imaginatively named **Hotel Camplong** (% 0323-321568; r 110,000Rp) is a reasonable place to bed down for the night.

In the island's capital, try either **Hotel Trunojoyo** (% 0324-322181; Jl Trunojoyo 48; r with/without mandi 55,000/25,000Rp, with air-con 65,000Rp; a), near Hotel Garuda on the road to Bangkalan, which is equipped with clean and quiet rooms, or **Hotel Ramayana** (% 0324-324575; Jl Niaga 55; r with fan from 40,000Rp, with air-con from 80,000Rp; a), which is slightly better, with reasonably bright, comfortable rooms.

Sumenep

% 0328

Compared with the rest of rugged Madura, Sumenep, in the far east of the island, is a sleepy, refined town, with a Mediterranean air and quiet lazy streets. The goats and belching pick-ups that clog the streets of the island's other main communities are a rarity here and by mid-afternoon the whole town seems to settle into a slow, collective siesta. With dozens of crumbling villas and a fine *kraton* and mosque, it is easily Madura's most interesting town.

INFORMATION

It's taken a while, but finally Madura has a **tourist office** (% 667148; Jl Sutomo 5; h 7am-3pm Tue-Sat), which has information on both Sumenep and the island.

Sumenep's post office is on the road to Kalianget, and the Telkom office is further out past the Chinese temple. Both the **BCA bank** (Bank Central Asia; Jl Trunojoyo; h 9am-2pm Mon-Fri) and **BNI bank** (Bank Negara Indonesia; Jl Trunojoyo; h 9am-2pm Mon-Fri) change cash at poor rates.

Wahana Computers (Jl Dr Cipto 3; h 8am-midnight) has internet access costing 6000Rp per hour.

SIGHTS

Occupied by the present *bupati* of Sumenep, the *kraton* and its *taman sari* (pleasure garden; admission included in carriage-house museum entry; h 7am-5pm) were built in 1750 by Panembahan Sumolo, son of Queen Raden Ayu Tirtonegoro and her spouse, Bendoro Saud. The architect is said to have been the grandson of one of the first Chinese to

settle in Sumenep after the Chinese massacre in Batavia. Part of the *kraton* building is a small museum with an interesting collection of royal possessions, including Madurese furniture, stone sculptures and *binggel* (heavy silver anklets worn by Madurese women). The complex can only be visited on a guided tour arranged at the royal carriage-house museum.

Opposite the *kraton*, the **royal carriage-house museum** (admission 1000Rp; h 7am-5pm) contains the throne of Queen Tirtonegoro and a Chinese-style bed reputedly 300 years old. On the first Sunday of the month, traditional dance or gamelan practice (admission free; h 10am-1pm) is held at the *kraton*.

Sumenep's 18th-century **Mesjid Jamik** is notable for its three-tiered Meru-style roof, Chinese porcelain tiles and ceramics. Sumenep also has a Chinese temple.

The tombs of the royal family are at the **Asta Tinggi cemetery**, which looks out over the town from a peaceful hilltop 2km away. The main royal tombs are decorated with carved and painted panels; two depict dragons said to represent the colonial invasion of Sumenep. The biggest mausoleum is that of Panembahan Notokusomo (1762–1811), but it is the grave of Tirtonegoro that attracts pilgrims from all over Madura and Java. One of the small pavilions in the outer courtyard still bears the mark of an assassin's sword from an unsuccessful attempt to murder Bendoro Saud.

Sumenep is a centre for champion bull-breeding, and on most Saturday mornings practice bull races can be seen at the Giling stadium.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The **Festival of Sumenep** is usually celebrated biannually on 31 October and marks the founding of the town, with a programme of cultural performances.

SLEEPING & EATING

Hotel Wijaya II (% 662532; Jl KH Wahid Hasyim 3; r with fan/air-con from 20,000/70,000Rp; a) This is the sister of Wijaya I; rooms are darker and scruffier, but it is a quieter spot to bed down for the night.

Hotel Wijaya I (% 662433; Jl Trunojoyo 45-47; r with/without air-con from 65,000/25,000Rp; a) Hotel Wijaya I is probably the best of a bunch of bad budget places, with a range of reasonably

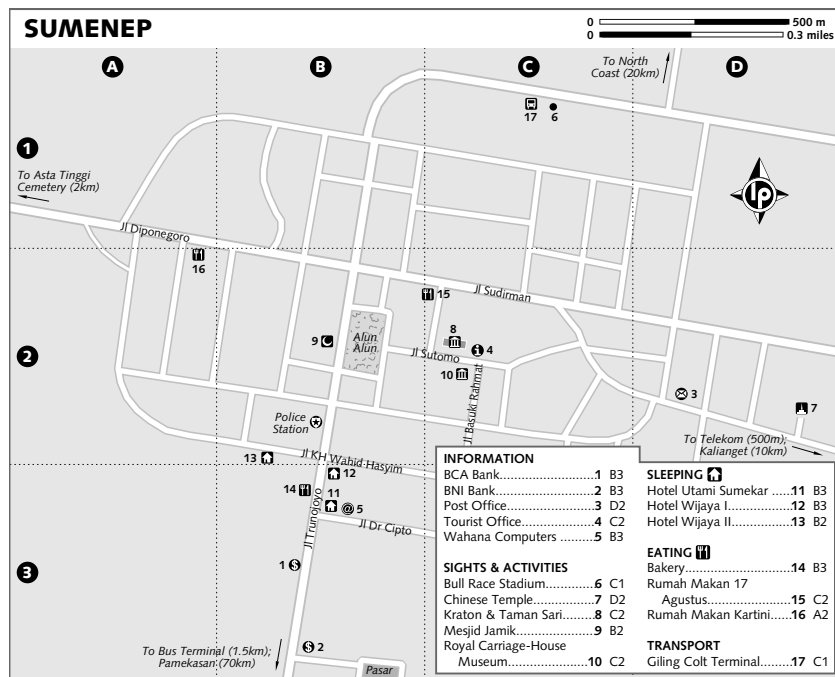
A BULL RACE AT PACE

In Madurese folklore, the tradition of *kerapan sapi* (bull racing) began long ago when plough teams raced each other across the arid fields. This pastime was encouraged by Panembahan Sumolo, an early king of Sumenep. Today, with stud-bull breeding big business on Madura, *kerapan sapi* are an incentive for the Madurese to breed good stock. Only bulls of a high standard can be entered for important races – the Madurese keep their young bulls in superb condition, dosing them with an assortment of medicinal herbs, honey, beer and raw eggs.

Traditional races are run in bull-racing stadiums all over Madura. Practice trials are held throughout the year, but the main season starts in late August and September, when contests are held at district and regency levels. The finest bulls fight it out for the big prize in October at the grand final in Pamekasan, the island's capital.

This is the biggest and most colourful festival and as many as 100 bulls, wearing richly decorated halters, ribbons and flowers, are paraded through town to a loud fanfare. For each race, two pairs of bulls, stripped of their finery, are matched, with their 'jockeys' perched behind on wooden sleds. Gamelan music is played to excite the bulls and then, after being fed a generous tot of *arak*, they're released and charge flat out down the track – just as often plunging straight into the crowd. The race is over in a flash – the best time recorded so far is nine seconds over 100m. After the elimination heats the victors get to spend the rest of the year as studs.

Pamekasan is the main centre for bull racing but Bangkalan, Sampang, Sumenep and some of the surrounding villages also host races. The East Java Calendar of Events, available from tourist offices in Surabaya (p221), has a general schedule for the main races, but if you are on Madura over a weekend during the main season, you can be guaranteed that races or practices will be held somewhere on the island.



clean but bland rooms. There is a restaurant on site, which is open for dinner, as well as a wotel.

Hotel Utami Sumekar (% 672221; Jl Trunojoyo 53; s/d 100,000/120,000Rp, ste from 145,000Rp; a) This huge, rambling place is a bit down at heel and has characterless rooms, but at least the beds are good and firm, and you won't be disturbed by neighbours.

Decent but simple restaurants around town include **Rumah Makan Kartini** (Jl Diponegoro 83; mains around 8000Rp; h lunch & dinner) and **Rumah Makan 17 Agustus** (Jl Sudirman 34; mains 8000Rp; h lunch & dinner); don't expect much and you'll be satisfied.

There are good day and night markets down a lane next to the BNI bank, and a **bakery** (Jl Trunojoyo; pastries 2000Rp; h lunch & dinner) opposite Hotel Wijaya I.

SHOPPING

The main business in town is antiques, but the best antiques are carted off by the truckload to Bali and Jakarta. Every second house seems to have something for sale. Sumenep is a centre for batik on Madura,

though Madurese batik isn't as fine as that in Java.

Rachma Batik (Pasar; h 9am-5pm Mon-Fri) For batik, try this place in the market.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

The main Sumenep bus terminal is on the southern outskirts of the town, a 5000Rp becak ride from the centre. Buses leave from here roughly every 1½ hours until evening for Surabaya's Purabaya bus terminal (35,000Rp, four hours), and there are also direct buses to Banyuwangi, Malang, Semarang, Jakarta and Denpasar. Bus agents along Jl Trunojoyo sell tickets.

The Giling bus terminal for Colts to the north is right near the stadium, 1.5km from the market, or around 5000Rp by becak. From Giling, Colts go to Lombang, Slopeng, Ambunten and other north-coast destinations.

Around Sumenep

From Sumenep, the road to Kalianget, 10km southeast, passes many fine villas with façades of heavy, white columns under

overhanging red-tiled roofs. Kalianget is a centre for salt production, and from here you can take boats to the other islands of the Sumenep district.

You can go snorkelling at Pulau Talango, just offshore. The larger islands include Sapudi, Rass and Kangean, well to the east.

North Coast

Fishing villages and their brightly painted *perahu* (boats) dot the north coast. The coast is lined with sandy beaches, but few are particularly wonderful.

Near Arosbaya, 27km north of Kamal, the tombs of the Cakraningrat royalty are at **Air Mata** (Tears) cemetery, superbly situated on the edge of a small ravine. The ornately carved *gunungan* (wayang mountain motif) headstone on the grave of Ratu Ibu, consort of Cakraningrat I, is the most impressive and is on the highest terrace. The turn-off to Air Mata is just before Arosbaya. From the coast road it's a 4km walk inland.

The village of **Tanjungbumi** is situated on the northwest coast of Madura, about 60km from Kamal. Although primarily a fishing village, it is also a manufacturing centre for traditional Madurese batik and *perahu*.

Pasongsongan is a fishing village on the beach, where it may be possible to stay with villagers. Further east, **Ambunten** is the largest village on the north coast and has a bustling market. Just over the bridge, you can walk along the picturesque river, which is lined with *perahu*, and through the fishing village to the beach.

Just outside Ambunten to the east, **Slopeng** has a wide beach with sand dunes, coconut palms and usually calm water for swimming, but it is not always clean. Men fish the shallower water with large cantilevered hand nets, which are rarely seen elsewhere in Java.

Slopeng is also known for its *topeng* making and its beach is best visited on a day trip from Sumenep, only 20km away.

Pantai Lombang, 30km northeast of Sumenep, is touted as the best beach on Madura. It has a wide stretch of sand but little else.

Getting There & Away

Ferries sail to Kamal (4000Rp, 30 minutes), the port town on the western tip of

Madura, roughly every half-hour around the clock from Surabaya's Tanjung Perak harbour. Buses go directly from Surabaya's Purabaya bus terminal via the ferry right to Sumenep (normal/patas 25,000/35,000Rp, four hours) almost every 1½ hours; alternatively, catch them at the harbour. Buses run right across to Sumenep (passing through Surabaya on their way) from Banyuwangi (via Probolinggo), Denpasar (also via Probolinggo), Malang, Semarang and Jakarta.

Another possibility, if you are coming from the east, is to take the passenger and car ferry (% 0328-663054) from Jangkar harbour (near Asembagus) to Kalianget (31,800Rp, five hours) on the eastern tip of Madura. The ferry departs Jangkar at 8am and 2pm daily but schedules change regularly, so it's a good idea to phone ahead. Buses run from Situbondo to Jangkar, or you can take a bus to Asembagus, then a becak or *andong* for the 4.5km trip to Jangkar. From Kalianget, the ferry departs Kalianget at 8am and 2pm daily. Colt 'O' (2000Rp, 20 to 30 minutes) travels between Kalianget and Sumenep.

Getting Around

On arrival by ferry from Surabaya in Kamal, it's possible to pick up a Colt to Terminal Baru on the southern outskirts of Bangkalan. From here, Colts run along the main highway to Bangkalan (2000Rp, 30 minutes), Pamekasan (10,000Rp, 2½ hours) and Sumenep (20,000Rp, four hours). If heading straight to Sumenep, try to get on a bus at Tanjung Perak in Surabaya. Colts are much more frequent than buses and run all over the island, but can spend a lot of time picking up passengers. Colts travel along the northern route to Arosbaya, Tanjungbumi, Pasongsongan and Ambunten.

To see something of the island, it's interesting to take a Colt from Pamekasan inland through tobacco country to Waru, and then another on to Pasongsongan, from where you can head back to Sumenep via Ambunten and Slopeng.

Madura's roads are almost all paved and in excellent condition, with relatively little traffic. As the island is mostly flat, Madura is a good cycling destination, although it does get very hot.

MALANG

☎ 0341 / pop 710,000

With leafy, colonial-era boulevards and a breezy climate, Malang moves at a far more leisurely pace than the regional capital, Surabaya, sprawling over the hilltops with the airs and graces of an overgrown market town.

Established by the Dutch in the closing decades of the 18th century, Malang earned its first fortunes from coffee, which flourished on the surrounding hillsides. Today, the city's colonial grandeur is quickly disappearing behind the homogenous façades of more modern developments, but the streets of the Tugu area still have a rare and intriguing serenity.

The main attractions lie outside the city, but much of Malang's charm can be discovered by leaving your map in the hotel and simply setting off into the suburbs.

Orientation

City life – both during the day and at night – revolves around the *alun-alun* and the busy streets flowing into Jl Agus Salim and Pasar Besar near the central market. This is where you'll find the main shopping plazas, restaurants, cinemas and many of Malang's hotels. Banks and the Telkom office are northwest of the *alun-alun* along Jl Basuki Rahmat. Malang's best restaurants are in the west of the city, a becak ride from the centre, and for more historical wanderings, start with the circular Jl Tugu.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

Prima Warung Internet (Jl Basuki Rahmat 33; per hr 4500Rp; h 24hr) Fastest internet connection in town, which is why there are often queues.

Warposnet (Jl Kauman Merdeka; per hr 3500Rp; h 7am-11pm) Next to the post office.

MONEY

Malang has plenty of banks, with ATMs and moneychangers. Compare the BNI and BII banks on Jl Basuki Rahmat for the best rates, or try **Lippo Bank** opposite the *alun-alun*.

POST & TELEPHONE

Main post office (Jl Kauman Merdeka; h 8am-7.30pm Mon-Sat) Opposite the *alun-alun*.

Telkom office (Jl Basuki Rahmat; h 24hr) Has a Home Country Direct phone.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Gunung Bromo National Park head office

(☎ 490885; tn-bromoru@malang.wasantaranet.id; Jl Raden Intan 6; h 7.30am-3pm Mon-Thu, 7.30-11am Fri) Brochures and information on Bromo.

Tourist Information box (☎ 323966; Jl Majapahit; h 8am-5pm) Has a tiny amount of information on the town and its surrounds; long opening hours but rarely occupied.

Tourist Information Office (☎ 562680; Jl Gede 6) More helpful, but 3km northwest of the *alun-alun*. Closed for renovation at the time of writing.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Sunrise Holiday (☎ 359070; www.sunriseholiday.com; Jl Majapahit 1K; h 8am-8pm) Knowledgeable agent offering tourist information and tours. Dutch- and English-speaking guides; has a branch at the Toko Oen restaurant (p234).

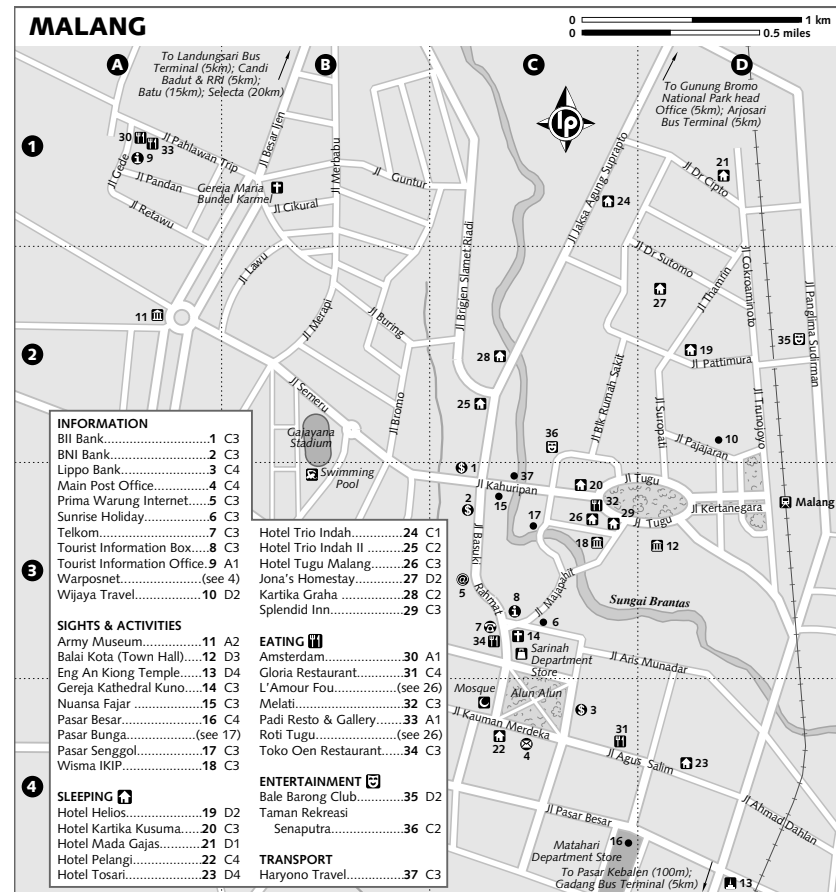
Wijaya Travel (☎ 327072; Jl Pajajaran 7; h 8am-5pm) Can arrange minibus pick-ups from hotels.

Sights & Activities

The city is noted for its colonial architecture. The **Balai Kota** (Town Hall; Jl Tugu Circle) is a sprawling Dutch administrative building, and nearby are some former old mansions, such as the **Splendid Inn** and the **Wisma IKIP** next door on Jl Majapahit. Near the *alun-alun*, the **Gereja Cathedral Kuno** is the old Dutch Reform Church. To the north of town, **Jl Besar Ijen** is Malang's millionaire's row. Most of the large houses date from the colonial era, but many have been substantially renovated, losing architectural detail in the process.

On the northwestern outskirts of town, **Candi Badut** is a small Shivaite temple dating from the 8th century. West of town, the modern **Army Museum** (Jl Besar Ijen; admission 1500Rp; h 8am-3pm Mon-Thu, 8-11am Fri, 8am-1pm Sat & Sun) is devoted to Malang's **Brawijaya** Division.

Malang has some good markets. The huge central market, the **Pasar Besar** (Jl Pasar Besar; h 9am-5pm), is always worth browsing in. The flower market, **Pasar Bunga** (h 7am-5pm), has a pleasant aspect down by the river, and it is the place to stroll in the morning. The most intriguing market, though, is **Pasar Senggol** (h 7am-5pm), Malang's bird market, which also sells snakes and fish. **Pasar Kebalen**, near the **Eng An Kiong** Chinese temple, is the most active market in



the evenings, open until around 9pm most nights.

A great way to combine relaxation for yourself and support for the local community is a visit to **Nuansa Fajar** (☎ 324482; Jl Kahuripan 114; massage per hr 17,000Rp, house calls per hr 24,000Rp), an outfit training and employing blind masseurs from all over the country. The beds are set up at the back of a small restaurant and while the surroundings aren't the most tranquil, the masseurs are skilled and it's for a good cause.

Tours

A number of operators offer tours to southern beaches (from 300,000Rp per person, minimum of two), Batu (200,000Rp) and Bromo

(via Tosari for about 375,000Rp). The following can all also arrange car hire with driver from about 350,000Rp to 400,000Rp per day, or scooter and driver from 85,000Rp.

Hotel Helios (☎ 362741; Jl Pattimura 37) Well-known operator (the staff speak Dutch as well as English); works in tandem with Sunrise Holiday.

Jona's Homestay (☎ 324678; Jl Sutomo 4) Anna is the helpful English-speaking owner of this place; will only rent scooters to people overnighing at the homestay.

Sunrise Holiday (☎ 359070; www.sunriseholiday.com; Jl Majapahit 1K; h 8am-8pm) Also rents scooters.

Sleeping

BUDGET

Hotel Tosari (☎ 326945; Jl Ahmad Dahlan 31; r 30,000Rp, with mandi/air-con 45,000/155,000Rp; a) **Tosari** is

only a 10-minute stroll from the *alun-alun* and is on a street that's fairly quiet given that it's so central. Upstairs rooms are far superior to their downstairs cousins.

Jona's Homestay (☎ 324678; Jl Sutomo 4; r with shared mandi 60,000Rp) This homely option is housed in a colonial villa and has basic yet comfy rooms. The owner, Anna, speaks English and is a great source of information. Her weekly dance practices can get noisy, but there's generally a troop of hangers-on during the evenings, so you'll never be short of company.

Hotel Helios (☎ 362741; Jl Pattimura 37; r with/without mandi 70,000/45,000Rp) Helios is something of a travellers Mecca, with clean, comfortable rooms overlooking the garden. Good travel information, bus bookings and tours are available, but staff can at times be a little grumpy.

Splendid Inn (☎ 366860; splendid.inn@plasa.com; Jl Majapahit 2-4; r 120,000-160,000Rp; a s) Housed in a fading Dutch villa, Splendid Inn isn't quite so splendid today, but its eccentric latter-day interior still has more than a flick of charm. It has worn but huge, well-equipped rooms, billiards and a good restaurant and bar.

Hotel Kartika Kusuma (☎ 352266; Jl Kahuripan 12; r with/without air-con & hot water 145,000/120,000Rp; a) This tidy little hotel has a range of well-kept rooms around a peaceful courtyard garden. Some rooms are a little dark, but at least the light bulbs are stronger than 10 watts. Ask for a discount.

MIDRANGE

Hotel Trio Indah II (☎ 359083; Jl Brigjen Slamet Riadi 1-3; r 215,000-380,000Rp; a i) This newly built hotel has small but comfy rooms and eager-to-please staff. It shares a busy corner with McDonald's, so ask for a room at the back.

Trio Indah (☎ 341661; Jl Jaksa Agung Suprpto 18-20; r from 250,000Rp) Not as good as its number II, Trio Indah is still a fine bet, with large, if bland, rooms and discounts available.

Kartika Graha (☎ 361900; Jl Jaksa Agung Suprpto 17; r from 285,000Rp; a s) Kartika Graha is a modern hotel with pleasant rooms and bars, restaurants and karaoke lounges aplenty. Sadly, there doesn't seem to be anyone about to fill them.

Hotel Pelangi (☎ 365156; www.hotelpelangi.com; Jl Kauman Merdeka 3; r from 286,000Rp) With a su-

premely central location, newly renovated rooms and a restaurant with some standing in Malang, Pelangi is a top midrange choice. However, some may find the room colour scheme rather garish.

Hotel Mada Gajas (☎ 358785; Jl Dr Cipto 17; r from 670,000Rp; a) Don't be put off by the fantastically garish façade of this tall, thin, new hotel (it's modelled on Roman architecture we're told, but looks more like something from Narnia). Rooms are in superb condition, and look as though they've never been used. Ask for a discount, which could be as much as 50%.

TOP END

Hotel Tugu Malang (☎ 363891; www.tuguhotels.com; Jl Tugu 3; r from US\$105, ste from US\$140 plus 21% tax; a s) Though neither large nor lavishly appointed, Tugu Malang is one of Java's finest. Each room is individually decorated and simply oozes style (as does the entire hotel); it's worth the extra for the suites, which are all furnished in different Asian antique designs. Tugu has a couple of quality restaurants attached and very favourable exchange rates are offered if you ask for prices in rupiah.

Eating

Malang has some top-notch eateries, but they're scattered throughout the city. For cheap eats, the big shopping centres have a variety of places to eat, or head for Jl Agus Salim, which comes alive at night to the sights and smells of Malang's night food market. Local specialities, such as *nasi rawon* (beef soup served with rice), are always worth a try.

Roti Tugu (Jl Tugu 3; cakes around 2000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) Sublime pastries, along with an assortment of cookies, drinks and fruits, can be picked up from the bakery of the Tugu Hotel.

Gloria Restaurant (Jl Agus Salim 23; mains 10,000-30,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Gloria is your quintessential Chinese restaurant, with a huge array of Chinese cuisine served in stripped-back yet clean surrounds. The staff are friendly and keen to practise their English.

Toko Oen (Jl Basuki Rahmat; mains 20,000-40,000Rp; h breakfast, lunch & dinner) Opposite the Sari-nah department store is this anachronism from colonial days, with tea tables and cane

chairs. These days, the ambience is more English seaside than imperial grandeur, but the Western and Indonesian food is reasonably good and it is an inviting place to kick back with a beer or an ice cream. There's also tourist information available and a small selection of English books and maps for sale.

Melati (☎ 363891; Jl Tugu 3; mains 30,000-160,000Rp; h 24hr) Melati is Hotel Tugu Malang's smaller restaurant, but it by no means takes second place in the restaurant race. Set beside the hotel's pool and lit by an army of candles, it exudes plenty of romantic charm and has an inviting mix of Western, Indonesian and Malang cuisine. The service, which is close to impeccable, is an added bonus.

L'Amour Fou (☎ 363891; Jl Tugu 3; mains 40,000-120,000Rp; h dinner) This eccentric, eclectic and extravagant restaurant is not only a dining option but an attraction in its own right. Almost everything inside L'Amour Fou touches on *love*, from the heart-shaped pizzas to the labyrinth of lovers' nooks and secret balconies. The menu is a heady mix of Indonesian and Western delights and the wine selection is extensive; the only drawback is the loud cover band, which you'll have to shout over to be heard.

Padi Resto & Gallery (Jl Pahlawan Trip 19; mains 50,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) Padi is at the cutting edge of Malang's cuisine scene, with live music, a chic garden setting and plenty of starched linen and gleaming glassware. Pick from a menu of tip-top steaks and fish specials before tucking into the stunning puds. Even the toilets are chic.

Amsterdam (☎ 326536; Jl Pahlawan Trip 25; mains 50,000Rp; h lunch & dinner) A couple of doors down from Padi Resto, Amsterdam is a more gregarious steakhouse, with louder punters and less formality. This is a good place to mingle over a mixer with the city's upwardly mobiles.

Entertainment

CULTURAL PERFORMANCES

Taman Rekreasi Senaputra (Jl Basuki Rahmat) This is Malang's cultural and recreational park. Every Sunday morning at 10am, *kuda lumping* (horse trance) dances are held here (2500Rp). The dancers ride plaited-cane horses until they fall into a trance, allowing them to eat glass and perform

other masochistic acts without harm. The park also features *wayang kulit* performances on special occasions; check with the tourist information offices for the next performance.

RII (☎ 387500; Jl Candi Panggung) About 5km northwest of the city, this place has *wayang kulit* from 9pm on the first Saturday of the month.

NIGHTCLUBS

For a city with such a large student population, things are decidedly quiet during the evening. One place to mix and mingle with the local populace at night though is **Bale Barong Club** (Hotel Mandala Puri; Jl Panglima Sudirman 81; cover charge 25,000Rp). The club kicks off after 10pm on weekends when cover bands take the stage.

Getting There & Away

BUS & MIKROLET

Malang has three bus terminals. Arjosari, 5km north of town, is the main one, with regular buses mostly along the northern route to destinations such as Surabaya (normal/air-con 9500/14,000Rp, two hours), Probolinggo (11,000/15,000Rp, 2½ hours), Jember (21,600Rp, 4½ hours), Banyuwangi (34,200Rp, six hours) and Denpasar (60,000/95,000Rp, 10 hours). *Mikrolet* run from Arjosari to nearby villages such as Singosari (2000Rp) and Tumpang (2000Rp).

The Gadang bus terminal is 5km south of the city centre, and has buses along the southern routes to destinations such as Bli-tar (9000Rp, two hours).

The Landungsari bus terminal, 5km northwest of the city, has buses to destinations west of the city, such as Batu (2500Rp, 30 minutes).

Numerous bus companies offer deluxe services from Arjosari for the long hauls. The buses to Bandung (around 185,000Rp) and Jakarta (205,000Rp) leave around 2.30pm. Numerous buses to Solo and Yogyakarta cost around 120,000Rp, and leave around 7pm. Night buses also do the run to Bali for 135,000Rp.

The travel agent (p232) at the Toko Oen restaurant books a wide range of bus tickets; otherwise, try **Haryono Travel** (☎ 367500; Jl Kahuripan 22) for other transport needs, including flights.

MINIBUS

Plenty of door-to-door minibus companies operate from Malang, and hotels and travel agencies can book them. **Wijaya Travel** (☎ 327072; Jl Pajajaran 7; 7am–5pm) is one reliable agency, as is **Sunrise Holiday** (☎ 359070; www.sunriseholiday.com; Jl Majapahit 1K; 7am–8pm). Minibuses travel to Solo (75,000Rp), Yogyakarta (75,000Rp), Probolinggo (50,000Rp) and Denpasar (135,000Rp). Minibuses to Surabaya (50,000Rp) will drop you off at hotels in Surabaya, thus saving the long haul from Surabaya's bus terminal.

TRAIN

Some useful services, mostly economy class, operate out of Malang train station (☎ 362208). The economy-class *Penataran* (4500Rp, 2½ hours) is the most convenient train to Surabaya. It leaves Malang every day at 4.15am, 6.55am, 8.40am, 12.18pm and 6.32pm. The executive-class *Gajayana* (185,000Rp, 13 hours) leaves Malang at 3.40pm, bound for Jakarta's Gambir station. The economy/business *Matar Maja* goes west from Malang to Solo, Yogyakarta (55,000Rp, seven hours), Cirebon and Jakarta at 2.10pm.

Getting Around

Mikrolet run all over town from the main bus terminals and to other *mikrolet* stations. Most run between the bus terminals through the town centre. These are marked A-G (Arjosari to Gadung and return), A-L (Arjosari to Landungsari) or G-L (Gadung to Landungsari). A trip anywhere in town costs 2000Rp.

Becak and metered taxis (minimum charge 20,000Rp) are also available around the town.

AROUND MALANG Singosari Temples

The Singosari temples lie in a ring around Malang and are mostly funerary temples dedicated to the kings of the Singosari dynasty (AD 1222 to 1292), the precursors of the Majapahit empire.

CANDI SINGOSARI

Right in the village of Singosari, 12km north of Malang, this temple (admission free; 7am–5pm) stands 500m off the main Malang to Surabaya road. One of the last monuments

erected to the Singosari dynasty, it was built in 1304 in honour of King Kertanegara, the fifth and last Singosari king, who died in 1292 in a palace uprising. The main structure of the temple was completed, but for some reason, the sculptors never finished their task. Only the top part has any ornamentation and the *kala* heads have been left strangely stark. Of the statues that once inhabited the temple's chambers, only the statue of Agastya, the Shivaite teacher who walked across the water to Java, remains. Statues of Durga and Ganesha were originally carted off to the Netherlands and are now housed in the National Museum in Jakarta.

About 200m beyond the temple there are two enormous figures of *dwarapala* (guardians against evil spirits) wearing clusters of skulls and twisted serpents.

To reach Singosari, take a green *mikrolet* (2000Rp) from Malang's Arjosari bus terminal and get off at the Singosari market on the highway, then walk or take a becak.

CANDI SUMBERAWAN

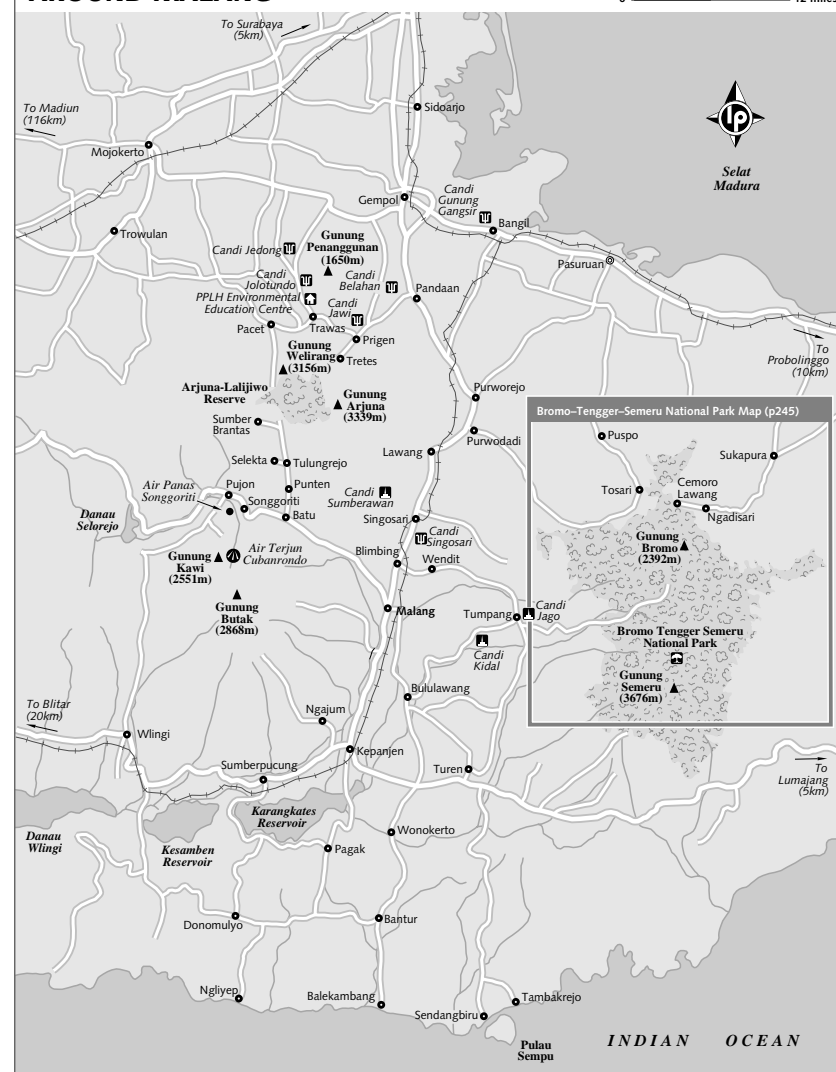
This small, plain Buddhist stupa (admission free; 7am–5pm) lies in the foothills of Gunung Arjuna, about 5km northwest of Singosari. Originating from a later period than the Singosari temples, it was built to commemorate the visit of Hayam Wuruk, the great Majapahit king, who visited the area in 1359.

Take a Colt (2000Rp) from Singosari pasar on the highway to Desa Sumberawan, and from where the Colts terminate, walk 500m down the road to the canal, turn right and follow the canal through picturesque rice paddies for 1km to the temple. This delightful walk is the highlight of the visit.

CANDI JAGO

Along a small road near the market in Tumpang, 18km from Malang, Candi Jago (Jajaghu; admission 5000Rp; 7am–5pm) was built in 1268 and is thought to be a memorial to the fourth Singosari king, Vishnuvardhana. The temple is in fairly poor condition, but it still has some interesting decorative carving – in the three-dimensional, *wayang kulit* style typical of East Java – from the Jataka and the Mahabharata. This primarily Buddhist temple also has Javanese-Hindu statues, including a six-armed, death-dealing goddess

AROUND MALANG



and a lingam, the symbol of Shiva's male potency.

To reach Candi Jago take a white *mikrolet* from Malang's Arjosari bus terminal to Tumpang (3000Rp). In Tumpang you can also visit the Mangun Dhama Art Centre, which is noted for its dance classes; it also has gamelan, *wayang* and woodcarving

courses. *Wayang kulit* and dance shows will be staged if pre-arranged; check with the tourist office (p232) and travel agencies (p232) in Malang for information on schedules and prices.

If coming from Singosari, go to Blimbing where the road to Tumpang branches off the highway, and then catch a *mikrolet*. In

Tumpang, the temple is only a short stroll from the main road.

CANDI KIDAL

This temple (admission 5000Rp; 7am-5pm), a small gem and a fine example of East Javanese art, is 7km south of Candi Jago. Built around 1260 as the burial shrine of King Anusapati (the second Singosari king, who died in 1248), it is tapering and slender, with pictures of the Garuda (mythical man-bird) on three sides, bold, glowering *kala* heads and medallions of the *haruna* and Garuda symbols. Two *kala makara* (dragons) guard the steps – like those at the *kra-ton* steps in Yogyakarta, one is male and the other female.

Colts run from Tumpang market to Candi Kidal but are infrequent. From Candi Kidal you can take another Colt south to Turen, where buses go to Malang, but it is usually quicker to backtrack through Tumpang.

Lawang

☎ 0341

Lawang, 18km north of Malang on the road to Surabaya, is forgettable, but the Hotel Niagara is a notable five-storey Art Nouveau mansion built in the 1900s. This once-grand hotel has seen better days, but it's fun to poke around inside if management will let you. Rumour has it that the hotel is haunted, and locals generally avoid it like the plague.

Of more interest, the road just south of the Hotel Niagara leads a few kilometres west to the Kebun Wonasari tea estate (☎ 426032; admission 6000Rp; r 110,000-1,020,000Rp). This agrotourism venture offers everything from tea-plantation tours (30,000Rp) to tennis and a mini zoo. Guides (150,000Rp for the day) hike to the top of Gunung Arjuna can be arranged at the estate's information office. Best of all, accommodation is available in this peaceful setting. From Malang, catch a *mikrolet* to Lawang (4000Rp) and then an *ojek* to Wonosari from there (10,000Rp).

Purwodadi

A few kilometres north of Lawang on the road to Surabaya, the Kebun Raya Purwodadi (admission 3700Rp, tours 6000Rp; 7am-4pm) are expansive dry-climate botanical gardens. If

you want more information and maps of the gardens, visit the garden offices to the south of the entrance. Air Terjun Cobanbaung is a high waterfall next to the gardens.

The gardens are easily reached; take any bus (5500Rp) from Malang to Surabaya and ask to be dropped off at the entrance.

Pandaan

Pandaan is a small town about 45km north of Malang and 40km south of Surabaya, on the road to Tretes. Here you'll find the Candra Wilwatika Amphitheatre (☎ 0343-631842), where modern Javanese ballet performances normally take place once a month from July to October. Unfortunately performances are currently cancelled due to lack of interest, but there are plans in the future to reinstate them. You can, however, over-night at the complex (double 200,000Rp); the accommodation is quite basic. To get there, take a bus from Malang or Surabaya, and then a Tretes-bound Colt. The theatre is 1km from Pandaan, right on the main road to Tretes.

Also on the main road to Tretes, a few kilometres from Pandaan before Prigen, Candi Jawi (admission free; 7am-5pm) is an early 14th-century Hindu temple, built to honour King Kertanegara.

Gunung Arjuna-Lalijiwo Reserve

This reserve includes the dormant volcano Gunung Arjuna (3339m), the semi-active Gunung Welirang (3156m) and the Lalijiwo Plateau on the northern slopes of Arjuna. Experienced and well-equipped hikers can walk from the resort town of Tretes to Selektta in two days, but you need a guide to go all the way. Alternatively, you can climb Welirang from Tretes or Lawang (left).

A well-used hiking path, popular with students on weekends and holidays, begins in Tretes near the Kakak Bodo Recreation Reserve. Get information from the PHKA post (☎ 081 21788956; Jl Willis 523) in the northern reaches of the town. Guides can be hired here for 300,000Rp per day; allow two days to climb one mountain and three days for both.

It's a hard five-hour, 17km walk to the very basic huts used by the Gunung Welirang sulphur collectors. It is usual to stay overnight at the huts in order to reach the summit before the clouds and mist roll

in around mid-morning. Bring your own camping gear, food and drinking water (or hire it all at the PHKA post for 100,000Rp per day), and be prepared for freezing conditions. From the huts it's a 4km climb to the summit. Allow at least six hours in total for the ascent, and 4½ hours for the descent.

The trail passes Lalijiwo Plateau, a superb alpine meadow, from where a trail leads to Gunung Arjuna, the more demanding peak. From Arjuna a trail leads down the southern side to Junggo, near Selektta and Batu. It's a five-hour descent from Arjuna this way; a guide is essential.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

To get to the start of the hike, take a bus to Pandaan (7500Rp) from Malang or Surabaya and then a minibus to Tretes (7000Rp).

Gunung Penanggungan

The remains of no less than 81 temples are scattered over the slopes of Gunung Penanggungan (1650m), a sacred Hindu mountain said to be the peak of Mt Mahameru, which broke off and landed at its present site when Mt Mahameru was transported from India to Indonesia.

This was an important pilgrimage site for Hindus. Pilgrims made their way to the top of the mountain and stopped to bathe in the holy springs adorned with Hindu statuary. The two main bathing places are Candi Jolotundo and Candi Belahan, the best examples of remaining Hindu art. Both are difficult to reach.

In a stunning, unspoilt setting on the western slopes of Penanggungan, PPLH Environmental Education Centre (☎ 0321-7221045; www.pplh.org; dm 20,000Rp, bungalows 220,000Rp) is the perfect place to take a break from the intensity of travel in Java. It mainly caters to groups, but its hiking packages (guides 80,000Rp) and herbal medicine and ecology courses are also open to individuals. It has a good organic restaurant and fine accommodation in pretty bungalows or more-basic dorms. During the week you'll generally have the place to yourself, aside from the occasional school group passing through. To get there, take a Trawas-bound bemo (7000Rp) from Pandaan and an *ojek* (10,000Rp) from Trawas.

Batu

☎ 0341

Batu, 15km northwest of Malang, is a featureless sprawl on the lower reaches of Gunung Arjuna, but it has superb mountain scenery, a cool climate and a scattering of nearby attractions. It recently hit international headlines when Azahari Husin, a Malaysian bomb maker linked with Jemaah Islamiah and wanted in connection with the Bali bombings, was cornered in his home and killed.

SIGHTS

Without leaving the confines of the town, the only sight is the apple and strawberry orchard surrounding the Kusuma Agrowisata hotel (p240). Tours (15,000Rp per orchard; 7am-5pm) are offered and the price includes a generous two apples or three strawberries, and entry to the nearby mini zoo.

Songgoriti, 3km west of Batu, has well-known hot springs (admission 7500Rp; 7.30am-5pm) and a small ancient Hindu temple in the grounds of the Hotel Air Panas Songgoriti. Nearby, Pasar Wisata is a tourist market selling mostly apples, bonsai plants, and stone mortars and pestles. The waterfall Air Terjun Cubanrondo (admission 10,000Rp; 7.30am-5pm) is 5km southwest of Songgoriti.

Selektta, a small resort 5km further up the mountain from Batu and 1km off the main road, is home to the Pemandian Selektta, a large swimming pool with a superb setting in landscaped gardens (admission 12,500Rp; 7.30am-5pm).

Higher up the mountain, the small village of Sumber Brantas, far above Selektta, is at the source of Sungai Brantas. From here you can walk 2km to Air Panas Cangar (admission 5000Rp; 7.30am-5pm), a hot springs high in the mountains surrounded by forest and mist.

SLEEPING

Accommodation is available in Batu, Songgoriti and all along the road to Selektta at Puntan and at Tulungrejo, where the road to Selektta turns off. Songgoriti and Selektta are small, quiet resorts, though Selektta is more elevated with better views. Batu has better facilities and makes a good base. You'll find most hotels scattered along Jl Panglima Sudirman, the main road to Kediri running west from the town centre.

Add around 25% to the prices listed here for weekend rates.

Hotel Baru (☎ 591775; Jl Agus Salim 27; d 50,000-80,000Rp) A pleasant guesthouse slap-bang in the middle of what little action Batu has, Baru has friendly owners and surprisingly spotless rooms; the bigger they are the more expensive they are.

Mutiara Baru (☎ 511259; Jl Panglima Sudirman 89; d from 60,000Rp; Ⓢ) The newly renovated Mutiara Baru has simple but very good rooms and a quiet garden with a children's playground out the back.

Hotel Selektta (☎ 591025; r from 265,000Rp; Ⓢ) Near the Pemandian Selektta, Hotel Selektta is a midrange option with a quiet setting and views of the valley below.

Royal Orchids Hotel (☎ 593083; www.royalorchids.com; Jl Indragiri 4; r from 299,000Rp, condominiums from 750,000Rp; Ⓢ) This plush hotel is newer than the nearby Kartika Wijaya and has a lovely resort feel. The collection of old-timer cars in the reception and parking lot only add to the ambience.

Kusuma Agrowisata (☎ 593333; www.hotelkusuma.com; Jl Abdul Gani Atas; weekday/weekend r from 375,000/510,000Rp; Ⓢ) This sprawling place 3km south of the town centre has well-presented rooms in a quiet location. Cottages are also available and tours of the attached apple orchard and strawberry farm are thrown in for free.

Hotel Kartika Wijaya (☎ 592600; Jl Panglima Sudirman 127; r from 405,000Rp; Ⓢ) Kartika Wijaya is an upmarket hotel with a delightful colonial lobby, fitness centre and landscaped gardens. The rooms are styled after different regions in Indonesia, and the reception features a huge stained-glass window of Java. Fork out a little more for the cottages at the back; the hotel is on a busy road.

EATING

Jl Panglima Sudirman in Batu also has plenty of restaurants.

Rumah Makan Cairo (Jl Panglima Sudirman 60; mains 10,000-30,000Rp; 🍴 lunch & dinner) This simple eatery has *martabak* (meat, egg and vegetable pancake-like dish) and Middle-Eastern inspired fare.

Pantara Café (Jl Panglima Sudirman 123; mains around 15,000Rp; 🍴 lunch & dinner) Pantara is an atmospheric, traditional-style eatery, serving local dishes in bamboo surroundings.

Both Hotel Kartika Wijaya and Mutiara Baru have decent restaurants.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

From Malang's Landungsari bus terminal take a Kediri bus or one of the frequent pink *mikrolet* to Batu (2500Rp, 30 minutes). Batu's bus terminal is 2km from the centre of town – take another *mikrolet* (1000Rp) from the bus terminal.

From the bus terminal, orange *mikrolet* run through town to Selektta (2000Rp, 30 minutes) and Sumber Brantas (3000Rp, one hour), but they often linger for a full complement of passengers. *Mikrolet* turn off to Sumber Brantas at Juranguwali village. For Air Panas Cangar, walk 2km straight ahead from Juranguwali.

An *ojek* to Selektta costs 10,000Rp.

Gunung Kawi

On Gunung Kawi (2551m), west of Malang and 18km northwest of Kepanjen, is the tomb of the Muslim sage Kanjeng Penembahan Djoego, who died in 1871. Descended from Pakubuwono I, king of the Mataram empire, the sage is better known as Mbah Jugo.

From the parking area, a long path leads up the slope past shops, souvenir stalls and beggars. Before the tombs at the top, there is a Chinese temple and the house of Mbah Jugo, which attracts non-Muslim Chinese worshippers from as far away as Jakarta. Legend has it that the saint will answer the prayers of fortune-seeking pilgrims. Apparently he did so for one Chinese couple, who went on to form one of Indonesia's biggest *kretek* companies.

This strange cross-religious mountain resort can be experienced on a day trip, or there are plenty of basic *penginapan* and restaurants if you want to stay the night. Gunung Kawi can be reached by taking a bus to Kepanjen (7000Rp), 3km east of the turn-off, and then a Colt (7000Rp) for the final 19km.

South-Coast Beaches

The coast south of Malang has some good beaches, but facilities are limited. Sendangbiru is a picturesque fishing village separated by a narrow channel from Pulau Sempu, a nature reserve with the Telaga Lele and Telaga Sat lakes in the centre, ringed by

jungle. Boats can be hired (150,000Rp per person) for the 800m crossing. Take your own provisions.

A few kilometres before Sendangbiru, a rough track to the left leads 3km to Tambakrejo, a small fishing village with a sweeping sandy bay, which despite the surf is generally safe for swimming.

Balekambang is best known for its picturesque Hindu temple on the small island of Pulau Ismoyo, connected by a footbridge to the beach. This is Java's answer to Bali's Tanah Lot and was built by Balinese artisans in 1985 for the local Hindu communities. Balekambang is one of the most popular beaches and is crowded on weekends. Accommodation in the village is limited to the very basic Pesanggrahan Balekambang.

Ngliyep, further west, is a popular rocky beach. It has a *pasanggrahan* (guesthouse) offering basic accommodation.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Minibuses from Malang's Gadang bus terminal travel the 69km to Sendangbiru (12,000Rp, two hours), past the turn-off to Tambakrejo; otherwise take a bus to Turen and then another to Sendangbiru. For Balekambang, buses run direct from Malang along the upgraded road for 7000Rp. The road to Ngliyep is also good, and occasional white minibuses run direct; otherwise first take a bus to Bantar.

BLITAR

☎ 0342 / pop 125,000

Blitar is the usual base from which to visit Panataran, and is also of interest as the site of former president Soekarno's grave.

Information

The post office is next to the train station. Both the **BNI bank** (Bank Negara Indonesia; Jl Kenanga 9) and **BCA bank** (Bank Central Asia; Jl Merdeka) are in the centre of town. **Telkom** (Jl A Yani 10) is the place to go for international telephone calls; it's on the continuation of Jl Merdeka, about 1km east of the Hotel Lestari. **Warnet** (Jl Mastroip 34; per hr 4500Rp; 🌐 9am-7pm Mon-Sat) has internet access and is behind the main street.

Sights

MAKAM BUNG KARNO

At Sentul, 2km north of the town centre on the road to Panataran, there is an elaborate

monument (admission 1500Rp; 🌐 8am-5pm) that marks the spot where former president Soekarno was buried in 1970. Soekarno is looked on by many as the 'father of his country', although he was only reinstated as a national hero in 1978.

Soekarno, affectionately referred to as Bung Karno, was given a state funeral, but despite family requests that he be buried at his home in Bogor, he was buried as far as possible from Jakarta in an unmarked grave next to his mother in Blitar. His father's grave was also moved from Jakarta to Blitar. It was only in 1978 that the lavish million-dollar monument was built over the grave and opened to visitors. At the southern edge of the monument a new museum devoted to the man and his achievements has been built; entry is included in the admission price.

A becak from the town centre will cost anything between 5000Rp and 10,000Rp depending on your bargaining skills; otherwise take a Panataran *angkudes* (yellow minibus; 2000Rp) and ask for the *makam* (grave). Bemos turn off before the souvenir stalls, from where it is a walk of a few hundred metres.

OTHER SIGHTS

For a more personal look into the life of Soekarno, head for the **Museum Soekarno** (Jl Sultan Agung 59; admission 5000Rp; 🌐 8am-3pm), located in the house where he lived as a boy. Photos and memorabilia line the front sitting room, and you can see the great man's bedroom and check out the old Mercedes in the garage, a former state car. The museum is about 1.5km from the centre of town.

Blitar's large Pasar Legi, next to the bus terminal, is also worth a gander.

Sleeping & Eating

Hotel Sri Rejeki (☎ 801718; Jl TGP 13; r with/without mandi from 35,000/25,000Rp, with air-con from 65,000Rp; 🍽) With a range of rooms and a central location, Sri Rejeki should have something to suit everyone's taste.

Hotel Tugu Blitar (☎ 801766; blitar@tuguhotels.com; Jl Merdeka 173; r 80,000-390,000Rp; 🍽) Located right in the centre of town, this fine boutique hotel has quite bland economy rooms but superb superior doubles, decked out with antiques, in the old colonial-era building. It also has an excellent restaurant.

Blitar has some good restaurants on Jl Merdeka:

Ramayana (Jl Merdeka 65; mains around 15,000Rp; 𠄎 lunch & dinner) Large Chinese establishment east of the *alun-alun*.

Rumah Makan Sarinah (Jl Merdeka; mains 10,000Rp; 𠄎 lunch & dinner) Has varied fare and does good *sop buntut* (oxtail soup) and *ayam goreng*.

Getting There & Away

Regular buses run from Blitar to Malang (9000Rp, two hours) and Surabaya (20,000Rp, four hours), as well as Solo (30,000Rp, six hours). The bus terminal is 4km south of town along Jl Veteran (2000Rp by *angkot* from the centre). *Angkudes* run from the western end of Jl Merdeka, by the Rumah Makan Sarinah, to Panataran for 5000Rp – they stop right outside the temple. They also pass near Makam Bung Karno, but the road in front of the grave is closed and they skirt around the side streets to the east.

The easiest way to reach Malang is by train. The express economy-class *Penataran* departs for Malang (4500Rp, 1½ hours) and Surabaya (6000Rp, 3½ hours) at 4.40am, 6.35am, 10.10am, 1.10pm and 4.37pm. The *Matar Maja* travels east from Malang, through Blitar, to Solo, Semarang, Cirebon and Jakarta (45,000Rp).

PANATARAN

The **Hindu temples** (admission by donation; temple complex 𠄎 7am–5pm) at Panataran are the largest intact Majapahit temples, and the finest examples of East Javanese architecture and sculpture. Construction began in around 1200, during the Singosari dynasty, but the temple complex took some 250 years to complete. Most of the important surviving structures date from the great years of the Majapahit empire during the 14th century and are similar to many Balinese temples.

Around the base of the first-level platform, which would once have been a meeting place, the comic-strip carvings tell the story of a test between the fat, meat-eating Bubukshah and the thin, vegetarian Gagang Aking.

Further on is the small Dated Temple, so called because of the date '1291' (AD 1369) carved over the entrance. On the next level are colossal serpents snaking end-

lessly around the Naga Temple, which once housed valuable sacred objects.

At the rear stands the Mother Temple – or at least part of it, for the top of the temple has been reconstructed alongside its three-tiered base. Followed anticlockwise, panels around the base depict stories from the Ramayana. The more realistic people of the Krishna stories on the second tier of the base show an interesting transition from almost flat to three-dimensional figures.

Behind is a small royal *mandi* with a frieze depicting lizards, bulls and dragons around its walls.

Three hundred metres beyond the turn-off to the temples is the **Museum Panataran**. It contains an impressive collection of statuary from the complex, but labelling is poor and opening hours are haphazard.

Getting There & Away

Panataran is 16km from Blitar (5000Rp by bus), and 3km north of the village of Nlegok. It is possible to see the Panataran temples comfortably in a day from Malang – and possibly from Surabaya also.

PACITAN

% 0357

On the south coast near the provincial border with Central Java, the small town of Pacitan is on a horseshoe bay ringed by rocky cliffs. Pacitan's **Pantai Ria Teleng** is 4km from town and makes a good beach break from Solo. The sand is a dark yellow and the surf is rough, but it is very peaceful, and the coastline is scenic. Swimming is possible when the seas are calm – the safest area is towards the fishing boats at the southwestern end of the bay, where there is also a swimming pool.

Information

BNI bank (Bank Negara Indonesia; Jl A Yani) On the main street; changes cash for a number of currencies, at poor rates.

BRI bank (Bank Rakyat Indonesia; Jl A Yani) Also on the main street.

Telkom office (Jl A Yani) Located at the western end of the main street.

Tourist Information Office (% 885326; Jl W R Suprapanto; 𠄎 7am–3pm Mon–Thu, 7–11am Fri) Helpful; 2km from the Hotel Pacitan.

Wartel Next to the Hotel Remaja.

Sleeping & Eating

The beach is the main reason to visit, so there is not a lot of reason to stay in town. If you're stuck, though, there are budget hotels in Pacitan are along Jl A Yani. The best place to stay is 4km out of town at Pantai Ria Teleng.

Happy Bay Beach Bungalows (% 881474; r 55,000Rp, private bungalows 65,000Rp) Happy Bay has comfortable accommodation and is directly opposite the beach. There are also bicycles (10,000Rp) and motorbikes (50,000Rp) available for rent and a restaurant that may or may not be open.

Srikandi (% 881252; Jl A Yani 67; r with TV & fan/air-con 85,000/120,000Rp; a) Overlooking rice paddies on the western edge of the town is Srikandi, the area's best place to stay. Staff are more than helpful and the hotel's restaurant serves cheap Indonesian dishes and fresh fish.

Depot Makan Bu Jabar (Jl H Samanuhdi 3; mains around 15,000Rp; 𠄎 lunch & dinner) This simple eatery is a block behind the police station on Jl A Yani; it's the next best dining option to Srikandi's restaurant.

Getting There & Away

Pacitan can be approached by bus from Solo (15,000Rp, four hours), or hourly buses run along the scenic road to Ponorogo (9000Rp, 2½ hours), just south of Madiun. From Ponorogo, direct buses go to Blitar (15,000Rp, four hours) throughout the day. From Blitar to Malang take a Colt or bus.

Pacitan's bus terminal is 500m from the centre of town on the road to Solo and the beach. Buses from Solo pass the turn-off to the beach and can drop you there. Happy Bay is a 500m walk away; a becak from the terminal costs 7000Rp.

AROUND PACITAN

At Punung village, on the Solo road 30km northwest of Pacitan, is the turn-off to the limestone caves of **Goa Putri**, 2km away, and the much more impressive **Gua Gong**, 8km from the highway. Only open to the public since 1995, **Gua Gong** is the largest and most spectacular cave in an area famed for its caves.

The more famous **Gua Tabuhan** (Musical Cave) is 4km north on the highway beyond Punung, and then another 4km to the cave. This huge limestone cavern is said to have

been a refuge for the 19th-century guerilla leader Prince Diponegoro. Guides will give an excellent 'orchestral' performance by striking rocks against stalactites, each in perfect pitch, and echoing pure gamelan melodies. The concert lasts about 10 minutes. You must hire a guide and lamp.

This is also agate country, and hawkers sell reasonably priced polished stones and rings.

PROBOLINGGO

% 0335 / pop 180,000

Among Indonesians and fruit lovers, Probolinggo is best known as the producer of Java's finest mangoes (it also receives kudos for its grapes). For most tourists, however, the town is little more than a transit point on the route to Gunung Bromo.

Information

The main post office and most of the banks, including the BCA and BNI, are on Jl Suroyo, which leads off the main street to the train station.

Sleeping & Eating

Hotel Bromo Permai (% 422256; Jl Panglima Sudirman 327; r 65,000Rp, with air-con from 95,000Rp; a) This is the town's most popular travellers hotel, and has comfortable rooms and a very helpful, English-speaking owner. It's on the busy main road close to the centre of town at the eastern end, but rooms at the back are quiet. It also has a wartel.

Hotel Paramita (% 421535; Jl Staman 7; r with fan/air-con from 75,000/140,000Rp; a) Paramita is handy to the town's main street and is so new the finishing touches were being added when we visited. Rooms – which are spotless and sizable, but a little plain – are centred on a landscaped garden.

Hotel Ratna (% 421597; Jl Panglima Sudirman 16; economy r with/without fan 90,000/50,000Rp, VIP from 150,000Rp plus 10% tax; a) Two kilometres further west of the Bromo Permai you'll find Ratna, the best hotel in town. The building has plenty of (fake) colonial charm and the rooms are spacious and come with balcony.

Most of the hotels have restaurants and there are also some good Chinese eateries in Probolinggo.

Restaurant Malang (Jl Panglima Sudirman 104; mains around 15,000Rp; 𠄎 lunch & dinner) Has a big menu, cold beer and stacks of mangoes.

PROBOLINGGO PROBLEMS

Of all the bus terminals in Java, Probolinggo's has the worst reputation. It's by no means dangerous, just not very honest. Travellers have reported problems with arranging onward tickets, particularly at night, when overcharging is the norm. Even what looks like a reputable ticket agent may charge double or even triple the standard price. The best thing to do is find the bus you need and pay the fare on board; at least you'll have a chance to compare prices with other passengers. Also, when travelling to Probolinggo, make it clear to the ticket collector you want to be dropped off at the Bayuangga bus terminal; we've received letters from travellers complaining of being left at random travel agents and charged exorbitant fares for bus tickets.

Thieves are common on the buses in East Java, especially on buses departing from Probolinggo.

Sumberhidup (Jl Panglima Sudirman; mains around 15,000Rp; 7am-3pm lunch & dinner) Near Restaurant Malang; cooks up Chinese and Indonesian fare.

Getting There & Away

BUS

Probolinggo's Bayuangga bus terminal is about 5km from town on the road to Gunung Bromo. Yellow *angkot* run to/from the main street and the train station for 2000Rp. Buses to destinations in East Java (eg Banyuwangi and Surabaya) are frequent, so avoid the crowds of touts and just pay for your fare on the bus. Advance bookings for the long-distance executive buses will cost a little more – shop around.

From Probolinggo, buses travel to destinations such as Surabaya (15,000Rp, two hours); Malang (economy/air-con 15,000/30,000Rp, 2½ hours); Banyuwangi (35,000/50,000Rp, five hours) via Situbondo; Bondowoso (15,000/30,000Rp); Yogyakarta (45,000/80,000Rp, eight hours); and Denpasar (55,000/120,000Rp).

MINIBUS

Gunung Bromo Colt minibuses from Probolinggo's Bayuangga bus terminal go to Cemoro Lawang (15,000Rp, two hours) via Ngadisari (12,000Rp, 1½ hours) until around 5pm, sometimes later during peak tourist periods if there is demand. The late-afternoon buses charge more to Cemoro Lawang, when fewer passengers travel beyond Ngadisari. Make sure it goes all the way to Cemoro Lawang when you board.

TRAIN

About 2km north of town, the train station is 7km from the bus terminal. Probolinggo is on the Surabaya–Banyuwangi

train line. Most services are economy class. The *Mutiara Timur* costs 40,000/55,000Rp (business/executive) to Surabaya (departing at 1.25pm) or Banyuwangi (departing at 11am). The pick of the economy-class services is the *Tawang Alun* to Banyuwangi (19,000Rp) at 3.45pm and to Malang (18,000Rp) at 11am. The slow *Sri Tanjung* goes to Yogyakarta (32,000Rp) via Solo at 10.50am.

GUNUNG BROMO & BROMO-TENGER-SEMERU NATIONAL PARK

0335

Gunung Bromo is nature's Borobudur; it's a landscape that's as evocative and resonant as any in Southeast Asia, and is the raw material for countless legends and as many picture postcards.

Compared with Java's other major peaks, Gunung Bromo (2392m) is a midget, but this volcano's beauty is in its setting, not its size. Rising from the guts of the ancient Tengger caldera, Bromo is one of three volcanoes to have emerged from a vast crater, stretching 10km across. Flanked by the peaks of Kursi (2581m) and Batok (2440m), the steaming cone of Bromo stands in a sea of ashen, volcanic sand, surrounded by the towering cliffs of the crater's edge. Nearby, Gunung Semeru (3676m), Java's highest peak and one of its most active volcanoes, throws its shadow – and occasionally its ash – over the whole scene.

Orientation & Information

Access is usually via Probolinggo from the northeast, but Bromo can be approached from a number of routes, including Wonokitri from the northwest and Ngadas from the southwest. The ideal time to visit is dur-

ing the dry season from April to October. At any time of year it's cold on these mountains and night temperatures can drop to single figures.

Whichever approach you take, an entrance fee of 4000Rp is payable. Information is available from the PHKA post (☎ 541038; 7am-3pm Tue-Sun), opposite Hotel Bromo Permai in Cemoro Lawang, and at the PHKA post (☎ 0343-571048; 7am-3pm Tue-Sun) on the southern outskirts of Wonokitri. Both extend their opening hours during busy periods. The park's official office is located in Malang (p232).

Activities

PROBOLINGGO APPROACH

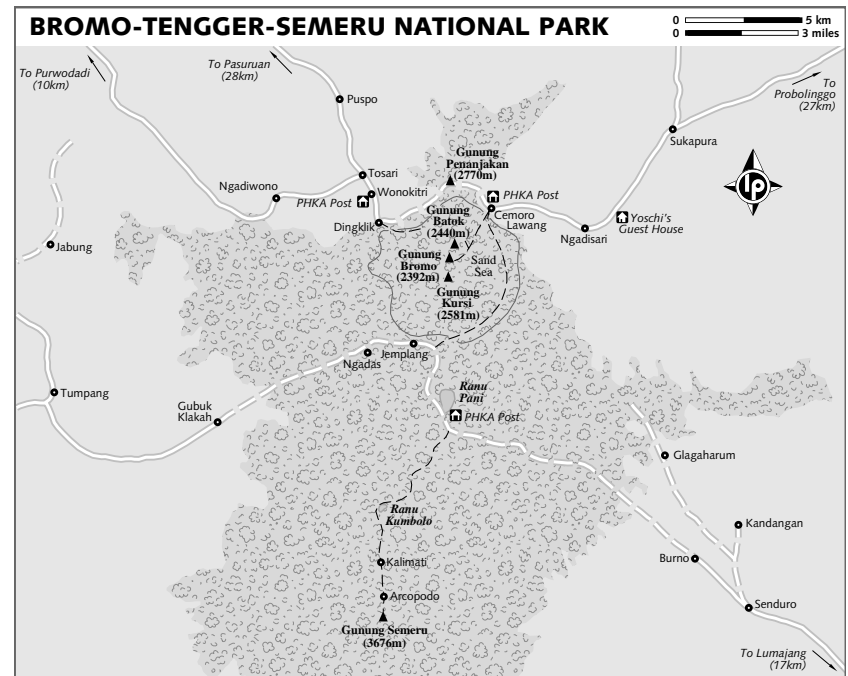
This is the easiest and most popular route. From Probolinggo, it's 28km to Sukapura, then another 7km to Ngadisari and then 3km to Cemoro Lawang. Minibuses ply the route all the way to Cemoro Lawang from Probolinggo.

As with mountain scaling anywhere in Asia, it is important to be at the top of Gunung Bromo for the impressive sunrise.

From Cemoro Lawang, it's 3km down the crater wall and across the Sand Sea (Laotian Pasir) to the slopes of Bromo, about a one-hour walk. Get up at 4.30am or even earlier for the flat stroll across the eerie sea. White stone markers are easy to follow during the day, but can be more elusive in the dark; alternatively, hire a jeep (300,000Rp) or horse (60,000Rp) from Cemoro Lawang. By the time you have crossed the lava plain from Cemoro Lawang and started to climb up the 253 steps to the top of Bromo, it should be fairly light and you'll get fantastic views of the smoking crater and of the sun clearing the higher peaks.

The colours are better at dawn, but visibility is usually good throughout the day in the dry season, even though the slopes below Cemoro Lawang may be covered in mist. Later in the day you'll also avoid the dawn crowds, especially during busy holiday periods. In the wet season the clouds and the dawn often arrive at the same time.

From Cemoro Lawang, it is also possible to visit Gunung Penanjakan (2770m), the



THE LEGENDS OF BROMO

Unsurprisingly, the eerie landscape of Bromo and its neighbouring volcanoes has spawned countless myths and legends. It is said that the Tengger crater was originally dug out with just half a coconut shell by an ogre smitten with love for a princess.

But Bromo is of particular religious significance to the Hindu Tengger people, who still populate the massif and first fled here to escape the wave of Islam that broke over the Majapahit empire in the 16th century. The Tengger believe that Bromo once fell within the realm of the childless King Joko Seger and Queen Roro Anteng, who asked the god of the volcano for assistance in producing an heir. The god obliged, giving them 25 children, but demanded that the youngest, a handsome boy named Dian Kusuma, be sacrificed to the flames in return. When the queen later refused to fulfil her promise, the young Dian bravely sacrificed himself to save the kingdom from retribution.

Today, the mountain is appeased during the annual Kasada festival (the park's PHKA offices can tell you when it occurs during the year), when local Tenggerese come to Bromo to throw offerings of vegetables, chickens and money into the crater of the volcano.

highest point on the outer crater. Hired jeeps (200,000Rp) go down to the Sand Sea and up to Penanjakan for the dawn, then return via Gunung Bromo. Penanjakan is where those picture-postcard shots are taken, with Bromo in the foreground and Semeru smoking in the distance. Alternatively, it is two hours on foot. Walk one hour (or charter a jeep) along the road to the 'Penanjakan II' viewpoint, itself a spectacular vantage point. It's worth taking the walking trail behind this viewing area for another hour to reach Penanjakan proper. The trail is fairly steep but easy to follow – bring a torch (flashlight) – and comes out on the Dingklik road, 500m before reaching the summit.

From Cemoro Lawang, trekkers can also take an interesting walk across the Sand Sea to Ngadas (8km) on the southern rim of the Tengger crater. You'll need to start early in order to get to Malang by evening.

WONOKITRI APPROACH

Small tour groups come this way to do the trip to Gunung Penanjakan, which can be reached by sealed road, or by a 4WD, which can drive all the way to the base of Bromo. Wonokitri can be approached from Pasuruan on the main northern highway, or coming from Malang you can turn off at Purwodadi just after Lawang.

From Pasuruan take a Colt to Puspo (7000Rp) and then another to Tosari (5000Rp), 36km from Pasuruan. From the Purwodadi turn-off, catch a Colt to the market town of Nongkojajar (7000Rp) then

an *ojek* to Tosari (20,000Rp to 25,000Rp). Note that the latter route is not a common tourist trail, so you may have to hunt for an *ojek* to take you the last leg.

From Tosari market another *ojek* will take you to Wonokitri (10,000Rp), from where jeeps can be hired for the last stretch to Bromo (300,000Rp, less in the afternoon), including a side trip to Gunung Penanjakan. Cheaper *ojek* can also be hired (75,000Rp to Penanjakan).

From Wonokitri, it's 5km along a good road to Dingklik on the edge of the crater, from where superb views can be had. From Dingklik the road forks – down to Bromo or 4km up along the paved road to Gunung Penanjakan for even better views. From Penanjakan a walking trail leads to Cemoro Lawang. The 6km paved road from Dingklik down to the Sand Sea is very steep but is spectacular. From the bottom it is then 3km across the sand to Bromo.

NGADAS APPROACH

It is also possible to trek into the crater from Ngadas to the southwest of Gunung Bromo, although it is more often done in the reverse direction as a trek out from Bromo or as an approach to climbing Gunung Semeru. This is definitely a trek for those willing and able to rough it a bit, but it is very rewarding.

Transport to the area is erratic and only available in the morning. From Malang take a *mikrolet* to Tumpang (3000Rp), or from Surabaya take a bus to Blimbing, just north of Malang, then a *mikrolet* to Tumpang.

From here take another *mikrolet* to Gubug Klakah (3000Rp), from where you walk 12km to Ngadas. From Ngadas it is 2km to Jemplang at the crater rim, and then three hours on foot (12km) across the floor of the Tengger crater to Gunung Bromo and on to Cemoro Lawang. From Jemplang, you can also head south for the Gunung Semeru climb.

Jeeps can also be chartered in Tumpang or Ngadas for around 300,000Rp.

CLIMBING GUNUNG SEMERU

Part of the huge Tengger Massif, Gunung Semeru is the highest peak in Java, at 3676m. Also known as Mahameru (Great Mountain), it is looked on by Hindus as the most sacred mountain of all and the father of Gunung Agung on Bali.

Semeru is one of Java's most active peaks and has been volatile ever since its first recorded eruption in 1818. In 1981, 250 people were killed during one of its worst eruptions, and only recently, in March 2002, two huge pyroclastic flows travelled 2.5km down the mountainside to Besuk Kembar. At the time of writing the mountain was open to climbers, but this situation could change at any time; check with the local tourist office, other travellers or the nearest *pos pengamatan* (observation post) for Gunung Semeru's eruption status.

It's a rough three-day trek to the summit, and you must be well equipped and prepared for camping overnight. Nights on the mountain are freezing and inexperienced climbers have died of exposure. The best time to make the climb is May to October.

Hikers usually come through Tumpang in the west, from where you can charter jeeps to Ranu Pani (500,000Rp return), the start of the trek; otherwise take a Colt from Tumpang to Gubug Klakah and walk 12km to Ngadas, and then on to Jemplang. It is also possible to cross the Tengger Sand Sea from Gunung Bromo (12km) to Jemplang, 2km from Ngadas at the Tengger crater rim. From Jemplang, the road skirts around the crater rim before heading south to Ranu Pani (6km; 1½ hours on foot).

Ranu Pani is a lake with a small village nearby. Pak Tasrip runs a homestay costing 80,000Rp per person (meals are served). He can help organise a climb of Gunung Semeru, and he also rents out sleeping bags,

which are essential. Ranu Pani is the usual overnight rest spot, and the Ranu Pani PHKA post (☎ 0341-787972 for office in Tumpang) is towards the lake. Register with the PHKA and obtain advice on the climb. It can also help arrange guides (from 200,000Rp for one day; 75,000Rp for porters), which are not essential but recommended unless there are a lot of other climbers.

The main trail begins behind the PHKA post. This new trail is lined with scrubby growth, but is an easier walk than the old trail, which is steeper. Both trails lead to Ranu Kumbolo crater lake (2400m), 13km or 3½ hours from Ranu Pani. From Ranu Kumbolo, which has a shelter, the trail climbs to Kalimati (three hours) at the foot of the mountain. From Kalimati it is a steep 1½-hour climb to Arcopodo, where there is a camp site for the second night on the mountain.

From Arcopodo, it is a short, steep climb to the start of the volcanic sands, and then a tough three-hour climb through loose scree to the peak. Semeru explodes every half-hour and these gases and belching lava make Semeru dangerous – stay away from the vent. On a clear day, there are breathtaking views of Java's north and south coasts, as well as views of Bali. To see the sunrise it is necessary to start at 2am for the summit. It is possible to make it back to Ranu Pani on the same day.

Sleeping & Eating

CEMORO LAWANG

Right on the lip of the Tengger crater and the start of the walk to Bromo, Cemoro Lawang is the most popular place to stay. Prices for everything, including accommodation, are inflated, but the views are stunning and the cool climate can come as quite a relief. You may be able to bargain a discount during quiet periods.

Cafe Lava Hostel (☎ 541020; r with shared bath 50,000Rp, with breakfast & hot shower 110,000Rp) This archetypal travellers hang-out has a laid-back air, gregarious English-speaking staff and a good backpacker buzz. Economy rooms are scuzzy and small, but the more expensive standard rooms are in quite good nick.

Cemara Indah Hotel (☎ 541019; old block r with/without mandi from 150,000/50,000Rp, with air-con, TV & hot water 250,000Rp; a) This place teeters on

the edge of the crater and has sublime views over Bromo. Rooms range from prison-block Spartan to comfortable. Discounts are available for YHA and ISIC cardholders.

Hotel Bromo Permai I (☎ 541021; bromopermai_hotel@yahoo.com; r 60,000Rp, with hot shower/TV 210,000/245,000Rp) Bromo Permai is the fanciest hotel in the village centre. Rooms are rather ho-hum, though, and luxury certainly doesn't come as standard.

Lava View Lodge (☎ 541009; globaladventure@indo.net.id; r from 150,000Rp, bungalows 250,000Rp) The upmarket cousin of the Cafe Lava Hostel is 500m along a side road through the parking/souvenir-stall area below Hotel Bromo Permai I. Views are superb and rooms are comfortable and the closest Cemoro Lawang has to plush. Add 75% to prices in peak season (mid-October to the beginning of January).

Guest House Rumah Tamu (☎ 541038; cottages 500,000Rp) This PHKA establishment located opposite Hotel Bromo Permai I has two cottages to rent that sleep four people. They're a bit rough around the edges, but each has two bedrooms, a sitting room and hot water.

All the hotels have restaurants, and there are a couple of warungs near the PHKA office.

Bromo Corner Cafe (mains around 20,000Rp; 17 lunch & dinner) Next to the information centre; serves nasi goreng and other favourites in pleasant surrounds.

Café Lava (mains around 20,000Rp; 17 breakfast, lunch & dinner) The cheeriest place around, with cold beer and friendly staff.

Cemara Indah (mains 20,000-40,000Rp; 17 breakfast, lunch & dinner) Has the best views.

NGADISARI

Yoschi's Guest House (☎ 0335-541018; yoschi_bromo@telkom.net; r with/without shower 150,000/75,000Rp, cottages with hot water from 300,000Rp plus 15% tax; i) With loads of character, Alpine kitsch décor, a fab restaurant and friendly staff, Yoschi's is a great option away from the crater. Rooms are a little small but very comfortable, and there's a peaceful garden to relax in. Tours and transport for the 3km to Bromo (50,000Rp person) are also offered.

SUKAPURA

Grand Bromo Hotel (☎ 031-7329945; r from 302,500Rp, cottages from 1,210,000Rp; s) The resort-style

Grand Bromo is a few kilometres up the mountain from Sukapura village and a full 9km from the crater. If you want luxury accommodation and have a car, this may be your best bet; otherwise it's too far from the crater to be convenient.

TOSARI & WONOKITRI

Bromo Cottages (☎ 0343-571222; r from 375,000Rp, cottages from 625,000Rp) Perched on the side of the hill in Tosari, Bromo Cottages has fine mountain views and a restaurant. Rooms and cottages are quite plush for the area, and transport and tours to Bromo are available.

It's also possible to stay with villagers in Wonokitri or at the **Surya Nata Homestay** (r from 100,000Rp). Ask around or arrange something through Wonokitri's PHKA office.

Getting There & Away

Most visitors come through Probolinggo. Hotels in Cemoro Lawang and Ngadisari can make bookings for expensive onward bus tickets from Probolinggo (15,000Rp by public bus) to Yogyakarta (125,000Rp to 140,000Rp) and Denpasar (125,000Rp to 140,000Rp).

Travel agencies in Solo and Yogyakarta book minibuses to Bromo for 100,000Rp to 150,000Rp. These are not luxury minibuses, and sometimes they run a bigger bus to Probolinggo and change there. Occasionally buses will stop short of Cemoro Lawang – specify this as your end destination when purchasing your ticket.

Tours to Bromo are easily organised in Malang, and you can also arrange jeep hire in hotels and travel agents there.

PASIR PUTIH

☎ 0338

On the north coast, roughly halfway between Probolinggo and Banyuwangi, Pasir Putih is one of East Java's most popular seaside resorts and is mobbed on the weekend by sun 'n' sand worshippers from Surabaya. While the beaches are OK, this strip of rickety warungs, souvenir stalls and *rumah makan* is run down, infested with sand flies and has few passable hotels.

The **Hotel Pasir Putih** (☎ 390022; r 55,000-175,000Rp) is in the heart of the 'action', but rooms are desperately dowdy; the more expensive variety come with hot water. If

you are staying for a while, **San Sui Hotel** (☎ 675432; r from 155,000Rp; a s), 6km east of Pasir Putih's main drag, is a far more comfortable bet. It has some quiet stretches of sand nearby.

BONDOWOSO

☎ 0332

Bondowoso, 34km southwest of Situbondo, is one of the cleanest towns in Java – itself an attraction – and the home of some of the island's best *tape*, a tasty, sweet-and-sour snack made from boiled vegetable roots. Otherwise, it is merely a transit point for nearby attractions such as Ijen.

Hotel Anugerah (☎ 421870; Jl Sutuyo 12; r 75,000Rp, with TV/air-con 100,000/125,000Rp; a) Anugerah is a very friendly establishment with large, clean rooms in garish green. Staff can arrange transport to Ijen (300,000Rp return for up to two persons), but you're better off overnighting on the plateau.

Palm Hotel (☎ 421201; www.palm-hotel.net; Jl A Yani 32; r with mandi/air-con from 62,500/156,250Rp; a s) Near Hotel Anugerah, this is Bondowoso's best hotel, with spotless, newly renovated rooms and a lovely pool. It also has a good restaurant and can arrange transport to Ijen.

Both hotels have restaurants, but *tape* can be found on Jl PB Sudirman, where dozens of shops sell it by the basket (15,000Rp). The '321' brand is reportedly the best.

Buses from Bondowoso include Jember (5000Rp, 45 minutes), Probolinggo (9000Rp, two hours) and Surabaya (normal/air-con 25,000/40,000Rp, five hours).

IJEN PLATEAU

Ijen Plateau, part of a reserve that stretches northeast to Baluran National Park, was at one time a huge active crater, 134 sq km in area. Today, it is a quiet but active volcano, and the landscape is dominated by the volcanic cones of Ijen (2368m) and Merapi (2800m) on the northeastern edge of the plateau, and Raung (3332m) on the southwestern corner. Coffee plantations cover much of the western area of the plateau (alongside lush forest), where there are a few settlements. The plateau has a number of difficult-to-reach natural attractions, but most visitors come for the hike to spectacular Kawah Ijen. There are few people in this

unspoiled area, which is as much an attraction as the volcanoes themselves.

Sights & Activities

KAWAH IJEN HIKE

The magnificent turquoise sulphur lake of Kawah Ijen lies at 2148m above sea level and is surrounded by the volcano's sheer crater walls. Ijen's last major eruption was in 1936, though a minor ash eruption occurred in 1952. At the edge of the lake, smoke billows out from the volcano's vent and the lake bubbles when activity increases.

The vent is a source of sulphur, and collectors work here, making the trek up to the crater and down to the lake every day. The best time to make the Kawah Ijen hike is in the dry season between April and October. Sulphur collectors hike up in the morning and return around 1pm when the clouds roll in. Trekkers are advised to do the same, but the clouds often disappear in the late afternoon. Make it for sunrise if you can.

The starting point for the trek to the crater is the PHKA post (17 7am-5pm) at Pos Paltuding, which is usually reached from Bondowoso but can also be accessed from Banyuwangi. Sign in and pay your 20,000Rp entry fee here. The steep 3km path up to the observation post takes about 1½ hours; keep an eye out for gibbons. Just past the PHKA post, the road forks – to the left is the walk to the 'safety-valve' dam, built to regulate the flow of water into Banyu Pahit (Bitter River), but the main area of interest lies along the right fork, a 30-minute walk to the top of the crater and its stunning views.

From the crater, a steep gravelly path leads down to the sulphur deposits and the steaming lake. The walk down takes about 20 minutes; the path is slippery in parts and the sulphur fumes towards the bottom can be overwhelming. Take great care – a French tourist fell and died some years ago.

Back at the lip of the crater, turn left for the climb to the crater's highest point (2368m) and magnificent views, or keep walking anticlockwise for even more expansive views of the lake. On the other side of the lake opposite the vent, the trail disappears into crumbling volcanic rock and deep ravines.

COFFEE PLANTATIONS

Java's finest coffee, both Arabica and Robusta varieties, is produced in the Ijen Plateau area, as well as cacao, cloves and rubber. It's possible to visit various coffee plantations, including Kebun Kalisat (admission 50,000Rp) and Kebun Balawan (admission free); visits will usually include a wander through coffee groves and an impromptu tour of the plantation's factory. The latter plantation has thermal pools and a gushing thermal waterfall (1000Rp) set among lush jungle and the incessant pulse of cicadas. Both plantations have accommodation (below).

Sleeping & Eating

Pos Paltuding (dm 50,000Rp, r 120,000Rp, Pesanggrahan cottage 350,000Rp) The PHKA post at the start of the Kawah Ijen hike has a bare but peaceful cottage with three comfortable rooms. There's no hot water and blankets are not provided, so bring a sleeping bag – it gets very cold at this altitude. The post also has an open-sided shelter for campers, and beds in its café.

Arabika Homestay (% 0868 12107424; r from 92,000Rp plus 10% tax) At Sempol, 13km before Pos Paltuding on the Bondowoso side, the Kebun Kalisat coffee plantation maintains this guesthouse, 1km from the main road. Service is friendly and the more expensive rooms are comfy and have attached bathrooms and hot water. Meals are served here.

Catimore Homestay (% 0868 12107942; r 100,000-200,000Rp) This quality homestay is on the Kebun Balawan coffee plantation some 6km from Sempol. Its basic rooms have a quiet atmosphere. Dinner is available and rooms come with attached bathroom and the all-important hot water. An *ojek* from Sempol costs 15,000Rp.

Jampit Villa (% 031-3524893, Jember 0331-486861; ptpn12@rad.net.id; 1,000,000Rp; ☞) Kebun Kalisat coffee plantation is the proud owner of this luxurious villa, 14km south of Sempol at Jampit. The villa sleeps 20 and has a kitchen and a communal living room. Book through PT Perkubunan Nusantara XII (opposite).

Sempol village has a couple of warungs if you need a place to eat. Pos Paltuding has a small shop for provisions and a café serving little more than noodles.

Getting There & Away

It is possible to travel nearly all the way to Kawah Ijen by public transport, but most visitors charter transport.

FROM BONDOWOSO

From Wonosari, 8km from Bondowoso towards Situbondo, an upgraded road (with its fair share of potholes) runs via Sukosari and Sempol all the way to Pos Paltuding. Apart from a few rough stretches, it is a good paved road and takes about two hours by car. Sign in at the coffee plantation checkpoints (4000Rp) on the way. The Palm Hotel and Hotel Anugerah in Bondowoso (p249) can arrange day tours.

Minibuses run from Bondowoso to Sempol (20,000Rp, 2½ hours), but they only leave when full, and departure times are haphazard. You should be able to find someone in Sempol who will take you the 13km to Pos Paltuding on the back of their motorbike for around 50,000Rp one way. At Pos Paltuding, there are usually a few motorbikes to take you back.

FROM BANYUWANGI

Ijen is closer to Banyuwangi, but the road is very steep and has deteriorated badly. A 4WD is essential (500,000Rp per vehicle) and can be hired through the Banyuwangi Tourist Office (p263).

From Banyuwangi's Blambangan bemo station, take a Lin 3 bemo to Sasak Perot (2000Rp) on the eastern outskirts of town and then a Colt on to Jambu (7500Rp) at the turn-off to Kawah Ijen, a further 17km away. Start at 5.30am to reach the crater in time for good views. From Jambu, *ojek* can take you 9km along the paved road to Sodong through the clove and coffee plantations for 50,000Rp. Beyond Sodong it is a hair-raisingly steep ride and *ojek* are not always keen to do it.

Sodong used to be where the sulphur collectors would bring their loads to be taken by truck to Banyuwangi. It has now been abandoned and the washed-out road is a very steep, rock-strewn track for about 4km, though the last stretch is better.

The 8km from Sodong to Pos Paltuding winds its way through dense rainforest with towering ferns and palms. It's possible to attack this on foot, but expect a tough three-hour battle uphill; most people travel

by jeep. Halfway up, the PHKA Pos Totogan, which is at the edge of the reserve, is not always staffed.

Only 4WD vehicles and motorcycles can make it up, but cars and minibuses can go down from Pos Paltuding to Banyuwangi. It's a slow, bumpy ride in first gear with brakes on all the way.

JEMBER

% 0331

Jember is the thriving service centre for the surrounding coffee, cacao, rubber, cotton and tobacco plantations. It has all the amenities of a large city, but is relatively free of traffic and competes with Bondowoso for the tidy town award.

From Jember groups can arrange a plantation tour, though Kalibaru is the usual centre for plantation visits. PT Perkubunan Nusantara XII (% 486861; Jl Gajah Mada 249) is the state-owned company that controls most of the plantations – it offers day or overnight tours with accommodation on the plantations (including Jampit Villa, opposite). It is also home to the Meru Betiri National Park Office (% 335535; www.merubetiri.or.id; Jl Sriwidjaya 53; 7.30am-3pm Mon-Fri), which has background and accommodation information on the park.

If you need a place to stay overnight, **Hotel Sulawesi** (% 333555; Jl Let Jenderal Suprpto 48; r from 175,000Rp; a), about 1km from the

town centre, is spotlessly clean, with well-equipped rooms.

Getting There & Away

The main terminal, Tawung Alun, 6km west of town, has buses to Bondowoso (7000Rp, 45 minutes), Banyuwangi (15,000Rp, three hours) and Kalibaru (7000Rp, one hour), but buses from Bondowoso usually terminate at the subterminal, 5km north of town; there are also subterminals to the east (for Banyuwangi) and south (for Watu Ulo). Yellow Lin bemo (2000Rp) run from the terminals to the centre of town.

Jember is also located on the Surabaya–Banyuwangi train line; the station is in the town centre.

WATU ULO & PAPUMA

% 0331

Watu Ulo is popular on weekends, but like most of the beaches on Java's south coast, it has grey sand, and crashing surf makes swimming dangerous. The real surprise lies just west around the headland from Watu Ulo at Papuma – a small beach with white sand, turquoise waters and sheltered swimming. **Hotel Vishnu** (% 481028; r from 45,000Rp) is a basic place in the heart of Watu Ulo.

To reach Watu Ulo, take a Jember city bemo (2000Rp) to the Ajung subterminal and then a taxi (the confusing name for a public minibus in these parts) to Ambulu

THE THREAT OF LANDSLIDES

Landslides are common occurrences that leave dozens dead and thousands homeless on an all-too-frequent basis.

It seems the steep slopes of Java are simply slip-sliding away every time the wet season – November to March – hits the island. In February 2006 alone, landslides swept through the village of Sijeruk in Central Java and Jember in East Java, claiming more than 150 lives. In recent years, Purworejo and Cilacap in Central Java and Cimahi in West Java all suffered at the hands of huge mud slides.

Unsurprisingly, environmentalists blame much of the problem on deforestation and illegal logging. But while stripping the land of its much-needed blanket of vegetation is just asking for trouble (and utterly short-sighted), it may not be the main cause of landslide disasters. Sijeruk's landslide occurred on a densely forested hill and most of the villagers affected in the Jember slide live on coffee plantations and along river banks, areas prone to flooding each year. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization has even been so bold as to suggest that deforestation cannot be blamed for small-scale landslides and floods, but rather that the change in climatic patterns is the culprit.

Indonesia's government has made significant progress in halting the illegal trade in timber in recent years, but there is still plenty of work to do. In the near future, however, it seems likely that landslides will play a major role in far too many people's lives when the rains come.

(6000Rp, one hour). From Ambulu yellow bemos go to Watu Ulo (2000Rp, 30 minutes). Papuma is then a half-hour walk along the paved road over the steep headland, though bemos can drop you at the beach.

KALIBARU

☎ 0333

The picturesque road from Jember to Banyuwangi winds around the foothills of Gunung Raung (3322m) up to the small hill town of Kalibaru. It has a refreshing climate and makes a pleasant stop on this route.

The village itself is basically strung out along the main road and quite unremarkable, but it does have a remarkable array of excellent midrange accommodation for such a small town. This makes it a good base for visiting the nearby plantations around Glenmore, 10km east, or the smaller, easily visited plots of coffee and cloves to the north of Kalibaru's train station.

The area has many plantations but the main plantation of interest is **Kebun Kandeng Lembu** (admission 20,000Rp; 11 9am-noon Mon-Thu & Sat, 8.30am-noon Fri), 5km south of Glenmore. Guides can be hired (70,000Rp) for groups to see rubber tapping and processing, as well as cacao and coffee plantations.

Tours

Margo Utomo (right) This resort has plantation tours for 375,000Rp for two people. It also organises transport and group tours to Kawah Ijen (750,000Rp for one to four people), Alas Purwo (735,000Rp for one to five people) and Sukamade (1,100,000Rp for one or two people including accommodation and food).

Kalibaru train station (☎ 897322) Small diesel lorries can be taken from the train station through 35km of impressive mountain countryside (500,000Rp for eight people).

Sleeping & Eating

Kalibaru Cottages (☎ 897333; r with breakfast 165,000Rp; Ⓢ) Four kilometres west of town on the Jember road is yet another of Kalibaru's excellent midrange hotels. It's larger than its competition but still retains a peaceful resort atmosphere. The central pool, surrounded by palm trees, is inviting any time of the night or day and rooms are more than spacious, with comfy beds and pleasant, open-air bathrooms. There's also a restaurant attached.

Margo Utomo Resort (☎ 897700; Jl Lapangan 10; r 200,000Rp; Ⓢ) This old Dutch inn, which now moonlights as a resort, is full of colonial style, and is one of the best places to stay in East Java. Its small bungalows are attractively arranged along a central walkway lined with tropical flowers leading to the resort's aqua-blue pool, all of which is backed by a coffee plantation (tours free for guests, 30,000Rp for nonguests). Its collection of tropical birds can be a little noisy at times and rooms are surprisingly mediocre, but the setting is hard to beat. Rates skyrocket from June to August, at which time it's advisable to book well ahead.

Margo Utomo Cottages (☎ 897420; margoutomo@hotmail.com; Jl Putri Gunung 3; r 200,000Rp; Ⓢ) Newer than Margo Utomo Homestay and without the same colonial atmosphere, Margo Utomo Cottages loses out in the charm stakes but makes up ground with a superb, restful setting down by the river, 3km east of town. It also has a restaurant.

Getting There & Away

Any bus between Jember (7000Rp, one hour) and Banyuwangi (10,000Rp, two hours) can drop you near the hotels. The train station is right near the Margo Utomo Homestay and Kalibaru is on the main Banyuwangi-Jember-Probolinggo-Surabaya train line.

MERU BETIRI NATIONAL PARK

The Meru Betiri National Park, covering 580 sq km between Jember and Banyuwangi districts, is an area of magnificent coastal rainforest and abundant wildlife, making it one of Java's finest parks. Its biggest drawback, however, is its difficult access, which keeps the number of visitors to a trickle.

Orientation & Information

Named after Gunung Betiri (1223m) in the north of the park, the coastal mountains trap the rain and the park is very wet for much of the year. Visit in the dry season from April to October – the road into the park fords a river, which easily floods. Even in the dry season you may have to wade across the river and walk into the park.

The park's office (p251) in Jember has plenty of information; entrance to the park costs 15,000Rp.

(Continued on page 261)

(Continued from page 252)

Sights & Activities

The park's major attraction is the protected turtle beach at **Sukamade**, one of Indonesia's most important turtle-spawning grounds, where five species of turtle come ashore to lay their eggs. Green turtles are most common, but giant leatherbacks also visit. Usually seen in the wet season from December to February, giant leatherbacks are affected by conditions in the Indian Ocean and sometimes arrive between February and July instead; **Mess Pantai** (below) arranges night trips.

Wildlife, found mostly in the mountain forests, includes leopard, wild pigs, deer, banteng, black giant squirrels, civets and pangolin. Bird life is prolific and hornbills, including the rhinoceros hornbill, whoosh and honk overhead. **Meru Betiri** is most famous as the last known home of the Javan tiger, and though they are now widely believed to be extinct, tracks have been recorded as recently as 1997.

Trails are limited in the park and a guide (50,000Rp), arranged through the park office or accommodation, is usually necessary. Apart from some coastal walks, a trail leads about 7km northwest of Sukamade to the **Sumbersari** grazing ground part of the way through rainforest and bamboo thicket.

Rajegwesi, at the entrance to the park, is on a large bay with a sweeping beach and a fishing village. Past the park entrance the road climbs, giving expansive views over spectacular **Teluk Hijau** (Green Bay), with its cliffs and white-sand beach. A trail leads 1km from the road down to **Teluk Hijau**, or it is about a one-hour walk east from **Mess Pantai**.

Sleeping

Mess Pantai (☎ 0331-335535; cottages with shared mandi per r 75,000Rp, entire cottage 300,000Rp, VIP r with fan 250,000Rp) Nestled in the forest back from Sukamade beach, **Mess Pantai** is the best place to stay when exploring the park. It has simple, four-bedroom cottages and a bigger, more comfy two-bedroom cottage. There's cooking facilities and the staff can provide meals (10,000Rp), but as a safe bet bring your own food – you can stock up in Sarongan, or the Sukamade estate in the nearby plantation has a shop selling basic supplies. If you have your own equipment, you can also camp on the beach (15,000Rp per tent).

Wisma Sukamade (☎ 0331-484711; r from 120,000Rp) Approximately 5km north of the beach, Sukamade plantation has much more comfortable accommodation with electricity and all the creature comforts. It has a variety of rooms and meals are provided. Though the accommodation is good, it's not as convenient unless you have your own transport or are on a tour.

Getting There & Away

This is one of the most isolated parts of Java, and it is a long bumpy trip, even by 4WD vehicle.

The most direct way to Sukamade from Banyuwangi or Jember is to first take a bus to **Jajag** (15,000Rp, 1½ hours), then a minibus to **Pesanggaran** (9000Rp, one hour). From **Pesanggaran** take a taxi (the local name for a public truck) to Sukamade (25,000Rp, two hours). The taxi leaves **Pesanggaran** at noon on the dot (a rarity in Java); to make it on time, you'll need to leave Jember around 6.30am.

The taxi passes through Sarongan, a small town where you can stock up on supplies. **Ojeks** to Sukamade (around 50,000Rp) can be arranged here, but generally only in the dry season; during the wet season the rivers are too high to cross. There are two river crossings: the deeper one further south and the shallower crossing further upstream. If the river is up but not flooded, you can wade across and get another *ojek* or walk the 4km to **Mess Pantai**. The taxi has no problem with swollen rivers unless there is severe flooding.

About 4km from Sarongan you reach the **Rajegwesi PHKA** post at the entrance to the park; this is a good place to check on the condition of the river.

ALAS PURWO NATIONAL PARK

This 434.2-sq-km national park occupies the whole of the remote **Blambangan Peninsula** on the southeastern tip of Java. Facilities are limited and it is not easy to reach, but **Alas Purwo** has fine beaches, good opportunities for wildlife spotting, and savannah, mangrove and lowland monsoon forests. Apart from day-trippers and local beach parties on weekends, the park gets few visitors.

Alas Purwo means **First Forest** in Javanese – according to legend this is where the earth first emerged from the ocean. It is an

important Hindu spiritual centre and Pura Giri Selokah, a temple in the park, attracts many pilgrims, especially during Pagerwesi, the Hindu new year.

More recently, the huge breaks – which stretch for 2km – at Plengkung, on the isolated southeastern tip of the peninsula, have made it famous among surfers who have dubbed it ‘G-Land’ (for Grajagan, another name for the area).

Orientation & Information

Surfers come by charter boat from Grajagan at the western end of the bay, but the usual park entry is by road via the village of Pasar Anyar, which has a large national park office and interpretive centre. Call in here to check on accommodation; alternatively check with the head office (opposite) in Banyuwangi.

The actual gateway to the park is at Rowobendo, 10km south along a bad road, where you need to pay your admission fee (20,000Rp). From Rowobendo the road runs past the temple before hitting the beach at Trianggulasi, 2km away. Trianggulasi has hut accommodation but nothing else.

Sights & Activities

This limestone peninsula is relatively flat and the rolling hills reach a peak of only 322m. Alas Purwo has plenty of lowland coastal forest but few trails to explore it – vast expanses of the eastern park are untrammelled, even by park staff.

Using Trianggulasi as a base, there are some interesting short walks. The white-sand beach here is beautiful, but swimming is usually dangerous.

It’s common to see herds of wild banteng, *kijang* and peacocks in the early morning and late afternoon at the Sadengan grazing ground, which has a viewing tower. This beautiful meadow backed by forest is a 2km walk from Trianggulasi along a road and then a swampy trail.

Alas Purwo also has a small population of *ajag* (Asiatic wild dogs), jungle fowl, leaf monkeys, *muntjac* deer, sambar deer and leopards (mostly black panthers). The park guards can arrange interesting, although often fruitless, night leopard-spotting expeditions for around 100,000Rp.

Guards can also arrange a motorbike trip to the turtle hatchery at Ngagelan, or you can

walk. It’s 6km from Rowobendo along a rough road, or a 7km walk along the beach at low tide from Trianggulasi.

It is also possible to walk along the beach all the way to Plengkung via Pancur, 3km southeast of Trianggulasi, where there is a small waterfall that flows onto the beach, another PHKA post and a camping ground.

From Pancur a trail heads 2km inland through some good forest to Gua Istana, a small cave, and another 2km further on to Gua Padepokan.

From Pancur it is a further 11km walk (two hours) around Grajagan Bay to the fine beach at Plengkung, one of Asia’s premier surfing spots. Between 1995 and 1998 the Quiksilver Pro surfing championship was held here every year around June as part of the Association of Surf Professionals World Championships. The surf camps at Plengkung are by no means five-star but do provide unexpected luxury in the wilderness.

Tours

The bigger and better surf camps, away from the beach at Plengkung, are for tours only. Accommodation costs around US\$50 a day at all the camps, but everyone comes on a surfing package that includes all transfers, usually from Bali. Established tour operators include the following:

Bobby’s Camp (bookings in Bali % 0361-755588; www.grajagan.com) The biggest of them, this is run out of Bali and offers three-night packages from US\$300.

G-Land Jungle Surf Camp (bookings in Bali % 0361-777649; www.g-land.com) The other main operator. The elevated bungalows are comfortable and have most of the facilities a surfer could want; packages start at US\$350 for three nights.

Sleeping & Eating

Pesanggrahan (% 0333-428675; s/d 50,000/75,000Rp) Close to the beach at Trianggulasi, this PHKA establishment has elevated bungalows. The rooms are Spartan, with only a bed. Water is from a well, and electricity is provided by a generator. Though primitive, this is a lovely, relaxing spot and many who come for a day or two end up staying longer.

Even though staff at Pesanggrahan may sell supplies and cook meals in the high season, it’s best to bring all food and drink

with you. Trianggulasi has no warungs and is deserted if no guests stay, but the Pesanggrahan has a kitchen with a kerosene stove and hurricane lamps.

The PHKA office at Pasar Anyar has a shop selling basic provisions for visitors, such as packet noodles, but it is better to stock up on food at the general stores in Dambuntung, where the bus drops you. There is also a camping ground and a PHKA post at Pancur.

Getting There & Away

From Banyuwangi’s southern Brawijaya bus terminal, the Putra Jaya company has buses to Kalipahit (10,000Rp, 1½ hours) via Benculuk and Tegaldelimo until 4pm. Buses can drop you at the small village of Dambuntung, where you can stock up on food. Then take an *ojek* for around 35,000Rp to 50,000Rp first to the park office in Pasar Anyar, 3km from Dambuntung, to check on accommodation, and then on to the park. The 12km road from Pasar Anyar to Trianggulasi is badly potholed but is flat and negotiable by car.

Jeeps can be hired in Banyuwangi (700,000Rp) for one-day trips to Plengkung.

BANYUWANGI

% 0333

This pleasant, clean town has no major sites to drag you here, but schedules, inquisitiveness or the need for a break might take you to Banyuwangi, the ferry departure point for Bali.

Orientation

The ferry terminus, bus terminal and train station are all at Ketapang, 8km north of town, so most people go straight through to Gunung Bromo or Yogyakarta.

Information

Alas Purwo National Park head office (% 428675; Jl A Yani 108; 7.30am–3pm Mon–Thu, 7.30–11am Fri) Two kilometres south of the town centre.

Baluran National Park head office (% 424119; www.baluranationalpark.go.id; Jl Agus Salim 132; 7am–3pm Mon–Thu, 7–11am Fri) Four kilometres southwest of the centre.

Banyuwangi Tourist Office (% 424172; Jl Ahmad Yani 78; 7am–3.30pm Mon–Thu, 7–10.30am Fri) Extremely helpful office; Mr Aekanu (% 081 55905197; aekanu@plasa.com), who works at the office, can organise tours.

Sights

One of the few sights in town is the **Kongco Tan Hu Cin Jin Chinese temple** (Jl Ikam Gurani 54); built in 1784, it’s well worth a peek.

At the Banyuwangi Tourist Office is a small museum (admission free; 7am–3.30pm Mon–Fri) devoted to culture from the area.

Sleeping & Eating

Hotel Baru (% 421369; Jl MT Haryono 82–84; r with fan/air-con 30,000/70,000Rp; a) Baru is a solid option with friendly staff and a variety of rooms. There’s also a small restaurant on site.

Hotel Ketapang Indah (% 422280; Jl Gatot Subroto; r from 200,000Rp, sea-view r 400,000Rp; a s) About 2km south of the ferry terminal in Ketapang is this, Banyuwangi’s most stylish hotel. Rooms and cottages are scattered around a landscaped garden, and there are uninterrupted views of Bali.

Ijen Resort and Villas (% 429000; www.ijenhotel.com; Dusun Randaungun, Licin; r from US\$115, ste US\$195 plus 21% tax; s) Nestled among rice fields at the foot of Ijen Plateau, miles from the hustle and bustle of city living, is this East Java oasis. Privacy is paramount here, which is probably why the resort attracts so many honeymooners. Rooms are more than inviting, with stone floors, open-air bathrooms, supremely thick mattresses and balconies with either views of the Ijen mountains or Bali. The pool itself has possibly the best view of all – across terraced rice fields to the rising peak of Gunung Raung. Meals are available, so you never have to venture away from the peaceful setting. The resort is about 25 minutes from Banyuwangi; take a bus to Licin then hire an *ojek* for the rest of the journey.

Wina Ayam Goreng Blambangan (mains 20,000Rp; 7 lunch & dinner) This large eatery in Blambangan bemo station has some of the best chicken in town.

For cheap eats, there are plenty of warungs on the corner of Jl MT Haryono and Jl Wahid Haysim. There are also several budget eateries on Jl Kapt Piere Tendean. In the evening, Pondok Ikan Bakar at No 17 does a cracking fish barbecue.

Getting There & Away

BOAT

Ferries from Ketapang depart roughly every 30 minutes around the clock for Gilimanuk

in Bali. The ferry costs 4300Rp for passengers, 16,000Rp for a rider and motorcycle and 85,000Rp for a car, including driver. Through-buses between Bali and Java include the fare in the bus ticket and are the easiest option.

Pelni's *Tatamailau* stops in Banyuwangi once a month on its route to Sulawesi, Maluku and Papua. It docks at Tanjungwangi, along from the Bali ferry dock. Tickets can be bought at the Pelni agent (☎ 510291; Jl Raya Dodol 16) nearby.

BUS

Banyuwangi has two bus terminals. The Sri Tanjung bus terminal is 3km north of the Bali ferry terminal at Ketapang, and 11km north of town. Buses from this terminal travel to northern destinations, such as Baluran (6000Rp, one hour), Probolinggo (normal/*patas* 26,000/34,000Rp, four hours) and Surabaya (36,000/51,000Rp, six hours). Buses also go right through to Yogyakarta (*patas* 105,000Rp, 14 hours) and Denpasar (51,000Rp, four hours including the ferry trip).

Brawijaya terminal (also known as Karang Ente), 4km south of town, has most of the buses to the south. These include Kalipahit (10,000Rp, 1½ hours), Kalibaru (10,000Rp, two hours) and Jember (15,000Rp, three hours).

TRAIN

The main Banyuwangi train station is just a few hundred metres north of the ferry terminal.

The express *Mutiara Timur* leaves at 9am and 10.45pm for Probolinggo (four hours) and Surabaya (business/executive 40,000/55,000Rp, six hours). Economy-class trains include the *Sri Tanjung*, which leaves at 6am for Yogyakarta (38,000Rp, 13 hours); and the *Blambangan*, which leaves at 1.10pm for Probolinggo (19,000Rp, six hours).

BALURAN NATIONAL PARK

Baluran National Park is quite unlike any other park on the island. Nicknamed 'Indonesia's little bit of Africa', this park was once extensive grasslands covering some 250 sq km on the northeastern corner of Java. Unfortunately much of the grasslands have disappeared due to encroachment by acacia

thorn scrub, but you can find pockets of the park that still live up to its nickname.

Orientation & Information

The main service town for Baluran is Wonorejo, on the main coast road between Surabaya and Banyuwangi, where food supplies can be bought. The PHKA office (☎ 0333-461650; 7am-5pm) is on the highway, where guides can be arranged for 60,000Rp per hour. The park's head office (p263) is in Banyuwangi. The park entry fee is 20,000Rp and an extra 6000Rp is charged for a car.

Baluran can be visited at any time of the year, but the dry season (June to November) is usually the best time because the animals congregate near the waterholes at Bekol and Bama.

Sights & Activities

Baluran is rich in wildlife and supports important populations of banteng and *ajag* plus sambar deer, *muntjac* deer, two species of monkey, and wild pigs. The park is also home to between 10 and 12 leopards, but there have only been two sightings in the last 17 years. The bird life is depleted, due to extensive illegal trapping for the caged-bird trade. However, green peafowl, red and green jungle fowl, hornbills and bee-eaters are still easy to see.

On the hill above the guesthouses at Bekol there is a viewing tower that provides a panoramic view over a 300-hectare clearing. Banteng and sambar herds can be seen here, and wild dogs can sometimes be seen hunting sambar, usually in the early morning. There are walking trails around Bekol.

Bama, on the coast, is a 3km walk or drive from Bekol. It has accommodation and a half-decent beach where you can snorkel. The nearby coastal forest has numerous waterholes and is a good place to see water monitor lizards and monkeys.

Sleeping

Bookings can be made in advance through the Baluran National Park head office (☎ 424119; www.baluranationalpark.go.id; Jl Agus Salim 132; 7am-3pm Mon-Thu, 7-11am Fri) in Banyuwangi. Most visitors tend to day-trip, so accommodation is not usually full, but it pays to book, especially in the peak June to July holiday period when school groups visit the park.

PANGANDARAN'S TSUNAMI *Atik Wildan*

On the afternoon of 17 July 2006, an undersea earthquake measuring 7.7 on the Richter scale triggered a tsunami that struck a 200km stretch of Java's central coast. The earthquake caused a wave 3m high to race 400m inland, and, while far less severe than the devastating tsunami of December 2004, it still wreaked havoc as far west as the Bandung province and as far east as Yogyakarta's coastal settlements. Approximately 550 people died and close to 50,000 were displaced.

Worst hit was the beach resort of Pangandaran and its neighbouring villages. Little warning of the wave reached locals and tourists (the promised tsunami-warning system of alarms and sirens had yet to be installed), but fortunately many managed to flee to the inland hills. Beachfront restaurants and hotels were badly damaged by the wave and all the shops and stalls on the beach itself were completely washed away; those further inland suffered little damage.

As little as two months after the tsunami, much of Pangandaran was back to normal. Transport facilities along the coastline were up and running, some hotels had opened their doors, and the fish market was once again crowded. The most severely damaged hotels were planning to open six months after the tsunami, but it's advisable to call ahead to check whether your hotel of choice is currently operating. The government has banned further development on the beach so the warungs at the southern end of the west beach are no longer.

Support and donations for victims of the tsunami are welcomed by the Indonesian arm of the Red Cross (☎ 021-7992325; www.palangmerah.org in Indonesian; Jl Jenderal Datot Subroto Kav 96, 12790 Jakarta).

Atik Wildan lives in Yogyakarta and with her husband runs the Lana Gallery (p184), one of the few contemporary art galleries in the country to directly support up-and-coming artists.

Rosa's Ecolodge (☎ 0338-453005; www.rosasecolodge.com; Ds Sidomulyo RT 03/03, Sumberwaru; r 250,000Rp; a) On the northern edge of the park in tiny Sumberwaru is this peaceful lodge run by the affable Rene and Rosa. This is a place to kick back for a few days and soak up village life, and let yourself be entertained by the hosts' captivating stories. Rooms are spacious and of the highest standard, with tiled floors you could eat off, bamboo lining the walls, and traditional wood furniture. Home-cooked meals – veritable banquets of local specialities using local produce – are available for 40,000Rp, and tours of Baluran can be arranged. You can sleep easy, knowing part of the room rate is being channelled into educating local children on the importance of nature and natural resources.

At Bekol, 12km into the park, **Pesanggrahan** (per person 25,000Rp) has six rooms; there's a *mandi* and kitchen, but you must bring your own provisions.

Bekol also has two *wisma*; **Wisma Tamu** (beds per person 35,000Rp) has three comfortable rooms with attached *mandis*, while **Wisma Peneliti** (beds per person 55,000Rp) is a little more expensive but also a little more plush.

Bama, 3km east of Bekol on the beach, also has its fair share of accommodation. **Bama Guesthouse** (beds 25,000Rp per person) is a very basic option but has cooking facilities, although you must bring your own food. **Rumah Panggung** (cottage 150,000Rp) is bigger, newer and cosier, but is closer to the waterhole than the beach.

The canteen at Bekol sells drinks and some provisions, but meals are cooked only for groups of 10 or more. You might be able to arrange something with the PHKA staff, but you have to bring your own food.

Getting There & Away

Surabaya to Banyuwangi buses, taking the coast road via Probolinggo, can drop you right at the park entrance; and when leaving the park, buses are easily flagged down. From Banyuwangi (or Ketapang ferry, if you are coming from Bali) it's only a half-hour journey on the Wonorejo bus (6000Rp). Ask the driver to let you off at the park entrance, and ask a PHKA ranger to arrange an *ojek* (30,000Rp) to take you the next 12km to Bekol along the badly rutted road. If you are coming from the west, Baluran is 3½ hours from Probolinggo.

© Lonely Planet Publications. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'