

Indonesian Lombok: Beaches, Mangroves, Hot Springs

The fascinating island of Lombok is located at the West Nusa Tenggara province of Indonesia. The island is known to be one of the most beautiful parts of the Lesser Sunda Islands along with Bali on the west and Sumbawa on the east. The island is divided into five regions namely the West Lombok, North Lombok, Central and East Lombok, South Lombok and of course the Gili Islands. Due to its geographical location, Lombok has a tropical climate, mostly hot and humid making it drier than the neighboring Bali.



Although Lombok is mostly rural, signs of urbanization and industrialization start to flourish in the island. In fact, there had already been few well-established cities around Lombok such as Mataram which is the capital city of the West Tenggara province and also the largest city of the island. Next is the Kuta which is known to be a surfing haven for tourists. Another major city is Praya which is the second largest city of the island and where Lombok International Airport is located. Selong is another city located in East Lombok. The cities of Senggigi and Tanjung are both known for their luxurious hotels, villas and resorts.

The principal language of Lombok is Bahasa Sasak but most people also speak and understand Bahasa Indonesia which is the national language. English is not widely spoken nor understood in most parts of the island but there are some natives who can speak the language especially in the cities.

The most popular tourist destination of Lombok is the Gili Islands. The Gili islands consist of three islands. The first one is the Gili Trawangan which is the largest and the most visited island. Gili Trawangan was dubbed to be the 'party island' since there is a number of nightclubs located in the area. The next is the Gili Air which is the closest to Lombok and is known to have a well-developed local community. The last but not the least is Gili Meno. Located in the middle of two well-known islands, Gili Meno is not as popular and well-developed with only 400 people living on the island. Nevertheless, it was said that Gili Meno has the best beaches compared to Gili Trawangan and Gili Air. The Gili Islands are also best known as the most visited places by backpackers.



Gili islands adventure is never completed without visiting mangrove forest of Gili Sulat. Tourists can do canoeing passing through the alleys of numerous mangrove trees and seeing a lot of birds that nest there. The place is also good for snorkeling and diving.

Lombok also takes pride for its majestic Mount Rinjani which is an active volcano and the third highest mountain in the entire country. Rinjani has just recently erupted on 23 May 2012. As of the moment, the mountain is at peace allowing people see its breathtaking view with the clear skies. The middle and lower part of the mountain is home to rich variety of unique trees, flowers and animals so tourists can really see a lot of things there when trekking. There is a crater lake as well called Segara Anak. The mountain's natural hot springs are also something to look forward.

But even before trekking Mount Rinjani, tourists can enjoy the grandiose waterfalls in Senaru: the Air Terjun Sindang and the Air Terjun Tiu Kelep. Among the two, Air Terjun Sindang is more admired because of its unique waterfalls that go along into different directions. In fact, the English translation for its name is 'slightly crazy water falls'.



Tanjung Aan is a place located in South Lombok. It became popular to visitors for its picturesque beaches. The place is also earmarked for its well-developed world-class resorts. Aside from swimming, tourist can also do surfing.

So far, trekking is the most favorite activity by the tourists in Lombok. But there is still so much more to see and do in the place. Although Lombok is best known for their high-end resorts and white pristine beaches, the island also highlights its diverse culture, captivating nature and authentic and locally made products.

There are several temples where tourists can feel the real essence of tranquility such as the Lingsar Temple, Gunung Agung Temple, Surandi Temple and the Meru Temple which is the largest. To take a glance on the past of Lombok and the diversity of the culture, tourists can go to the Nusa Tenggara Barat also known as the Cultural Lombok Museum. Just before leaving the Island, tourist can go

shopping for some souvenirs at Beleka Village where almost all kinds of handicrafts are sold. There is also the Penujak Village known to be the oldest pottery center in Lombok. Dining is also a major attraction in the place as Indonesian cuisine is undisputedly one of the best in the entire world.

Lombok is truly and exciting place to visit. It had evolved way better than it was few years ago. Today, Indonesia is making its ways to continually promote Lombok and make it as a frontier tourist destination. So far, Lombok is consistently doing well inviting more and more foreign tourists annually.

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