

Exploring Bama Beach in Banyuwangi

To reach Bama Beach, visitors must pass through the protected conservation area of Baluran National Park.

Tourism

Tags: East Java, Tourism, Banyuwangi, Beach

The name Banyuwangi has become increasingly popular due to the Trans Java Toll Road, which speeds up vehicle access to the eastern part of Java. Banyuwangi International Airport, designed by architect Andra Matin and winner of the prestigious Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 2022, has further propelled Banyuwangi's reputation.

More than just a port connecting Java Island to Bali Island, Banyuwangi also holds many stunning tourist destinations. Even though its area may not be as large compared to other regencies, Banyuwangi offers access to diverse tourist destinations. From mountains to oceans, forests to savannas, all can be found or accessed from Banyuwangi.

One place worth visiting is Bama Beach, located within the Baluran National Park. The beach offers refreshment at the edge of the savanna. Bama Beach's beauty lies in its clean white sand and clear seawater. The beach is surrounded by mangrove forests, creating a natural feel and adding to the scenic panorama.

Visiting Bama Beach

To reach Bama Beach, visitors must pass through the protected conservation area of Baluran National Park. Its unique location also keeps Bama Beach less crowded with tourists, preserving its cleanliness and natural charm. Baluran National Park is about a 1.5-hour drive from Banyuwangi.

To get to Bama Beach, visitors coming from Situbondo, East Java, must travel about 74 kilometers, which takes about 1.5 to 2 hours, depending on traffic conditions.

Since it is within Baluran National Park, visitors don't need to pay an extra entrance fee to enter the beach area. Once there, a few stalls offering snacks and, of course, fresh young coconut water, will greet visitors.

Don't be surprised if long-tailed macaques also welcome you, as this beach is their natural habitat. According to stall owners on the shore, these macaques sometimes fight each other or take visitors' food or belongings. So, be careful with your items.

No worries, though, the beautiful stretch of white sand will quickly divert attention (and fear) to pleasant and calming views. Visitors can enjoy activities like swimming, snorkeling, sunbathing, or strolling along the beautiful beach.

Due to its well-preserved natural environment, the marine life in the waters around the beach remains rich and diverse. Swimming or snorkeling is a must-do when visiting this beach. Snorkeling equipment is available for rent in the beach area.

Passenger boats are also available along the shore, allowing visitors to head out to the sea and enjoy the view back toward the beach. From the middle of the sea, Mount Baluran can be seen in the distance, along with mangrove forests on both sides that cover most of Bama Beach.

After returning to the beach, visitors can choose to enjoy snacks like fried bananas while watching the sunset or explore the mangrove forest area (there's a mangrove trail to follow). A gazebo awaits at the end of the mangrove trail. Imagine sitting here while gazing at the blue sea under the twilight sky, soothed by the gentle breeze. If you plan to enjoy the sunset, make sure to notify the local officers first, as Baluran National Park closes at 4:00 p.m.

The beach area also has adequate facilities to support a pleasant tourist experience, such as parking, toilets, rinse rooms, stalls, and accommodation. Don't forget to bring picnic gear or relaxation items when visiting the beach. Spare clothes, towels, sunglasses, sunscreen, and a camera to capture moments are must-haves.

Like any beach vacation, the best time to visit Bama Beach is during the dry season. The clear weather and calm sea will provide more freedom to maximize your enjoyment of Bama Beach. So, don't forget to include Bama Beach as the next destination in your Banyuwangi adventure and enjoy the captivating natural beauty there!

Looking Back at Minahasa's Past through the Waruga Sawangan Site

The ancestral tombs of the Minahasa tribe, the Waruga Sawangan site, stand as silent witnesses to the civilization of the Minahasa people from the Megalithic era. Today, it serves as a historical and cultural tourism destination.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, North Sulawesi, Minahasa

The Waruga Sawangan Minahasa site is a traditional burial complex located in Sawangan Village, Minahasa, North Sulawesi. It has significant historical and cultural value and is a precious heritage of the Minahasa tribe.

Similar to the Toraja tribe, known for their distinctive burial traditions, the Minahasa tribe also has a unique tradition called waruga. One of the historically significant waruga sites is the Waruga Sawangan, located in Minahasa, North Sulawesi.

History of Minahasa's Waruga

Waruga is derived from two words: "waru" meaning "house" and "ruga" meaning "body." Thus, literally, waruga means "house or place for the body to return to heaven." The deceased placed inside a waruga would be positioned with their heels touching their buttocks and their mouth seemingly kissing their knees, mirroring the fetal position.

This position holds philosophical significance to the Minahasa people, symbolizing that humans begin life in the fetal position and return to the same position at the end of life. This concept is locally known as "whom". Furthermore, the deceased would face north to acknowledge that the Minahasa tribe's ancestors came from the north.

In those times, only individuals of higher social status were buried in waruga, indicated by carvings on the cover. For instance, a motif of a woman giving birth symbolized a midwife, animal motifs represented a hunter, and carvings depicting several people represented a family.

This megalithic-era legacy can now be found at the Waruga Sawangan Archaeological Park. Located in North Minahasa Regency, the park has become a favorite historical tourism destination for both domestic and international travelers.

Waruga Sawangan Site Complex and Its Contents

Waruga Sawangan Minahasa consists of hundreds of waruga spread throughout the burial area. These stone waruga are rectangular coffins, each serving as an individual grave used by the Minahasa tribe in the past. The stone structures feature intricate carvings on their covers, showcasing the artistic skills of the ancestors.

There are 143 waruga in Sawangan, grouped by size:

Small waruga: Less than 100 cm high (10 units)

Medium waruga: Between 101-150 cm high (52 units)

Large waruga: Between 151-250 cm high (81 units)

Given the number and the beautiful forms and decorations of these waruga, it's estimated that the past population in this area was significant, with a good economy. Sawangan Village was likely prosperous, with abundant natural resources.

Before entering the burial area, visitors can see stone reliefs depicting the waruga crafting process, from carving stones to placing the deceased inside. Traditional Minahasa farming practices are also shown.

Location and Accessibility of the Waruga Sawangan Site

The Waruga Sawangan Archaeological Park is an attractive cultural destination for visitors interested in Minahasa history. The site is now well-organized, concentrated within one complex. Visitors can explore the burial area to observe history or simply enjoy the serene atmosphere.

The site is situated behind residential and agricultural land, covering an area of 1,363 square meters. There is also a buffer zone, with vacant land and an access road. The total site area is 7,676 square meters. In addition to the main site, a 1,295 square meter outer zone features a Minahasa traditional house used as a museum, hall, parking lot, four public toilets, and a garden.

The Waruga Sawangan site is located in Sawangan Village, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi, about 10 kilometers west of Manado, the capital of North Sulawesi Province. The village is accessible by road from Manado and takes about 30-40 minutes depending on traffic.

Restoration of the Waruga Sawangan Site

Waruga remains a significant legacy in the archipelago, dating back centuries and attracting researchers from around the world. Waruga was noted by C.T. Bertling in the magazine *Nederlandsch Indie*, Oud En Nieuw No. XVI in 1931.

Until 1976, the waruga at Sawangan was unorganized. Drs. Hadi Moeljono, then head of the Archaeological Heritage Protection Agency of South Sulawesi Province, conducted research on the waruga in Minahasa Regency. In 1977, the complex was restored by the Archaeological Protection Agency in Ujung Pandang with the cooperation of the Muskala Division of the Provincial Education and Culture Office of North Sulawesi.

After the restoration, the Waruga Sawangan Archaeological Park became orderly, with paths within the complex and a wire fence. In 2006, the provincial tourism office installed a brick wall surrounding the waruga. The surrounding public cemetery is still used by the local community.

Every region in Indonesia offers unique charms, and Minahasa holds this historical site in addition to its famous marine tourism. If you have a chance to visit North Sulawesi, the Waruga Sawangan Archaeological Park should be on your list, along with Lake Tondano or Bunaken National Marine Park.

The Unique Temburun Waterfall, a 7-Tiered Waterfall

Located on Siantan Island, in the eastern part of Tarempa City, Riau Islands, this waterfall empties into the Peniting Strait.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Riau Islands, Waterfall

The Temburun Waterfall is one of the fascinating tourist destinations on Siantan Island, in the eastern part of Tarempa City. Its unique, seven-tiered structure cascades into the Peniting Strait. This area is a popular tourist destination for the people of Siantan.

Menara Pandang, the Landmark of Banjarmasin on the Banks of the Martapura River

From this 30-meter-high tower, you can enjoy the beauty of Banjarmasin.

Tourism

Tags: South Kalimantan, Banjarmasin

Banjarmasin is a city in South Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. With an area of 98.46 km², it is known as the City of a Thousand Rivers. Rivers are a vital natural resource for the community, serving various functions such as infrastructure, water transport, tourism, fishing, and trade. This might be why Banjarmasin is called the City of a Thousand Rivers.

While in Banjarmasin, you can try local cuisine, gemstone accessories, and traditional South Kalimantan fabrics. One must-see spot on your itinerary is Menara Pandang Banjarmasin. This landmark of Banjarmasin is right on the banks of the Martapura River, a tributary of the Barito River.

Menara Pandang Banjarmasin was built in several stages, the last being completed in 2014. Since then, it has become a popular tourist destination in Banjarmasin. At 30 meters high, the tower provides a spectacular view of the city.

Menara Pandang Banjarmasin consists of four floors. The first and fourth floors are open-air, offering an unobstructed view. The first floor is a plaza used for community events such as competitions, blood drives, and art practices.

On the second floor is the Baiman Gallery, added five years after the tower was built, in late 2019. The third floor hosts Power King Space, a large room used for major events like socialization, meetings, and MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) seminars.

The highest and fourth floor is an open space where visitors can view Banjarmasin from above. On either side, there are small additional rooms for private viewing.

Menara Pandang Banjarmasin from Above

To reach the top of Menara Pandang Banjarmasin, visitors need to climb 155 steps. However, the climb is worth it for the extraordinary view from the top, encompassing Banjarmasin and its surroundings.

To the east, you'll see the lush Meratus Mountains providing a natural backdrop for the city's beauty. To the south is the Martapura River, stunning from this height. You can see boats moving up and down, ferrying passengers along the river. To the west is a busy commercial area where visitors can shop or enjoy the urban vibe.

Activities at Menara Pandang Banjarmasin

With its strategic location and towering structure, Menara Pandang Banjarmasin is a naturally popular place to enjoy Banjarmasin's beautiful sunset. Arrive early in the evening to secure the best spot, and if you're lucky, you might catch the colorful sky as the sun sets in the west.

The tower is also a popular wedding venue due to its spectacular views and romantic atmosphere, accommodating up to 500 guests.

During Eid celebrations, the tower is adorned with beautiful lights, making the atmosphere even more festive. People come at night to enjoy the scenery and celebrate with loved ones.

Inside the tower, you can visit art exhibitions at the Baiman Gallery on the third floor, featuring photos and paintings by famous artists.

Location and Entry Fee for Menara Pandang Banjarmasin

Menara Pandang is on the banks of the Martapura River, specifically on Kapten Pierre Tendean Street, Banjarmasin, not far from the Banjarmasin Floating Market. You can visit this tourist destination daily.

Its central location makes it easily accessible by both public and private transport. From Syamsudin Noor International Airport, it's about 31 km (51 minutes) via Ahmad Yani Street, or around 1 hour via Gubernur Soebarjo Street.

Visitors don't need to spend a penny to enter Menara Pandang, only paying for parking.

Menara Pandang Banjarmasin is open daily: Monday to Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. local time; Saturday until 10:00 p.m.; and Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. local time.

The Underwater Beauty of Wangi-Wangi Island

Located in Wakatobi, this paradise for underwater sports enthusiasts can be found on Wangi-Wangi Island.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Southeast Sulawesi

Wangi-Wangi Island is one of the beautiful islands in Wakatobi. Its underwater beauty is a special attraction for underwater sports enthusiasts.

Tenganan Daud Tukad, the Settlement of Bali Aga People

Bali Aga refers to the native Balinese who lived before the arrival of the Majapahit people.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Bali

Tenganan Daud Tukad is one of the settlements of the Bali Aga people, the original Balinese before the arrival of the Majapahit people.

The Beauty of Bangli, Serene Natural Charm

It's the only regency in Bali that doesn't have a beach. This green tourism destination offers a refreshing escape from urban hustle and bustle.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Bali

Bangli is a regency located in Bali Province. Its natural charm lies in its lush greenery. Bangli is also the only regency in Bali without a beach.

Ujung Genteng, Beauty on the South Coast of West Java

The scenic beach view isn't the only attraction. Clean water and large waves characterize Ujung Genteng.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, West Java

Ujung Genteng is a tourist area on the south coast of West Java. It has clean water and big waves, but the waves facing the Indian Ocean are safe for tourists who enjoy playing in the sea.

Getting Up Close with Antang Island

This island has been designated by the government as the fisheries surveillance base for Western Indonesia.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Riau Islands

Antang Island is in Anambas Regency, a district receiving government attention in the Riau Islands. The island is the fisheries surveillance base for Western Indonesia, with at least seven patrol boats from the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries on standby daily.

Playing on the White Sand of Padang Melang Beach

Located in the Anambas Islands, the beauty of this eight-meter-long beach is well-known for its white sand.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Riau Islands, Beach

Padang Melang Beach is one of the most beautiful beaches in the Anambas Islands. The beach stretches for around 8 meters and is especially popular for its white sand.

Enjoying the Twilight at the Kuta-Legian Tourism Area

Beyond the stunning beach, visitors will find bustling shops, a beachfront mall, nightlife, and cafes.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Bali

Kuta-Legian is a world-famous tourist area. Besides its beautiful beach, it's filled with small shops, a beachfront mall, nightlife, and cafes.

Pusik Beach, a Hidden Gem on Jemaja Island

It's said that many ceramic fragments were found here, but due to difficult access, few visitors know of its beauty.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Riau Islands, Beach

Pusik Beach is a natural beauty on Jemaja Island. Legend has it that ceramic fragments were found here, believed to be remnants of pirates. Few tourists visit due to challenging access.

The Romantic Jimbaran Tourism Area, Bali

Before becoming a famous culinary destination with sunset views and the sound of waves on white sand, it was a fishing village.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Bali

Jimbaran is a tourist area in Badung Regency. Before becoming a famous culinary destination, it was a fishing village.

Neraja Waterfall, Anambas Island's Beauty Among Tiered Rocks

In Ulu Maras Village, this waterfall flows over tiered rocks and ends in two natural pools.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Riau Islands, Waterfall

Located on Jemaja Island in the Anambas Islands, Ulu Maras Village, Neraja Waterfall is a water tourism attraction flowing over tiered rocks and ending in two natural pools. Its natural beauty completes your journey on Anambas Island.

Olakemang Stone House, Cultural Heritage Tourism in Jambi

Estimated to be over 200 years old, this house still stands strong despite not having any steel supports in its original structure.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Jambi

Like royal palaces in other regions of Indonesia, the Olakemang Stone House is a fascinating tourist attraction in Jambi. The house is located in the cultural heritage site of Datuk Said Idrus Al-Djufri (Prince Wirokusumo) and is still owned by the prince's family.

According to Sari Paseha (great-granddaughter), the house originally faced the Batanghari River. The initial roof design included a dragon image, now replaced by corrugated iron sheets. The facing dragons can still be seen at the front gate.

Although the house is over 200 years old, it remains standing despite lacking steel supports in its original structure. Even though it's recognized as a cultural heritage site, it hasn't been adequately managed or restored.

The Exotic Eruption of Bledug Kuwu

According to legend, Bledug Kuwu is a passage connecting the site to the South Sea.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Central Java

Central Java is known for its rich arts and captivating tourist potential. If you're visiting Purwodadi, don't miss the exotic views at Bledug Kuwu.

According to local legend, Bledug Kuwu is a passage connecting the site to the South Sea. This passage is believed to be the way home for Joko Linglung to the Medang Kamulan kingdom after defeating Prabu Dewata Cengkar.

This unique tourist destination is sometimes called a miniature of the Salt Lake in the United States. The mud eruptions make this place different from any other.

You can reach this spot by road from Semarang via Purwodadi to Kluwu village. The journey provides scenic views of green rice fields, the blue sky, and hills.

Enjoying Sunrise at Batu Sindu, Natuna Regency

Batu Sindu is in Ranai, the capital of Natuna Regency. There's a local legend about a curse here.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Riau Islands

Batu Sindu is in Ranai, the capital of Natuna Regency. According to local legend, there's a curse that forbids mentioning the name Tanjung Datuk here. Those who are dating and violate the taboo may face relationship troubles or break up.

Laskar Pelangi, an Old Building on a Bangka Hill

Visitors from various regions want to see firsthand the school made famous by the Laskar Pelangi film.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Bangka Belitung

A replica of the Muhammadiyah Elementary School building has become a tourist attraction for visitors to Belitung.

Visitors from many regions are eager to see the school made famous by the Laskar Pelangi film.

The school building looks old and fragile. On the right side, a 5-meter-long wooden post props up the tilted school. The school walls, consisting of only two classrooms, are made of old wooden planks, and one of the doors is already tilted.

The roof is made of old corrugated iron. The building stands on a hill next to a swamp lake. The replica is on the grounds of State Elementary School 9 in Selingsing Village, Gantong District, East Belitung Regency.

Traces of History in Tolukko Fort, Ternate

It's said this fort was a refuge from the Spanish attack, but most people fled to Malayo Fort.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, North Maluku

Initially known as Tolukko Fort, it became better known as Hollandia Fort. It was built in 1540 by Francisco Serao, a Portuguese commander. The name Tolukko is said to come from the tenth ruler of Ternate, Kaicil Tolukko, but this sultan only began ruling in 1692, so the fort couldn't have been named after him.

The fort was renovated by Pieter Both, a Dutchman, in 1610 and used as a defense against the Spanish assault on Ternate Island.

The fort served as a refuge from the Spanish attack to persuade people to return. Most residents fled to Malayo Fort. Reports say there were 15 to 20 soldiers in the fort with various weapons and ammunition. In 1627, under Governor Jacques le Febvre, it was said that the fort was located on a hill north of Malayo Fort and had two small towers.

A corporal was brought from Malayo Fort to lead it and source food supplies for the 22 soldiers stationed there. In 1661, the Dutch Government allowed Sultan Mandarsyah of Ternate to stay in the fort, which reduced the Dutch garrison to 160 soldiers.

Martapura Diamond Market, Irresistible Glimmer

Known as a major center for diamond trading and polishing, this market has long been a compelling tourist attraction.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, South Kalimantan

Mentioning Martapura immediately brings to mind a city famous for being Indonesia's largest diamond producer. This reputation is well-earned, as Martapura, the capital of Banjar Regency in South Kalimantan, has produced beautiful, high-quality diamonds for generations. It's no wonder the city is called the "City of Diamonds."

The gleaming Martapura diamonds can be seen in the city center, where a traditional market, the Martapura Market or "Pasar Batuah," has sold gemstones alongside other commodities for a long time. In the 1970s, a diamond trading hall was built in the middle of the market to house jewelers and gemstone craftsmen. In the mid-1990s, the Cahaya Bumi Selamat (CBS) shopping complex was built to complement the existing halls.

Diamonds are the crown jewel of Martapura and South Kalimantan. According to Agus Yana's thesis, "Diamond Mining Practices and Factors Affecting the Conversion of Rice Fields into Diamond Mining Land (Case Study in Sungai Tiung Urban Village, Banjarbaru City)," diamond mining in South Kalimantan has been recognized since the 16th century, with diamond trading dating back to 1604.

During the Banjar Kingdom era, diamond mining was the king's right. The king could grant part of the kingdom's land as apanage to his family, giving them the right to collect taxes and monopolize diamond purchases.

"Any diamond found weighing 4 carats had to be sold to the king or apanage owner," said Agus Yana.

Martapura witnessed the Banjar Kingdom's glory. Sunarningsih from the Banjarmasin Archaeological Center wrote that the kingdom reached its peak when Martapura became its capital.

The diamond sparkle is evident in the place name Pasayangan, now a subdistrict in Martapura. The name "Pasayangan" hints at a place where jewelers once crafted gold and gemstone jewelry for the kingdom.

"Many people in Pasayangan still work as jewelry artisans and diamond polishers," said Sunarningsih.

Additionally, Pasayangan retains the stone houses of wealthy merchants who traded in gemstones. Built in 1911, these houses are now tourist attractions.

The Dutch abolished the king's monopoly over diamond mining. In its place, private exploitation emerged, and small-scale mining has persisted, with miners using traditional panning methods. In 1965, Matsam and his partners discovered a 166.7-carat diamond known as the Trisakti Diamond, the largest diamond found in Kalimantan.

Although rare, large diamond discoveries continue to motivate small-scale miners.

"Besides being a livelihood for many communities in South Kalimantan, diamond mining is considered a cultural heritage passed down by their ancestors," said Agus Yana.

Most of these diamonds are showcased as gemstones and jewelry at Martapura Diamond Market, which integrates Pasar Batuah with the Sekumpul Shopping Center, Culinary Tourism Area, and CBS Market. However, tourists mainly visit CBS Market to hunt for gemstones.

CBS Market was built on the city's square, which has long been a public space. A prominent monument featuring tall pillars with beautiful calligraphy, symbolizing the devout Banjar people, stands out here. Known as the "City of Students," Martapura also takes pride in being the "Veranda of Mecca" in Kalimantan.

"The overall effect is that it looks like a majestic and charming palace," wrote Gerry van Klinken and Ward Berenschot in *In Search of Middle Indonesia: Kelas Menengah di Kota-kota Menengah*.

Despite this, CBS Market isn't as luxurious as a mall. It has its challenges, such as puddles during the rain, trash piles, and street vendor congestion. Yet, it's still the most popular shopping destination for tourists visiting South Kalimantan.

CBS Market has two floors. The first sells gemstones and souvenirs, while the second has jewelry workshops. You can find bracelets, necklaces, rings, and brooches made of various gemstones. Prices vary depending on the uniqueness and rarity of the stones.

Near CBS Market is a park for relaxing and enjoying the city's atmosphere. The park is in front of the regent's office and the Regional House of Representatives. It's also close to a famous religious destination in South Kalimantan: the Guru Sekumpul Tomb, integrated with the Al-Karomah Grand Mosque.

"This prestigious project was intended to enhance Martapura's image as a jewelry trading hub and the Veranda of Mecca," wrote Gerry van Klinken and Ward Berenschot.

The glimmer of Martapura diamonds still captivates today. If you're intrigued, visit Martapura Diamond Market on Ahmad Yani Street in Banjar Regency, South Kalimantan. The location is easy to find since it's along the main road.

It's only a 30-minute drive from Syamsudin Noor International Airport to Martapura. From Banjarmasin, it takes about an hour by car. What are you waiting for? Kaicil Nuku's forces attacked Tolukko Fort on April 16, 1799, but were pushed back by the Ternate-VOC alliance. Ternate's population, 3,307 in June 1797, fell to 2,157 due to battle losses and Nuku's prolonged siege.

Most people died from war or famine, or fled to Halmahera. In 1864, led by Resident P. Van der Crab, the fort was vacated because most of it was ruined.

In 1996, the fort was rebuilt, but the restoration process destroyed its original features, including an underground tunnel directly connecting to the sea.

Prambanan Temple, Historical Grandeur in Jogjakarta

Prambanan Temple is known as the largest Hindu temple in Indonesia, located on Java Island. It's not far from the center of Jogjakarta.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Yogyakarta, Temple

It's not an overstatement to call Prambanan Temple the jewel of Jogjakarta tourism. The temple is famous not only in Indonesia but also internationally.

Besides being a popular tourist spot, Prambanan Temple holds a legendary tale still believed by locals. Roro Jonggrang and Bandung Bondowoso are the two central figures in the story surrounding the temple's construction.

Prambanan Temple is the largest Hindu temple in Indonesia, built around 850 AD. In addition to showcasing the beauty of the temple, the site hosts the Ramayana ballet during certain periods.

The temple's proximity to downtown Jogjakarta makes it a must-visit if you're in the area.

The Story Behind the Magnificence of Boko Temple

The grandeur of Ratu Boko Palace is recorded as an 8th-century legacy.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Yogyakarta

Besides Prambanan Temple, another interesting temple site to visit is Boko Temple. Located close to Prambanan, it holds a captivating legend and mystery.

Historical records indicate that the grand Ratu Boko Palace was built in the 8th century. Covering an area of 250,000 m², the temple is divided into several site sections. One fascinating site is the Mysterious Well, southeast of the Burning Temple. According to legend, the temple bears witness to the early glory of Sumatra.

Although built by a Buddhist, the palace has more Hindu elements, reflected in the presence of Lingga and Yoni, Ganesha statues, and gold plates worshipping Shiva.

Due to its stunning beauty, Boko Temple is often used as a photography location. From here, you can also admire the beauty of Mount Merapi and the surrounding hills. For sunset enthusiasts, it's a recommended spot to enjoy the evening.

Calm Waves at Pasir Padi Beach, Bangka Belitung

Another unique feature of this nearly 300-meter-long beach is its calm waves and firm, white, and smooth sand.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Bangka Belitung

Besides being famous as the Laskar Pelangi land, Bangka Belitung's exoticism extends further. Another gem in the region is Pasir Padi Beach.

The beach is located 7 km from Pangkalpinang, the capital of the Bangka Belitung Islands province. It is perhaps the most visited tourist spot for Pangkalpinang locals. The beach features

white sand and calm blue seas. Sunrise and sunset views are perfect from here, attracting both locals and international tourists.

Another unique feature is its nearly 300-meter stretch of calm waves and firm, white, and smooth sand. Besides walking along the shore, you can enjoy it by motorbike or bicycle.

Exploring the Beauty of Padang Bai Beach, Bali

This beach offers a serene beach atmosphere in contrast to the bustling Kuta Beach.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Bali

It's not an exaggeration to call Bali a beach paradise. One more attractive beach in Bali is Padang Bai Beach.

The beach is located at the Bali-Lombok ferry port. Despite this, it remains clean. It is popular among anglers and divers. Even though it's adjacent to the port, the marine life is well-preserved.

Unstable currents are sometimes strong, so divers should take precautions.

Padang Bai Beach offers a calm beach atmosphere, unlike the bustling Kuta Beach. Curious? Don't miss a visit to Padang Bai Beach for a unique beach experience unlike any other.

Fort Rotterdam, The Story of a City

From a defensive fort to a vibrant city, it's still well-preserved and worth visiting.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, South Sulawesi

This fort is easily recognizable. Its thick walls, almost two meters wide and five meters high, are black. The arched main gate exudes grandeur, with a sign carved above it reading, "Fort Rotterdam."

Fort Rotterdam, also known as Ujung Pandang Fort, is a historical structure in Makassar, South Sulawesi. From above, its shape resembles a turtle crawling toward the sea, earning it the nickname "Turtle Fort."

Despite being built centuries ago, the fort remains sturdy. Its outer appearance is impressive, and once you enter through the main gate, you'll find well-maintained old buildings.

Sixteen European-style buildings line the inner walls of the fort, all with saddle-shaped roofs, steep slopes, and many doors and windows.

A lush green garden lies in the center, with neatly arranged grass and a clean courtyard—a truly pleasant place to visit.

Fort Rotterdam's presence is closely tied to the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in Sulawesi. The VOC came to trade at Ujung Pandang Port, part of the Gowa Kingdom.

At that time, Gowa was a strong political and military power. To protect the Somba Opu defense center, Gowa built 17 forts, the grandest of which was Ujung Pandang Fort.

Andi Muhammad Said and others, in *Bangunan Bersejarah di Kota Makassar*, mention that the fort was initially built in 1545 during the reign of the ninth Gowa King, adopting a Portuguese-style square architecture made of stone and brick. During the reign of the fourteenth Gowa King, the fort's walls were replaced with black rock, coral, and brick, bonded by lime and sand. The following year, a second wall was constructed near the gate.

The VOC, led by Governor-General Admiral Cornelis Janszoon Speelman, attacked and forced Gowa to sign the Bongaya Treaty on November 18, 1667. All forts were demolished except Ujung Pandang Fort. Speelman rebuilt the destroyed sections in Dutch architectural style and renamed it Fort Rotterdam after his birthplace.

"Fort Rotterdam became the only fort built in Makassar during the 17th-18th centuries and symbolized the VOC's hegemony in South Sulawesi," wrote Djoko Marihandono in "Perubahan Peran dan Fungsi Benteng," published in *Wacana*, Vol. 10 No. 1, 2008.

The fort served as a defense command post, trade office, high officials' residence, and administrative center for eastern Indonesia. A settlement grew around the fort.

"With the fort's expansion, Makassar grew into a city with a colonial layout," Djoko noted.

Dias Pradadimara, in "Penduduk Kota, Warga Kota, dan Sejarah Kota: Kisah Makassar," wrote that this growth signified a historical disconnect from Somba Opu Fort to its south, the "old city" that was once Gowa's center.

After changing functions multiple times, the fort was handed to the Ministry of Education and Culture in 1970. Fort Rotterdam, declared a cultural heritage site in 2010, is now a popular tourist attraction.

The fort covers about 3 hectares. Five bastions stand at the fort's corners: Bone, Bacan, Buton, Mandarasyah, and Amboina. Each bastion is connected by walls except in the south. The bastions have slits for lookout and shooting.

A moat next to the defense walls followed the fort's turtle-like shape but has mostly been filled for surrounding construction, leaving only about 300 meters in the south.

Exploring the fort's corners and bastion alleys is enjoyable. You can also enter the narrow cell that held Prince Diponegoro, leader of the Java War. The cell is cramped with a curved roof and low door.

Despite being an old fort, there's no need to imagine a creepy atmosphere. This historic site isn't empty; it's utilized as offices and a cultural center, making it clean and well-kept.

Visitors can also visit the La Galigo Museum to learn about South Sulawesi's history and culture, from prehistoric to modern times. The museum has fossils, ancient weapons, and Phinisi ship models.

Around the fort are art galleries, souvenir shops, and stores selling books about Makassar's history and legends. It's a well-rounded historical tourism destination.

Due to city development, the area around the fort now includes multi-story buildings like shops and hotels by the coast. Though it may obscure the fort's view, it makes access easier for visitors.

Fort Rotterdam is located at Jalan Ujung Pandang No. 1, Bulogading Village, Ujung Pandang Subdistrict, Makassar. It's conveniently located in Makassar, right in front of the city's port. It's around 2 km from Losari Beach and a 30-minute drive from Sultan Hasanuddin International Airport. From Soekarno-Hatta Port, it's just a 15-minute drive.

Tanah Lot, A Sacred Haven by the Beach

One of the Hindu holy sites and a premier tourist attraction in Bali. Its beauty shines during twilight.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Bali, Temple

Situated on a steep seaside cliff, Tanah Lot Temple appears stunning. During high tide, the temple looks like it's floating in the middle of the beach. Visitors can only set foot here when the tide recedes.

There are many caves around Tanah Lot Temple, formed by the relentless erosion of the rocks by the sea. These caves are home to docile sea snakes believed to belong to the deity residing in the temple, protecting the sacred area. Hence, disturbing them is forbidden.

Tanah Lot Temple, a sacred Hindu site in Bali, stands on a rocky outcrop by the coast of Beraban Village, Kediri Subdistrict, Tabanan Regency. Its history is tied to the legend of a Javanese Brahmin named Danghyang Nirartha from the 16th century, also known as Danghyang Dwijendra or Pedanda Sakti Wau Rauh.

It's said that Nirartha won the sympathy of the Balinese people and brought them to embrace Hinduism, provoking the jealousy of Bendesa Beraban, the ruler of Tanah Lot. Many of Bendesa's followers turned to Nirartha, and Bendesa demanded that Nirartha leave Tanah Lot.

Nirartha agreed but first used his power to move a large rock to the middle of the beach and built a temple on it. He also transformed his sash into a snake to protect the temple. Eventually, Bendesa became Nirartha's follower.

Ida Bagus Gede Agastia, a cultural expert from Udayana University, analyzed the Balinese lontar manuscript Dwijendra Tattwa, revealing that Danghyang Nirartha was a religious scholar from the Majapahit Kingdom. After Majapahit collapsed, he traveled to Pasuruan, Blambangan, and Bali. In Bali, he was appointed royal priest at Gelgel by King Baturenggong. He often undertook spiritual journeys around Bali, Nusa Penida, and Lombok.

"Danghyang Nirartha's journey around Bali was an effort to arrange the island's religious life," Agastia explained.

Nirartha built several temples during his travels, including Tanah Lot, Uluwatu, and Rambut Siwi.

The Dwijendra Tattwa describes the construction of the temple in Tabanan. It is said that when Nirartha was at the beach, he noticed a small island that looked sacred in the middle of the ocean and wanted to build a sacred site there. He told the fishermen to establish a sacred place, which they called Pakendungan Temple. Agastia notes that Pakendungan Temple is now better known as Tanah Lot Temple.

A.A. Rai Sita Laksmi, a lecturer at Warmadewa University's Faculty of Literature, in "Pengelolaan Warisan Budaya Pura Tanah Lot Sebagai Daya Tarik Wisata di Desa Beraban, Kecamatan Kediri, Tabanan," published in Forum Arkeologi Vol. 27 No. 3, November 2014, questions the Dwijendra Tattwa's account. Tanah Lot Temple is located in the sea, while Pakendungan Temple is a subak temple on land northwest of Tanah Lot Temple.

“The name change from Pakendungan to Tanah Lot is unclear,” she emphasized.

In Kawasan Suci Pura Tanah Lot dan Destinasi Wisata, I Made Girinata notes that no historical evidence explains when, by whom, and on what basis Tanah Lot Temple was built. Some sources, including the Dwijendra Tattwa, only link the temple to Nirartha's journey. They don't directly state that Nirartha built the temple.

Moreover, I Made Girinata adds that religious activities in Bali were well-established long before Nirartha's arrival. People already knew how to build temples, as seen in Dasar Gelgel Temple and Besakih Temple, which were among Bali's six main temples.

“Regarding Tanah Lot Temple, it's likely that Dang Hyang Nirartha simply reminded people around the temple to acknowledge the greatness of God (Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa) by always worshipping and creating sacred places,” said Girinata.

Tanah Lot Temple is classified as a dang kahyangan, a site built to honor sacred teachers who once imparted religious teachings.

The temple has two courtyards: an outer courtyard (jabaan) and an inner courtyard (jeroan). The outer courtyard is an open area without walls, and though it's a sacred area, not everyone is allowed entry unless to pray. There are two entrances, one to the east and one to the north. The inner courtyard is surrounded by a wall and contains several shrines and fragments of a lingga.

“A menhir is a megalithic relic of an upright, coarse stone intentionally placed by humans to honor ancestors,” Rai Sita Laksmi explained.

Every year, millions of domestic and international tourists visit Tanah Lot in Bali, making it an iconic Bali tourism site and a favorite for photographers. Its most popular scene is the temple with a sunset backdrop.

Near Tanah Lot Temple are smaller temples, including Pakendungan Temple, Penataran Temple, Penyawang Temple, and more.

To visit Tanah Lot, travel 13 km from Tabanan or 22 km from Denpasar City. It's about 25 km from Ngurah Rai Airport, a roughly 45-minute drive.

Lawang Sewu, The Majestic Gem of Semarang

A landmark of Semarang that preserves the historical journey of Indonesia's railway system.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Central Java, Museum, Semarang

An old colonial Dutch building stands proudly in the heart of Semarang. Dark, empty, exotic, and mystical—all these impressions emanate from Lawang Sewu, a historic building near Tugu Muda in Semarang, Central Java.

Literally meaning "A Thousand Doors," Lawang Sewu doesn't actually have that many doors. Initially built as the headquarters of the Nederlandsch-Indische Spoorweg Maatschappij (NIS), a private railway company during the Dutch East Indies era, it played a pivotal role in Indonesian railway history.

Construction of the NIS headquarters aligns with the development of Indonesia's rail system, starting in 1864 with the first groundbreaking for the Semarang-Tanggung line, which later connected to Surakarta and Yogyakarta. NIS initially operated from Semarang Station but expanded rapidly, prompting a new grand office. Architect P. de Rieu was entrusted with the design, but his plans were abandoned in favor of a new design by Jacob K. Klinkhamer and B.J. Oedang, assisted by young architect G.C. Citroen. Their design embraced Dutch architectural style.

Visiting Lawang Sewu is a delightful experience. Once inside, visitors feel like they're walking through a corridor of a thousand doors, with each room's doors aligned perfectly. The many doors improve air circulation and facilitate the movement of NIS staff.

On the first floor, visitors find rooms documenting Indonesian railway history and the building's history. A staircase leads to the basement, while the second floor has a grand hall that was used for celebrations and parties. The third floor features a large room with windows, where NIS staff used to exercise. From this level, visitors can enjoy views of Tugu Muda.

Handinoto, an architecture lecturer at Petra Christian University in Surabaya, explains in *Arsitek G.C. Citroen dan Perkembangan Arsitektur Kolonial Belanda di Surabaya* (Dimensi Vol. 19, August 1993) that the building was designed to suit the local climate. A surrounding gallery keeps out rain and sunlight, supported by curved brick arches. Double gable ventilation and natural lighting are now commonly used.

In another article with Irwan Santoso, "Pemberian Ciri Lokal Pada Arsitektur Kolonial Lewat Ornamen Pada Awal Abad ke-20" (Dimensi Vol. 39 No. 1, July 2012), Handinoto describes the decorative features of Lawang Sewu. The reception room contains stained glass windows by J.L. Schouten, known for his stained glass designs. These windows are a main attraction.

"At Lawang Sewu, Semarang, Schouten's work is filled with symbolism," wrote Handinoto and Santoso.

The first stained glass window symbolizes the prosperity and natural beauty of Java, including biodiversity, flora and fauna, and Western and Eastern art. The second depicts Semarang and Batavia at the time. The third shows Batavia and Semarang as maritime centers. The fourth features a flying wheel, Dewi Fortuna (goddess of fortune), and Dewi Venus (goddess of love).

Other artworks include terracotta ornaments by H.A. Koopman on the balcony arches, copper-coated domes atop water towers, and bronze ornaments by artist L. Zijl on the tower tops.

Abdul Malik, an architecture lecturer, explains in *Aspek Tropis Pada Bangunan Kolonial Lawang Sewu Semarang* (Jurnal Jurusan Arsitektur Undip) that Lawang Sewu is one of the few buildings blending external influences (indische) with distinct local elements. "It is responsive to the climate and surrounding environment," he noted.

Lawang Sewu's architecture follows the Romanesque Revival style, characterized by simple arches and two facades with corner towers. "The building's overall design is exceptionally beautiful, earning it the title 'Pearl of Semarang,'" Malik wrote.

During the Japanese occupation, the building was taken over and repurposed as the Riyuku Sokyoku (Japanese Transport Office). Dwi Andhono Murti, in a non-seminar paper *Alih Fungsi Bangunan Lawang Sewu Pada Masa Pendudukan Jepang di Semarang*, explains that the basement was converted from a water reservoir for air conditioning into a prison for Kenpeitai, the Japanese military police. The rear section of the building, which has a disposal hole, was connected to the basement to discard the bodies of prisoners who perished. Thus, Lawang Sewu gained a spooky reputation.

Now, Lawang Sewu is managed by PT Kereta Api Indonesia and functions as the Indonesian Railway Museum. The building is also available for various events and is a cultural heritage landmark of Semarang worth visiting.

Sunda Kelapa Harbor Tourist Area, Jakarta

This area attracts history enthusiasts with its rich historical heritage.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Jakarta

Sunda Kelapa Harbor, located in northern Jakarta, has been renowned since the 12th century. The Portuguese writer Tome Pires considered it an important port. Historically, the harbor facilitated trade in commodities like porcelain, coffee, silk, horses, and wine, which were

exchanged for spices. This historical port is a captivating tourist destination for those interested in the relics of the past.

The area also includes several other museums, such as the Wayang Museum, Maritime Museum, and Jakarta History Museum. It's also a popular spot for couples to take pre-wedding photos.

Exploring Jakarta's Landmarks through Its Statues

Besides skyscrapers and old buildings, Jakarta is dotted with statues across the city.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Jakarta

As Indonesia's capital, Jakarta features towering skyscrapers and old colonial buildings. It also boasts several iconic statues across the city:

Patung Pahlawan/Tugu Tani

This statue, a gift from the Soviet Union, was designed by renowned Russian sculptors Matvel and Otto Manizer. It's made of bronze and depicts a farmer and a woman offering provisions to the farmer. The plaque reads "voetstuk" or "A nation that honors its heroes is a great nation."

Patung Dirgantara/Patung Pancoran

Known as the Dirgantara Statue or Pancoran Statue, it was requested by President Sukarno to showcase Indonesia's prowess in aviation. The design reflects honesty, bravery, and enthusiasm in reaching for excellence.

Monumen Selamat Datang

A pair of figures holding flowers and waving symbolizes a warm welcome for visitors to Jakarta.

Patung Pemuda Membangun

Located at Senayan Roundabout, this statue encourages youth to embrace the spirit of development.

Patung Jenderal Sudirman

Depicting the national hero General Sudirman, the statue stands tall in Jakarta, saluting with his head slightly raised to convey dynamism.

Patung Kuda Arjuna Wijaya

Created by Balinese sculptor Nyoman Nuarta, it depicts Arjuna and Batara Krishna fighting Adipati Karna, symbolizing leadership principles.

Indonesian Art Performances at Jakarta Arts Building

Built in 1821 by the Dutch, this building was originally for art performances and was named Schouwburg.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Jakarta

Jakarta Arts Building (GKJ) is a historical Dutch colonial building that still stands strong. Initially built by the Dutch in 1821 for art performances, it was called Schouwburg.

Located at Jalan Gedung Kesenian No. 1, Jakarta Pusat, GKJ regularly hosts theatrical performances, music, dance, and exhibitions by prominent Indonesian and international artists.

GKJ has excellent facilities, including a 24 x 17.5-meter stage with a 475-seat capacity, a 10.75 x 14 x 17-meter performance stage, lighting equipment, CCTV, TV monitors, and a 5.80 x 24-meter foyer. The building is managed by the Jakarta Provincial Government.

Joang 45 Museum, Silent Witness of Indonesia's Founding Fathers' Struggles

Originally a hotel from 1920-1938, the building became a political education hub for young revolutionaries.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Jakarta, Museum

The Joang 45 Museum, located at Jl. Menteng Raya 31, Jakarta, houses historical records of events leading to Indonesia's independence. Initially, it was the Schomper Hotel, managed by L.C. Schomper, a Dutch descendent.

During the Japanese occupation, it became the Ganseikanbu Sendenbu (Propaganda Department) and a political education hub for youth leaders like Sukarni, Chaerul Saleh, and Adam Malik. Known as "Pemoeda Menteng 31," they were behind the abduction of Sukarno, Hatta, and Fatmawati to Rengasdengklok before independence.

The museum displays paintings of pre-independence events, dioramas, and archives. There's also a theater showing documentaries, a reference library, a children's room, and outdoor space for children's theater.

Pancasila Sakti Monument, Silent Witness to G30S

A monument to honor the Revolution Heroes who defended Pancasila as Indonesia's ideology.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Jakarta, Monument, Pancasila

Over 50 years have passed since the G30S Movement, but the Pancasila Sakti Monument allows visitors to revisit this significant event.

Built in 1973, the monument includes statues and reliefs of the seven military officers murdered in the incident (Revolution Heroes). The statues, about 17 meters high, are arranged in a semicircle, starting with Soetodjo Siswomiharjo and ending with Pierre Andries Tendean, backed by a Garuda bird sculpture.

The monument includes a G30S diorama depicting the torture of the generals. The museum displays photos of their remains being retrieved from the so-called "death well."

Kim Tek Le Temple, Jakarta's Oldest Temple

Built in 1650, this temple withstood historical events and retains valuable relics.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Jakarta

Kim Tek Le Temple, also called Jin De Yuan, is Jakarta's oldest temple, built in 1650 by Lieutenant Kwee Hoen and named Koan Im Teng.

During the Angke Massacre, the temple was destroyed and burned. A century later, Captain Oie Tjhie renovated it, renaming it Kim Tek Le ("Golden Virtue Temple") to remind people to prioritize kindness over materialism.

Located at Jl. Kemenangan III No. 13 (Petak 9) Glodok, the temple holds valuable historical relics, including statues of various sizes. It's a heritage site full of historical value.

Exploring Historical Relics at National Museum, Jakarta

Famous among Jakarta locals, it's nicknamed the "Elephant Museum."

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Jakarta

If you want to see historical relics from Indonesia's past kingdoms, the National Museum is a must-visit. Known as the "Elephant Museum" due to the bronze elephant statue gifted by Thailand's King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) in 1871, the museum also features many statues, giving it the nickname "Gedung Arca."

Located at Jalan Merdeka Barat 12, the museum houses around 142,000 historical items, such as statues, inscriptions, and traditional weapons. The gold room displays precious artifacts and relics from Indonesian kingdoms, making it the largest museum in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

The Charm of Monas, Jakarta's Iconic Monument

The monument's peak is covered in 35 kg of gold.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Jakarta, Monas, Monument

No visit to Jakarta is complete without seeing Monas, or the National Monument. As an iconic landmark, Monas is a must-visit tourist destination.

Built in 1959 to commemorate the fight against Dutch colonial rule, Monas covers about 80 hectares and stands tall on Jalan Medan Merdeka. Its unique feature is the 35 kg gold-plated peak.

Visitors can also see Jakarta's skyline from the observation deck atop Monas. Additionally, there are vehicles to tour the grounds.

Taman Ismail Marzuki, Silent Witness to Indonesia's Art Evolution

Opened on November 10, 1968, it regularly hosts various art events in Jakarta.

Tourism

Tags: Tourism, Jakarta, Art

Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM) is one of Jakarta's primary landmarks, symbolizing the city's role as Indonesia's artistic hub.

Opened on November 10, 1968, TIM hosts art performances like music, film, shadow puppetry, dance, drama, and painting exhibitions.

The complex has six modern theaters, an exhibition hall, an archive building, and a cinema. The Jakarta Planetarium, inaugurated by President Sukarno in 1964, is also here. It houses the Jakarta Institute of the Arts, a public university specializing in various art forms.

Since its establishment, TIM has offered artists a platform to express creativity. It encourages them to produce phenomenal work, launching the careers of many artists like Rendra and Sardono W. Kusumo.