

# Gateway Jakarta

Dubbed the ‘Big Durian’, Jakarta has a spiny outer shell of freeways, skyscrapers, slums and traffic jams built on a plain that floods (often to biblical proportions) every rainy season. But the sweet, if acrid-smelling, centre is a condensed version of vast Indonesia – Batak taxi drivers, musicians from Maluku, religious radicals from Solo – with all the cultural traits and culinary treats that a nation of 250 million has to offer. From the crumbling colonial buildings to the city’s decadent nightclubs, Jakarta is literally stuffed with humanity. It is a tough city to explore, lacking a coherent centre, but it is a real workout for urban adventurers.

See Lonely Planet’s *Indonesia* guidebook for more information.

## INFORMATION

### Bookshops

**Periplus** (☎ 718-7070; lvl 3, Plaza Senayan, Jln Asia Afrika; ☎ 9am-7pm) Has a wide range of English-language titles, including Lonely Planet guide books and Periplus maps.

### Emergency

**Tourist Police** (☎ 566-000; Jln KH Wahid Hasyim) On the 2nd floor of the Jakarta Theatre.

### Internet Access

Internet cafés are scattered all over town, including the Jln Jaksa area, and generally charge around 10,000Rp per hour.

### Medical Services

**SOS Medika Klinik** (☎ 750-6001; Jln Puri Sakti 10, Kemang; ☎ 24hr)

### Money

Hundreds of banks and ATMs are spread across town including:

**Bank Mandiri** (Jln KH Wahid Hasyim)

**BII Bank** (Plaza Indonesia, Jln Thamrin) With an ATM.

**BNI Bank** (Jln Kebon Sirih Raya)

### Post

**Main post office** (Jln Gedung Kesenian 1; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat)

### Tourist information

**Jakarta Visitor Information** (☎ 315-4094; www.jakarta.go.id; Jakarta Theatre Bldg, Jln Wahid Hasyim 9; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat) Offers plenty of leaflets and an excellent colour map that shows the city’s busway routes. There’s also a desk at the airport.

## Travel Agencies

**24-Hour Tickets** (☎ 3192-3173; Jln Haji Agus Salim 57A)  
**Robertur** (☎ 314-2926; Jln Jaksa 20B)

## SIGHTS

### Kota & Around

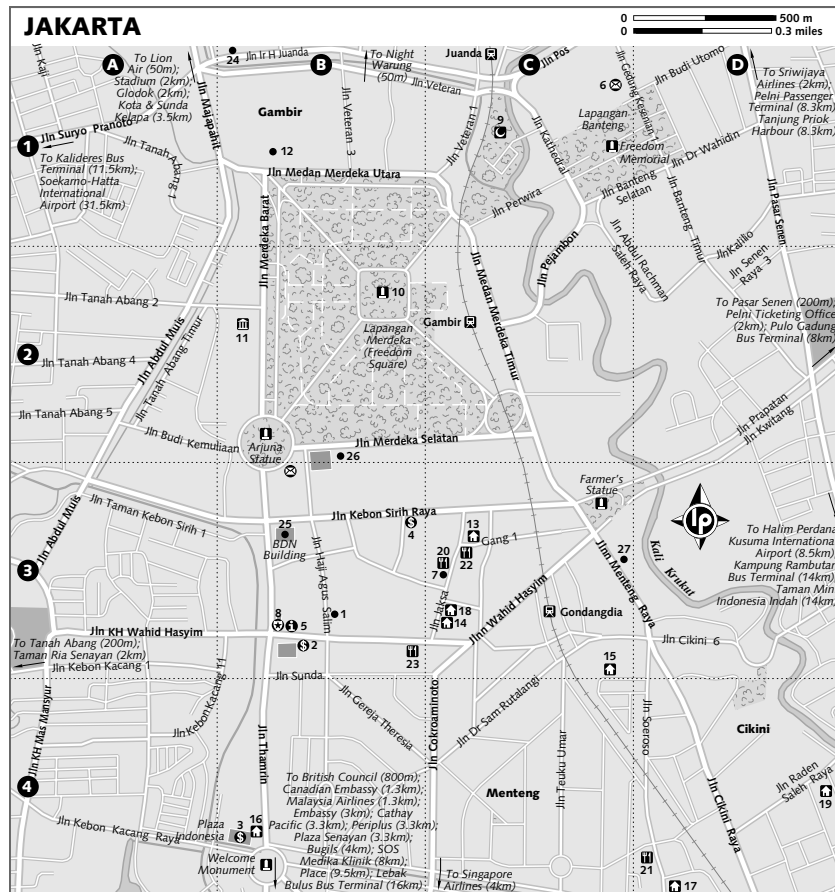
Jakarta’s crumbling historic heart is Kota, home to the remnants of the Dutch capital of Batavia. From Jln Jaksa take the northbound train from Gondangdia station to Kota station (2000Rp); or take a Koridor 1 bus from the busway on Jln Thamrin.

The finest way to relive the colonial experience is to kick your feet back and take a drink in the **Café Batavia** (see p84). The old Portuguese cannon **Si Jagur** (Taman Fatahillah), or ‘Mr Fertility’ was believed to be a cure for barrenness.

Nearby, **Gereja Sion** (Jl Pangeran Jayakarta 1; ☎ dawn-dusk) is the oldest remaining church in Jakarta. It was built in 1695 for the ‘black Portuguese’ brought to Batavia as slaves and given their freedom if they joined the Dutch Reformed Church.

## FAST FACTS

- Telephone code: ☎ 62 country; ☎ 021 city
- Population: 8.9 million
- Time: GMT+7
- Visas: most nationalities get a 30-day tourist visa on arrival



More fine Dutch architecture lines the grotty Kali Besar canal, including the **Toko Merah** (Jln Kali Besar Barat), formerly the home of Governor-General van Imhoff. Further north is the last remaining Dutch drawbridge, the **Chicken Market Bridge**.

Among the hubbub, **Sunda Kelapa** (admission 1000Rp) is the old Dutch port that is still used by colourful Buginese schooners. It's a 1km walk from Taman Fatahillah, or take an *ojek sepeda* (push-bike taxi; 2500Rp).

### Central & Southern Jakarta

Soekarno attempted to tame Jakarta by giving it a central space, **Lapangan Merdeka** (Freedom Square), and topping it with a gigantic **National Monument** (Monas; ☎ 384-0451; admission 6000Rp;

☎ 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-7pm Sat & Sun). The 132m-high column, capped with a gilded flame, has been dubbed 'Soekarno's last erection' – whip up the shaft for a shot of the city. The **National History Museum** (☎ 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-7pm Sat & Sun), in the base, tells the story of Indonesia's independence struggle.

The **National Museum** (☎ 386-8171; Jln Merdeka Barat 12; admission 750Rp; ☎ 8.30am-2.30pm Tue-Thu & Sun, 8.30-11.30am Fri, 8.30am-1.30pm Sat) is something of an oddity in that it is genuinely worth visiting. There are excellent displays of Han ceramics and ancient Hindu statuary and bejewelled kris handles. The **Indonesian Heritage Society** (☎ 572-5870) conducts free tours of the museum in English every Tuesday and Thursday at 9.30am.

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Built to celebrate the nation, **Taman Mini Indonesia Indah** (☎ 545-4545; www.jakweb.com/tmii; TMII Pintu 1; admission 6000Rp; ☎ 8am-5pm) includes traditional houses from (most) Indonesian provinces set around a lagoon. There's also an assortment of museums, including an insect house and bird park, and, best of all, displays of gifts given to Soeharto. To get here take the Koridor 7 bus to Kampung Rambutan bus station and then hop on a T15 metro-mini; it's about an hour from central Jakarta.

North of Lapangan Merdeka is the gleaming white **Presidential Palace** (Jl Medan Merdeka Utara) and to the northeast is the vast **Mesjid Istiqlal** (Jl Veteran 1; ☎ dawn-dusk), one of the grandest mosques in Southeast Asia.

### SLEEPING

#### Jln Jaksa & Cikini Area

Jakarta's guesthouse ghetto is a short stroll from the main drag, Jln Thamrin, and close to Gambir train station. The Cikini area is east of Jln Jaksa and has a few pricier guesthouses.

**Bloem Steen Homestay** (☎ 3192-5389; Gang I 173; s/d with shared mandi 25,000/40,000Rp) On a quiet lane, this place has sparse rooms with ancient mattresses (but clean sheets). There's a tiny garden out the front.

**Djody Hotel** (☎ 390-5976; Jln Jaksa 27; r 55,000-135,000Rp; ☎) Get past the Jaksa minimalist look and this place has plain but clean, tiled rooms that are fair value. There's a safety deposit box at reception.

**Hotel Tator** (☎ 3192-3941; Jln Jaksa 37; r 75,000-120,000Rp; ☎) Cleanliness standards are high here, where the rooms come with bleach-fresh aromas and there's a front patio where you can munch your breakfast.

**Yannie International Guesthouse** (☎ 314-0012; Jln Raden Saleh Raya 35; s/d 125,000/140,000Rp; ☎) Yannie has well-kept rooms with hot-water bathrooms. There is no sign, just a 'Y' out front.

**Gondia International Guesthouse** (☎ 390-92211; Jln Gondangdia Kecil 22; d from 160,000Rp; ☎) Pleasantly old-fashioned place with cosy, neat rooms that all have hot-water bathrooms, phones and reading lights. There's a small garden area too.

**Hotel Marcopolo** (☎ 230-1777; Jln Teuku Cik Ditiro 19; r from 240,000Rp plus 21% tax; ☎) In the heart of suburbia, Marcopolo is great value for money. This high-rise offers a range of enormous rooms (all of which are kept in top condition), with baths and balconies.

**Grand Hyatt Jakarta** (☎ 390-1234; http://jakarta.grand.hyatt.com; Jln Thamrin; r from US\$175; ☎) The Hyatt is the city centre's most salubrious hotel, rising above Plaza Indonesia. It attracts the grand and the beautiful to its top-notch bars and restaurants.

### Elsewhere

**Quality Hotel Aspac** (☎ 559-0008; fax 559-0018; r from US\$80; ☎) 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.

**Batavia Hotel** (☎ 690-4118; www.batavia-hotel.com; Jln Kali Besar Barat 44-46; r from 365,000Rp; ☎) The rooms at Batavia are surprisingly plush and it's also a lot closer to the airport than most hotels. Discounts are available for 12-hour stays.

### EATING

#### Jln Jaksa area

Jln Jaksa's fine for no-nonsense Indonesian and Western grub. Also head to the night hawkers stalls around the southern end of Jln Haji Agus Salim (also known as Jln Sabang).

**Margot Café** (☎ 391-3830; Jln Jaksa 15; mains 15,000Rp; ☎) breakfast, lunch & dinner) Classic Jaksa hangout with bamboo walls, wood floors, TV soaps, and cheap grub.

**Jasa Bundo** (☎ 390-5607; Jln Jaksa 20A; mains 12,000Rp; ☺ breakfast, lunch & dinner) Agreeable, inexpensive *masakan padang* (a spread of dishes) where all the usual favourites are piled up on the counter.

**Paprika** (☎ 314-4113; Jln KH Wahid Hasyim; mains 40,000Rp; ☺ lunch & dinner Mon-Sat) This hip, classy restaurant-cum-lounge bar has slick service and serves fusion food; it even starred in the film *Arisan*.

## Elsewhere

The upmarket suburb of Kemang has plenty of stylish nightlife. Street food can be picked up at the **night warung** (market, Jln Pecenongan), about 1km north of the National Monument.

**Place** (Jln Kemang Raya; ☺ dinner) Highly sociable 'food bazaar' serving up everything from Indo regulars, teppanyaki steaks to gelato.

**Pasar Pagi** (Jln Mangga Dua; ☺ dinner) A great food bazaar next to the Mangga Dua mall. Half of the stalls serve Indonesian and halal cuisine.

**Lara Djonggrang** (☎ 315-3252; Jln Teuku Cik Ditiro 4; mains 45,000-150,000Rp; ☺ lunch & dinner) An attractive selection of dishes from around the archipelago fill the tables of this stylish restaurant mixing traditional Indonesian flair with North African charm.

## DRINKING & CLUBBING

Jakarta nights are some of the most hedonistic in Asia with expat pubs and 'beautiful people' lounge bars. The bar zone on Jln Falatehan near Blok M is a good all round bet. Jakarta has an extraordinary clubbing scene centred in Glodok and Kota. In the south of the city the scene revolves around a richer crowd. Most places don't get going until 11pm, and rarely close before 4am.

**Bugils** (☎ 574-7650; ☎ 574 7650; www.batavia.cafe.com; Taman Ria Senayan, Jln Jenderal Gatot Subroto; ☺ 11am-late; ☺) Jakarta's prime expat watering hole in the *Cheers* mould is ideal for a pint and a game of pool.

☐ **Cafe Batavia** (☎ 691-5531; Jln Pintu Besar Utara 14; mains from 50,000Rp; ☺ 24hr) This refined bar-restaurant, dating from 1805, is a Kota landmark. Revel in the colonial surrounds as you sip your tropical cocktails.

**Embassy** (☎ 574-2047; Taman Ria Senayan, East Bldg. 704, Senayan) Upmarket club where Jakarta's rich and beautiful gather to groove.

**Stadium** (☎ 626-3323; www.stadiumjakarta.com; Jln Hayum Waruk 111 FF-JJ) An all-weekend party at this hardcore club, with a capacity of

4000, that opens on a Thursday and closes Monday morning. Be warned that alcohol is not the drug of choice here and take care outside as this is not Jakarta's safest area.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

Jakarta is the main travel hub for Indonesia, with flights and ships to destinations all over the archipelago. Buses depart for cities across Java, Bali and Sumatra, while trains travel across Java. For information on getting to specific regions in Borneo, see these chapters: Sabah (p87), Sarawak (p161), Brunei (p220) and Kalimantan (p237)

## Air

The **Soekarno-Hatta International Airport** is 35km northwest of the city. **Garuda** (www.garuda-indonesia.com) and its Citilink subsidiary connect from international destinations to Jakarta and on to Balikpapan, Kalimantan on the island of Borneo. Batavia, Adam Air, Lion Air and Sriwijaya Air also serve Balikpapan.

Domestic and international airlines serving Jakarta include:

**Adam Air** (☎ 550-7505, 690-9999; www.adamaair.co.id; Soekarno-Hatta airport)

**Air Asia** (☎ 0804-133-3333; www.airasia.com; Soekarno-Hatta airport)

**Batavia Air** (☎ 384-0888; www.batavia-air.co.id; Jln Ir H Juanda 15)

**Cathay Pacific** (☎ 515-1747; www.cathaypacific.com; Tower 1, Jakarta Stock Exchange Bldg, Jln Sudirman 26-F)

**Continental** (☎ 3193-4417; www.continental.com; ground fl, BDN Bldg, Jln Thamrin 5)

**Garuda Indonesia** (24-hr booking line ☎ 0807-1-427832; www.garuda-indonesia.com; Garuda Bldg, Jln Merdeka Selatan 13)

**Lion Air** (☎ 632-6039; www.lionair.co.id; Jln Gajah Mada 7)

**Malaysia Airlines** (☎ 522-9685; www.malaysiaairlines.com; ground fl, World Trade Center, Jln Jend Sudirman Kav 29-31)

**Qantas** (☎ 230-0655; www.qantas.com; 11th fl, BDN Bldg, Jln Thamrin 5)

**Singapore Airlines** (☎ 5790-3747; www.singaporeairlines.com; 8th fl, Menara Kadin Indonesia, Jln HR Kasuna Said, Blok X15 2-3)

**Thai Airways International** (☎ 230-2552; www.thaiairways.com; ground fl, BDN Bldg, Jln Thamrin 5)

## Boat

The **Pelni ticket office** (☎ 421-2893; www.pelni.co.id; Jln Angkasa 18; ☺ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat) is 13km northeast of the city centre in

Kemayoran. Tickets (plus commission) can be bought through Pelni agents including **Menara Buana Surya** (☎ 314-2464; Jln Menteng Raya 29), in the Tedja Buana building, 500m east of Jln Jaksa. To Kalimantan, the *Lawit* goes via Tanjung Pandan to Pontianak.

Pelni ships arrive at and depart from Pelabuhan Satu (Dock 1) at Tanjung Priok, 13km northeast of the city centre. Koridor 10 Transjakarta buses should start serving the terminal from 2008, or you can take bus 10 from Jln Haji Agus Salim (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.

## Bus

**Kalideres** (☎ 541-4996) is 15km northwest of the city centre and has frequent buses to destinations west of Jakarta. Take a Koridor 3 Transjakarta bus to get here. **Kampung Rambutan** (☎ 840-0062) is 18km south of the city and primarily handles buses to destinations south and southeast of Jakarta. Koridor 7 Transjakarta buses serve this terminal. **Pulo Gadung** (☎ 489-3742), 8km east of the centre, serves central and eastern Java, Sumatra and Bali. Take Koridor 4 or 2 Transjakarta buses. **Lebak Bulu** is 16km southwest of the city and handles some deluxe buses to Yogyakarta, Surabaya and Bali.

## Train

Jakarta's four main train stations are the easiest way out of the city to points elsewhere on the island of Java. **Gambir** (☎ 386-2361), on the eastern side of Lapangan Merdeka, is a convenient 15-minute walk from Jln Jaksa. Gambir handles express trains to Bogor, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Solo, Semarang and Surabaya. Some Gambir trains also stop at **Kota** (☎ 692-9083), the train station in the old city. **Pasar Senen** (☎ 421-0164), to the east, has mostly

*ekonomi* trains to eastern destinations. **Tanah Abang** (☎ 314-9872) has trains west to Merak.

Smaller, but useful if you are staying in Jln Jaksa is **Gondangdia**, 500m east of most of the area's guesthouses. From here, there are trains to Bogor and Kota.

## GETTING AROUND To/From the Airport

Soekarno-Hatta International Airport is 35km northwest of the city. It's about an hour away via a toll road (up to two hours during rush hour).

There's a Damri bus service (15,000Rp) every 30 minutes from 3am to 7pm between the airport and Gambir train station.

Alternatively, a metered taxi costs about 130,000Rp, including the airport service charge and toll road charges. These should be organised through the official booths in the arrival terminal. Avoid the freelance drivers outside for safety reasons.

## Bus

Jakarta has a comprehensive city bus network. Big, regular city buses charge a fixed 2000Rp fare. The big express *patas* buses also charge 2000Rp to 2500Rp and the air-con *transjakarta* buses cost 3500Rp. Supplementing these services are *mikrolet* and other minibuses (1000Rp to 2500Rp).

## Taxi

Metered taxis cost 5000Rp for the first kilometre and 250Rp for each subsequent 100m. Make sure the *argo* (meter) is used. **Bluebird cabs** (☎ 794-1234; www.bluebirdgroup.com) can be booked ahead and have the best reputation; do *not* risk travelling with the less reputable firms. Typical taxi fares from Jln Thamrin: to Kota (20,000Rp) or Blok M (30,000Rp). Any toll-road charges are extra and are paid by the passengers.

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