Bali, *before you land.*

Everything we check before a Bali trip, in the order we check it: from six weeks out to your first evening on the island. About an hour of admin, spread over a month.



TICK AS YOU GO

Print it, or open it on your phone and mark it up. Each chapter is a sitting.

EVERY LINK IS LIVE

Tap any underlined line in the PDF. They go to the official site or to the page we keep up to date.

HONEST MARKERS

OFFICIAL government site, no commission. PARTNER we may earn a small commission, at no cost to you. ON THE SITE our own guide.

IN THIS KIT

I Six weeks out — The paperwork.

II A month out — Health & cover.

III Two weeks out — Money & signal.

IV The week before — Book what sells out.

V 72 hours before — Three forms, one folder.

VI Packing — *for Bali, specifically.*

VII On the island — *the first 48 hours.*

I

SIX WEEKS OUT

The *paperwork.*

do this part with a coffee, not at the gate

- [ ] **Passport, six months clear.** Valid at least six months from the day you land, with two blank pages and no torn cover. Immigration in Denpasar does turn damaged passports away.

- [ ] **Pick your visa.** Most visitors use the e-VoA online or the visa on arrival at the airport: 30 days, extendable once, IDR 500,000 at the time of writing. Same fee either way; online skips a queue. Look-alike sites charge double, so use the government one.

  Indonesia e-Visa portal OFFICIAL Our entry & visa guide ON THE SITE

- [ ] **Staying past 60 days?** Working remotely, studying, or simply staying long needs a different visa, applied for before you fly. Do not plan on sorting it out on the island.

- [ ] **A licence that covers a scooter.** An International Driving Permit with the motorcycle category, carried with your home licence. Without both, police checks end in a fine and most insurers will not pay.

- [ ] **An onward ticket.** Immigration can ask how you are leaving. A return or onward flight, saved offline, ends the conversation.

- [ ] **Check the calendar.** Nyepi, the Day of Silence, usually falls in March: the whole island stops for 24 hours, airport included. Dry season runs April to October; the wet months bring short, heavy afternoon rain.

II

A MONTH OUT

Health *& cover.*

insurance is the one you only read once you need it

- [ ] **A travel clinic appointment.** Six to eight weeks before you go. Hepatitis A and typhoid are the usual recommendations; ask about rabies and Japanese encephalitis for long or rural trips.

- [ ] **Insurance that fits a Bali trip.** Read the exclusions for scooters, surfing, diving depth and medical evacuation before you buy: a scooter accident, for example, is only covered with a valid motorbike licence and a helmet. We use SafetyWing.

  SafetyWing PARTNER

- [ ] **Medicines, in their boxes.** Bring prescriptions in original packaging with a copy of the prescription. Some strong painkillers and ADHD medicines are controlled in Indonesia, so check before you pack them.

- [ ] **Dengue is a daytime biter.** There is no simple shot for it. Repellent with DEET or picaridin, in the morning and late afternoon, is the habit that counts.

III

TWO WEEKS OUT

Money *& signal.*

the rupiah has a lot of zeros. count them twice

- [ ] **A card with no foreign fees.** Plus a second card kept somewhere else. Tell your bank you are travelling and raise the withdrawal limit before you go.

  Our current picks ON THE SITE

- [ ] **Plan the cash.** Use ATMs attached to a bank branch or a mall, and cover the keypad. When a terminal offers to charge you in your own currency, always say no.

- [ ] **An eSIM, installed at home.** Set it up on your own wifi and switch it on as the plane lands. Your phone needs to be unlocked and eSIM-ready.

  Our current picks ON THE SITE

- [ ] **The apps that earn their place.** Grab and Gojek for rides and food. WhatsApp, because every villa, driver and warung uses it. Google Maps with Bali saved offline. Google Translate with Indonesian downloaded.

IV

THE WEEK BEFORE

Book what *sells out.*

batur pickups are at 2 am. yes, really

- [ ] **An airport pickup.** A name on a sign beats negotiating a taxi at midnight after a long-haul flight.

  Airport transfers PARTNER

- [ ] **Mount Batur at sunrise.** Book a few days ahead in high season. Closed shoes and a warm layer: the crater rim is cold at dawn.

  Batur sunrise treks PARTNER

- [ ] **Nusa Penida, with a spare day.** Boats depend on the sea. Keep the day after free in case the crossing moves.

  Nusa Penida trips PARTNER

- [ ] **Copies, in three places.** Passport page, insurance policy and bookings: in your email, offline on your phone, and one paper copy kept away from the passport.

- [ ] **Someone at home has the plan.** Flights, where you are sleeping, and the number of your insurer.

SAVE THESE IN YOUR PHONE

before you need them, not after

112	110	118 · 119	113
Emergency, any service	Police	Ambulance	Fire

Add your insurer's 24-hour assistance line and your embassy in Jakarta to the same contact card.

V

72 HOURS BEFORE

Three forms, *one folder.*

three QR codes. one folder on your phone

- [ ] **All Indonesia declaration.** Immigration, customs and health in one free form, filled in up to three days before you land. Keep the QR code.
  allindonesia.imigrasi.go.id OFFICIAL
- [ ] **The Bali tourism levy.** IDR 150,000 per person, once per trip, paid on Love Bali. The QR voucher arrives by email and can be checked at the airport.
  lovebali.baliprov.go.id OFFICIAL
- [ ] **Your e-VoA, saved.** If you applied online, screenshot the approval as well as keeping the PDF.
- [ ] **Check-in done.** Online check-in, boarding pass in your phone wallet, and the address of your first night written down: the arrival form asks for it.

VI

PACKING

For Bali, *specifically.*

you'll buy the rest at a warung for less

WEAR

- [ ] Something that covers shoulders and knees, for temples
- [ ] Sandals that survive rain, and one pair of closed shoes
- [ ] A light rain jacket, November to March
- [ ] Swimwear, a hat, sunglasses

CARRY

- [ ] Adapter for type C/F sockets, 230V
- [ ] A power bank, in your hand luggage
- [ ] A dry bag for boats and waterfalls
- [ ] A refillable bottle: most cafés refill it
- [ ] Earplugs. Roosters start at four

THE PHARMACY POUCH

- [ ] Reef-safe sunscreen, pricey on the island
- [ ] Repellent with DEET or picaridin
- [ ] Rehydration salts, anti-diarrhoea tablets
- [ ] Plasters and antiseptic: scrapes heal slowly in the humidity
- [ ] Your prescriptions, in their boxes

> **Leave at home:** anything drug-related. Indonesia's drug laws are among the strictest in the world, and that includes what is legal where you live. Flying a drone also needs a permit.

TEN WORDS THAT OPEN DOORS

a smile does the rest

Om Swastiastu	the Balinese hello	*Selamat pagi*	good morning
Terima kasih	thank you	*Sama-sama*	you're welcome
Permisi	excuse me, may I pass	*Berapa?*	how much?
Tidak, terima kasih	no, thank you	*Pelan-pelan*	slowly, please
Enak!	delicious	*Tidak pedas*	not spicy

VII

ON THE ISLAND

The first *48 hours.*

slow down. it's an island

- [ ] **Through the airport.** Visa lane or VoA counter, then immigration, bags, customs with your All Indonesia QR. Your driver, or the marked Grab pick-up point, is outside.
- [ ] **Signal and cash.** Switch on the eSIM before you leave the terminal. Use a bank ATM in the arrivals hall for a first handful of rupiah.
- [ ] **Step around the offerings.** The small palm-leaf baskets on pavements and steps are canang sari, left every morning. Do not step on them.
- [ ] **Right hand, covered knees.** Give and take with your right hand. At temples, wear or borrow a sarong and sash.
- [ ] **Mind the monkeys.** At Uluwatu and in Ubud they take sunglasses and phones. Any bite or scratch, from a monkey or a dog: a clinic the same day.
- [ ] **Leave the first evening empty.** No booking, no plan. Find the sea and watch the light go.

BEFORE YOU LOCK THE DOOR

- [ ] Passport in your hand
- [ ] Phone, cables, power bank
- [ ] Fridge emptied, bins out
- [ ] Windows shut, water off
- [ ] Someone has your itinerary
- [ ] Three hours for a long-haul flight

FILL IN BEFORE YOU FLY

First night: address and phone _____

Insurer's 24-hour assistance line _____

Policy number _____

Driver or pickup contact _____

Flight number, landing time _____

Your embassy in Jakarta _____

THAT'S THE KIT

Want the trip planned *around you?*

Tell us who is coming, when and how you like to travel. The AI Guide sends back your own Bali plan by email: where to base yourself, what to book, what to skip. Free while it is in beta.

Build my Bali guide · Read the Field Notes

see you on the island

MY GUIDE ABROAD · BALI

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