

BALI

IMPRESSIONS OF PARADISE

SUGGESTED ITINERARIES AROUND THE ISLAND
BALI'S NORTH COAST AND HOLY MOUNTAINS



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BALI'S HOLY MOUNTAINS AND NORTH COAST

**Batur-Air Saneh-Singaraja-Lovina Beach- Menjangan
Island-Bedugul-Mengwi-Sangeh**

(RECOMMEND OVERNIGHT IN LOVINA BEACH)

Two Days or One Long Day

(Could spend weeks)

Experience **beautiful vistas, cool springs, and black sand beaches, hot springs, crystal clear snorkeling, a lakeside temple, colorful marketplace, a royal palace and monkey forests.** This is a two-day journey, or one long day. Or this can even be a two-week or more trip. Remember to bring warm clothing for the chilly nights if you plan to stay in the mountains. Disregard or postpone this trip if it is raining at the beach. I recommend a sunrise departure, and head up to the village of **Penelokan** which is on the rim of a volcano near Kintamani. You can get there a variety of different ways depending where your home base is. Consult your map! Here you'll get a magnificent view of **Mt. Batur**. This volcano is still active and last erupted in 1974. This crater is both stunning and timeless, with steamy mists in the foreground and the smoking volcano in the distance. Long black streams of lava stretch down towards the lake below, and curtains of mist sweep the basin in ever changing configurations. On the rim of the huge crater there are lodges where you can have breakfast or sleep if you want to stay the night. If you wish, you could drive down into the crater and go to the **hot springs** of **Toya Bungkah** right on the lake for a nice combination of hot and cold water.

At the hot springs are a number of homestays and the art center founded by Takdir Alisjahbana, a well-known Indonesia novelist. For those of you who want quiet and tranquility, this



is the place for you. Take a dip in the hot springs and then swim out into the lake for a better view of the volcano. Across the lake, accessible is the secluded Bali Aga village of Trunyan. The dead of this village are placed under a sacred tree near the lake. If you go beware of beggars!

It is possible to climb the slopes of Mt. Batur and look down into the steaming crater, so be sure to bring sturdy walking or hiking shoes, and carry water. This is a three-hour hike up and down. The path crosses lava tubes and is easy to follow up the slope. There are guided hikes up the slope as well. Whether you stay for an hour or days to continue on this outing follow the road towards the village of Batur along the rim of the volcano. This village was once on the southern slopes of Mr. **Batur**. However the eruption in 1926 buried the village and the residents move to the present location on the rim of the volcano.

Pura Ulun Danu the large temple complex on the volcano rim is one of the major temples of Bali. The outstanding feature of this temple is the "meru" or pagoda type structures.

These "meru" represent the cosmic heavenly mountain "Mahameru ". There is an eleven tiered one for the lake goddess and three nine tiered "meru" for the gods of Mt. Batur. It is at this temple where major ceremonies are held to thank the gods for the precious water that feeds the rice fields of the island.

The market town of **Kintimani** is nearby. On market the village is bustling with visitors from the surrounding villages. Just north of the village is the temple of **Pura Penulisan** with its steep flight of stairs that lead to this very old and venerated site. Continuing past the temple site you will descend through a series of hairpin turns past the village of Jagara, toward the beaches of northern Bali below.

When you come to the east West Coast road you may want to go right to visit the fresh water springs of Air Saneh. This is a great place to refresh, swim and have lunch. I spent the night here "once". The mosquitoes were horrendous. This is an ok place just be out by nightfall.

Next head back west towards **Singaraja**. On the way the lowlands are full of groves of oranges, mangoes and durian. Also unique to this side of the island are several interesting temples. Surrounded by fresh spring water is **Pura Ponjok Batu** in the village of Tejakula.

Pura Meduwe Karans in Kbuata is devoted to "Ibu Pertiwi", mother earth and is spectacular with its detailed sculptures. The 15th century **Pura Beji** is a rice field temple near the village of Sangsit, featuring gates and walls of highly decorative carvings. **Singaraja** (lion king) is the biggest on Bali's north coast is an old trading port with a mixed population of mostly Muslims and Chinese. The town is interesting to drive through, but you will characteristically find much heat traffic and noise. I have always found these factors to overbearing to want to spend time here but if you are interested visit Bulling Market and Pant Lingga, an old Chinese cemetery

Continue up the coast for 14 kilometers to **Lovina Beach**. Explore the string of secluded black sand beaches with a long coral reef running parallel to the shore. A number of accommodations offer individual rooms and bungalows, and restaurants offer excellent seafood, as well as tasty Indonesian dishes. (See accommodations) Shell hunting is plentiful on the beaches and the sunrise excursions to greet the dolphins are a must, the atmosphere is casual and friendly, and a nice alternative to the busy south coast resorts. I have stayed on this coast for weeks at a time.



The Sinsing waterfall is near the village of Labuanhaji. The 400 meter walk through fields takes you to a deep pool and the waterfall. There are higher falls beyond. Bali's only remaining Buddhist monastery is a few kilometers off the main road up on a hill near the village of **Banjar Tegeha**. If you wish to visit dress respectfully, speak quietly and remove your shoes before entering. Nearby, are some "**air panas**" or hot springs, which flow from underground springs into a

gorgeous pool, with a surrounding jungle setting. There are changing rooms there as well as some small restaurants and shops. This used to be one of the best-kept secrets in Bali! There are a couple of scenic drives in this area of Bali. All you need is your own transportation and good map and an adventurous spirit.

For the best diving and snorkeling in Bali continue west towards **Bali Barat National Park**. You can rent dive equipment at Mimpi resort and then continue on to Labuhan Lalang and hire a small boat to take you to **Pulau Menjangan** a small island covering over 7,000 hectares of coastal waters and coral reef. Early am is the best time for this excursion. Of course the visit to Pulau Menjangan is optional! If you do go to the island there a number of ways to return to your hotel. You can take the coast road back to the intersection at **Seririt** and take the road back to the south coast via the village of **Papuan**. Or you can take the intersection at **Mayan** and take the road back east through **Tunjuk**, along **Lake Tamblingan** and then **Lake Buyan**. You will then come out at the main north south road just above **Lake Bratan** in the village of Bedugul. Or you could take the road back to **Lovina Beach**, after **Bali Barat National Park** and spend another night there. If you go this route to get back to the south coast take the road back towards **Singaraja** and then climb up the slopes of the central road to Bedugul. Ten Kilometers up the road is the **Gigit Waterfall**. Bali's most spectacular! It is not a far walk off the road and a picnic area has been set up near the falls. As you continue to climb up towards the village of **Bedugul** you will find a nice change of pace from the hot coast. **Lake Bratan**, near the village of **Bedugul**, is quiet and serene nestled within forest clad hills. At one end is a boating resort and at the other is a temple honoring Dewi Danu, goddess of the lake. The main complex on shore is **Pura Teratai Bang**, built in 1633. This temple of Origin features a

seven-tiered meru dedicated to the Brahma. The complex projecting over the water is the temple **Pura Ulun Danu Bratan**. This temple of the lake goddess is famous as source of fertility. Two of the four compounds of this temple are completely surrounded by water. On one of the islets is an eleven-tiered meru dedicated to Vishnu.



In the southwestern corner of the valley is a large, colorful flower and vegetable market, **Candi Kuning** which will provide many photo opportunities. A botanical garden and an orchid plantation **Kebun Raya Eka Karya Bali** feature enjoyable walks.

One my favorite hikes in Bali is the one to the peak of **Mt. Mangu**. This about a six hour walk and at the peak is an ancient temple and a great view. You can hire a guide at the Bedugul Hotel. Accommodations in **Bedugul** include the Bali Handara golf course and bungalows. This is nice, but expensive. Simpler, inexpensive accommodations can also be found in the area, but it is a good idea to bring warm clothes

and an extra blanket for the cold nights. Do most of your exploring in the morning as it rains (hard) in the afternoon. I love to stay in Bedugul, and enjoy the cool climate and relaxing atmosphere. This area of Bali reminds me of Nepal. If you are ready to descend into the lowland continue south about a half-hour to the intersection at **Mengwi**. If you go left (east) you will come to the state temple of Mengwi. **Pura Taman Ayun**. This temple is surrounded by a moat with lotus flowers. Various shrines represent Bali's holy mountains. The outer courtyard is entered through a tall gateway with wooden doors. If you haven't walked to Sangeh, the monkey forest, I would recommend at this time you continue East and then north down the road to an intersection with a sign that points towards **Sangeh** at the village of **Penanungan**. You will then pass through the village of Blahkiuh to the sacred nutmeg forest at Sangeh. The monkey forest is about 4 kilometers up the road. Families of monkeys inhabit this nutmeg forest. The small temple of Pura Bukit Sari is deep within a nutmeg forest. If you aren't a fan of the animals, the forest itself is worth the trip. The monkeys are pesky creatures and will try to confiscate anything within reach from food to sunglasses and jewelry so be warned. Had enough monkey business?



Turn back down the road and at the before mentioned intersection with the sign, take a left to continue on to Ubud. If you plan to stay at the beach, return to the main road which comes from Budugul. For those going to Ubud, look for the village of Mambal and continue on to the village of Kengetan. Head left (north) towards Sayan and Kekewatan, and when you arrive go right at the main intersection which takes you back to your hotel I felt like I had just taken the trip again, but was tired and happy with my journey.

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