



Free & Easy Traveler - Travel Prep Guide

10 Days in Indonesia: Bali & the Gili Islands

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The Basics

Duration: 10 Days

Start & Finish: Denpasar, Bali

Adventure Type: Backpackers (age 18 to 27)

Trip Size: 15 – 22 (+2 group leaders)



Epic Experiences

Included in the Price

- Balinese Cultural Day Trip
- Snorkel trip on a glass bottom boat in the Gili Islands

Optional Activities

- Scuba Diving
- Fishing
- Surfing

Trip Details

What's included?

- All Taxes (GST, PST, Airport tax)
- Return international flights and airport transfers***
- Accommodations for your 10-day Free & Easy experience
- Group travel between destinations
- 2 knowledgeable and fun Free & Easy leaders
- Free and Easy Travel Guidebook
- 15 years of trip leading experience

***Land Only prices do not include your international flight, airport taxes or transfers

What isn't included?

- All meals and drinks (except those mentioned above)
- Activities outside of the ones listed above
- Any Visa or Visa fees

Travel Budget (Canadian \$)

Indonesia is a very cheap place to travel, which is just one of many reasons that makes it so much fun! Your personal spending on the trip will include your food, drinks, shopping, entertainment and any activities outside of those included in your FNEZ adventure.

For the entirety of our 10 Day Indonesia Trip -- "[Island Livin](#)", we would recommend a budget of \$400 - \$1000. Any travel budget will fluctuate between personalities, so ask yourself: "What type of traveller are you?"

The Hippie

Brings about \$400—\$550 for the 20 days. Eats local food, bargains well at the market, finds good prices on drinks and picks, and chooses their optional activities wisely! Often likely to continue travelling after their FNEZ trip is complete.

The Backpacker

\$550-\$750 spending money. A bit more frivolous, but is aware of their budget. Takes in most activities they are interested in, without going too extravagant. Likes to party, but always looking for a good deal.

The Rock Star

\$750 - \$1000: Not too worried about their budget, they'll do almost everything, including lavish amounts of shopping and partying often. There won't be too much holding them back from activities, as this is their trip and don't want to let anything pass them by.

To help you work out your budget, here are some examples to give you an idea what you will be spending in Indonesia.

Food and Drink

Fried Noodle with Chicken: \$4

Bottle of Beer at the market (750ml): \$3

Bottle of Beer at a Bar: \$4

Fresh Seafood Dinner: \$8

Fruity Cocktail: \$4

Entertainment & Activities

White Water Rafting: \$25

Water Park Entry: \$28

Surfboard Rental on the Beach: \$4 - \$7

Yoga: \$8

Scuba-Diving:

Fun Dive (Already Certified): \$34

Discover Scuba-Diving Course (No certification granted): \$58

"Open Water" PADI Lifetime Certification: \$330

Shopping & Miscellaneous

T-shirts/Tanks: \$3 - \$5

1 Hour Massage: \$5 - \$15

Laundry Service: \$1/kg

Trip Leaders

Every Free & Easy trip is accompanied by at least two leaders. We like to call them "Leaders" and not "Guides" because they are essentially your well traveled, experienced friends! We hire local guides whenever knowledge of culture, history or safety are necessary (ie; temple tours or jungle treks). Our Leaders main goals are to ensure everyone on the trip is having the best time possible. Our leaders will arrange the group transportation between destinations, sort out rooms at the accommodations, plan any

group meals or activities and assist in any additional activities that anyone may wish to take part in, and ultimately show you the best that each destination has to offer. They know the trip locations well, and have great relationships with all our contacts in each destination. Not to mention they are all extremely fun and easy going people who continue to showcase the essence of what makes us Free & Easy!

Flying to Indonesia

Upon registration you can chose between booking your own flights or requesting Free & Easy to book flights for you.

If you book flights with Free & Easy

- A flight itinerary will be emailed to you approximately 2 – 3 months before your trip's departure. (Assuming you have paid enough money on your account)
- One or both of your leaders will be at the airport in Denpasar to pick you up and arrange transport back to the hotel.
- Transportation will be arranged for you to get from the guesthouse at the end of the trip to get to the airport to catch your flight.
- You can also ask for any custom flights, and our flight team will give you a price quote for booking this for you.

If you don't book flights with Free & Easy

- You will contacted with information on meeting up with your group for the start of the trip in Denpasar.

Meals

The ability to experience local food, whether it's from a street vendor, a home stay, or a restaurant, is a huge part of travelling. You'll be able to ask your guides for great options to check out at every destination we go, but for the most part, the journey finding the food, tends to be just as good as the food itself! There will be times that meals will be provided for you, if you have any allergies or food preferences, i.e. vegetarian, please let your guides know!

Allergies!

If you have any allergies, especially food allergies, it is good to be prepared before coming to Indonesia. Peanuts are the most common one and it is used a lot in Indonesian cooking. When you try to make special requests when ordering at a restaurant it doesn't always go as planned. Best thing to do is check out Killer Peanut, where you can chose from a variety of food allergies and get it translated into Indonesian. Simply print out the translation and then show it to the server when ordering food. This will make your life way easier when you arrive in Indonesia!

Types of Transportation on this trip

- Taxi: Our pickups from the airport in Jakarta and transportation to the airport in Bali is done through taxis. Comfortable, A/C sedans or van taxis are most common.
- Boats: Between the islands we take a few different types of boats. We use a local boat to get to the Gili Islands and then a speedboat to get us to Bali.
- Minivans: Occasionally we will be in private minivans when going to activities.

Accommodations

We have a wide range of accommodations on this trip from beach bungalows to hotel style rooms with A/C. We have chosen each of our accommodations based on quality, location, and relationships with the establishments. Plus there is so much to do on this trip you won't be spending much time in your room anyway!

All our accommodation is based on at least two-person occupancy. If you wish you have your own room you can pay an additional fee in order to do so. Please contact travel@fnez.com before your trip begins if you are interested.

Solo Traveler

Lots of solo travelers come on our trips and it's a great way to step outside your comfort zone and make lots of new friends. Since all our accommodation is based on at least two-person occupancy you will be rooming with other members of the same sex in your group.

Packing Suggestions

For a trip to a tropical country, you really don't need any heavy clothing, a sleeping bag, or food/cooking supplies. Also, keep in mind that the shopping is cheap over there so you may want to only pack half of your backpack, leaving room to buy new stuff once you arrive. Most people end up regretting how much they packed when they realize how easily they could have bought new clothes once they arrived.

It is good to properly prepare supplies for the trip, but don't stress out too much about having everything you think you might need because chances are that you will be able to find whatever it is during your trip. Good quality shoes are an exception to that as they are only really available in larger cities. There are also many pharmacies that have medications and first-aid supplies.

In general, you want to avoid packing things that you really don't need to have. Also, consider that the weight of your bag will likely be INCREASING throughout the trip, and having a lighter backpack simplifies life immensely. On our domestic flight as well we have a restriction on the amount of weight we can bring on. People who exceed this limit will have to pay an extra baggage charge. Honestly, look at what you have and cut it in half and you're probably good to go. You're gonna buy lots of new stuff.

Here's some ideas for what you might want to pack:

Travel Essentials

- Passport (digital and hard copies)
- Travel insurance (digital and a hard copy)
- Airline tickets (digital and a hard copy)
- Credit or debit card
- Any entry visas, additional passport photos or vaccination certificates required
- Cover for backpack/ziplock bags for travel essentials
- Large backpack and small backpack to be used as a day bag

Electronics/Entertainment

- Alarm clock
- Headlamp
- iPods, tablets
- Books, eReaders
- Camera (bring a few memory cards)
- All chargers
- Speakers

Clothing

- Swim wear
- Shorts
- Temple attire (something to cover your knees and your shoulders)
- Shirts/T-shirts
- Rain jacket
- Underwear
- Sarong (travel towel)

First-aid kit

- Most supplies can be purchased in Indonesia

Toiletries

- Deodorant in Indonesia is not nearly as good and often contains whitening agents. Bring some from home.
- Girls bring feminine hygiene products as they can be hard to find.

Laundry

Laundry facilities are offered by some of the places we stay. Ask your leaders to point out the best places to get laundry done. There will be times when there are no laundry facilities, however your leaders will tell you this in advance.

Travel Essentials

There is nothing more important than your health and safety so make sure you read this carefully!

Passports

Everyone **MUST** have a passport for international travel. If you already have a passport, double check to make sure that it is still valid for at least 6 months from the return date of your trip. If it is not valid for a full 6 months from the day you plan on returning to your passport's issuing country, you'll have to apply for a new passport before you leave.

The application process for getting a passport may seem simple, but for most people it ends up taking longer than it first appears. Sometimes it can take a few weeks to complete the entire process, so we definitely recommend not leaving it to the last minute.

Insurance

Everyone **MUST** have Travel Medical Insurance of some kind and bring proof with you for this trip. You might not need to purchase a medical insurance policy though because you may already be covered through some other way:

- Your parent's work health plan.
- With a credit card.
- Through a student or work health plan.
- Through private insurance.

While you are away traveling with us, if you decide to extend your plane ticket, you also have the ability to purchase an extension to your insurance policy. **PLEASE NOTE:** It is your own responsibility to be making any extension to your insurance so you cannot expect this will automatically happen when you extend your plane ticket.

If you need to extend your TIC insurance please call 1-800-670-4426

PLEASE NOTE: At this time we can only provide Travel Medical Insurance for Canadian citizens.

Immunizations

There are no immunizations that are 'required' for entry into Indonesia (please see your specific adventure's guidebook for any specific country information). For your own safety, there are some shots that are always recommended for travel to tropical countries.

- Hepatitis A.
- Hepatitis B.

- Typhoid.
- Tetanus.
- Diphtheria.

We also want to warn you that sometimes travel clinics are over cautious to the extreme and try to sell you everything under the sun. If you want a second opinion about something, do some more research online or contact us. Often they will say that you should take malaria pills. We suggest you try to learn more about the exact locations of any malaria danger before you commit to taking the pills. We can say truthfully, that currently none of the Free & Easy staff or owners take malaria medication when we are on any of our adventures. The feeling amongst many people is that the side effects of the pills are not worth the minimal risk in the regions we travel to. Rather than subject ourselves to the medications we choose to be cautious with mosquito repellent whenever they are present. Since we are not medical professionals we urge you to do your own research and make your own informed decision.

Banking & Money

The easiest way of getting and carrying your money is to simply use the bank machines in the country you are travelling. You can use your regular bank card, using your regular pin number, and the money will come out in the local currency (You need to make sure that you have “cirrus” or “plus” written on the back of your card). At nearly every destination on our trips, you’ll have easy access to a bank machine. This also means you won’t have to get local currency before you leave. Once you arrive, you can just use a bank machine right there at the airport.

Every time you need to make a transaction your account will be charged approx. \$5 fee from your bank and then a possible fee from the local bank. It can get a bit pricey if you’re making withdrawals every few days—so it makes more sense to take out a large sum and then just watch your spending! Although theft does happen sometimes we have found that it is quite rare. So we, ourselves, practice this method.

Be aware if you are pulling money out on your credit card that this counts as a “cash advance” and you will immediately be charged interest on this amount and not have a grace period or get reward points like you typically would with other credit card purchases. Additionally, you will still be charged those \$5 fees from your bank and the local bank. With this in mind the best option is always to pull out money using your debit card instead of your credit card.

Another suggestion we would like to reinforce is we highly recommend that you have online banking during the trip. It allows you to check your balances, transfer money, and monitor your transactions from any internet café. In case of any issue with your bank card, online banking always simplifies a situation since you can easily transfer money to another traveler in your group who could then pull out money for you.

Another little helpful hint is signing over power of attorney to someone you trust (i.e., a parent). This means they can have access to your accounts while you are away. This can help if you lose your bankcard, or there is a problem with it while overseas. It is also useful if you need someone to pay your bills, or make money transfers while you are away.

Indonesia Travel Visas

Upon entry to Indonesia most countries automatically grants a 30-day tourist visa. This visa costs \$35 USD so ensure you have correct change when landing in Indonesia. Also have your departure flight printed off and ready to show should they ask for it. For this 10-day trip it is NOT necessary that you obtain a visa before departing for Indonesia (please double check your country).

PLEASE NOTE: If you are planning on staying in Indonesia after your 10-day trip you will have additional time on your visa (20 days) but if you will be staying longer than this you need to obtain a 60-day visa from an Indonesian Consulate prior to arrival in Indonesia.

Communication + Payment

Questions

Phone: 1-800-403-5208

Email: travel@fnez.com

Communication

So you have signed up for a Free & Easy adventure and we hope to help make this the easiest travel experience of your life. We want to help you out with anything you need help with. However, there are always things that you will need to take care of yourself and we will make it as easy as possible to explain these things. So we need to have a bit of cooperation from your part and it start with actually **READING** our emails :). Please, make sure you read the emails we send leading up to your trip because we are sending them to make sure that you are as ready as you can possibly be for this travel adventure.

Most of the information we send will be coming through your “Your Trip” account. Please make sure that you have all of the requirements taken care of prior to your trip as well you can also view your account and balance owing and a place for us to give you your downloads and hear news of the upcoming trip. You should receive an email in your inbox notifying you when we do post something on there. Please notify us if you find that you’re not getting the notifications.

Making Payments

Follow this link for a full outline of our payment options.

Check here for the payment schedules for all our trips.

The \$200 deposit reserves your placement on a trip. For all the trips, we have arranged the payment dates to allow you the maximum time to pay for your trip. If you would prefer to pay for the entire trip all at one time, that is no problem. You can also make larger payments earlier whenever it is convenient for you. The payment dates that we have listed are just guidelines that state the last possible date by which payments should be made.

We would greatly appreciate that all payments be made on time. Meeting this simple request makes our job much easier because it allows us to always be looking forward and preparing for the trips, rather than figuring out who and where we need to collect money from. If you expect that a payment will be late, please email us to explain when we can expect the payment. Payment schedules for each of the trips can be reached by clicking the link above.

PLEASE NOTE: All additional costs (for flights, insurance, fees & extras) will be added to your statement of account on the 'your trip' page. Please, ensure that you add any additional charges to your final payment unless we require it sooner.

Cultural

Quick Facts on Indonesia

- Did you know, that with more than 250,000,000 people, Indonesia is the 4th most populated country in the world?
- Did you know, that there are 316 ethnic groups which speak 670 dialects in Indonesia?
- Did you know that it is forbidden not to have a religion in Indonesia (doesn't matter which one as long as you have one)?
- Did you know, that there are around 400 volcanoes in Indonesia, and 150 out of them are active, which represents 75% of all active volcanos on the planet (so only 50 for the rest of the world)?
- Did you know, that Indonesia is more than 5,000 kilometers long (which is an average length for a continent)?
- Did you know, that Indonesia is probably the last country in the world, which has still unexplored territories, and is not completely mapped (especially around Irian Jaya)?
- Did you know, that there are 17,508 islands in Indonesia, which is the largest Archipelagic State in the world?
- Did you know, that if you could spend only 1 day on each island of Indonesia, you would need 48 years to see all of them (transportation between islands not counted)?

- Did you know, that of the 17,508 islands, only 6,000 have a name, and only 1,000 are inhabited?
- Did you know, that there are 25% of the world coral reefs in Indonesia?
- Did you know, that of the 4,500 species of reef fishes existing in the oceans worldwide, around 3,500 of them have been identified in Indonesia?
- Did you know, that Indonesia has the biggest underwater biodiversity in the world?
- Did you know, that Indonesia has the 2nd largest global biodiversity (water + land + air) after Brazil?

Brief History of Indonesia

Check Wikipedia's entry on Indo for a good overview of the country.

Pre 20th Century History

It is generally believed that the earliest inhabitants of the Indonesian archipelago originated in India or Burma. In 1890, fossils of Java Man (*homo erectus*), some 500,000 years old, were found in east Java. Later migrants ("Malays") came from southern China and Indochina, and began populating the archipelago around 3000 BC. Powerful groups such as the Buddhist Srivijaya empire and the Hindu Mataram kingdom appeared in Java and Sumatra towards the end of the 7th century. The last important kingdom to remain Hindu was the Majapahit, which was founded in the 13th century. The subsequent spread of Islam into the archipelago in the 14th century forced the Majapahit to retreat to Bali in the 15th century.

By this time, a strong Muslim empire had developed with its centre at Melaka (Malacca) on the Malay Peninsula. Its influence was short lived and it fell to the Portuguese in 1511. The Dutch displaced the Portuguese and began making inroads into Indonesia. The Dutch East India Company based in Batavia (Jakarta) dominated the spice trade and took control of Java by the mid 18th century, when its power was already in decline. The Dutch took control in the early 19th century and by the early 20th century, the entire archipelago—including Aceh and Bali—was under their control.

Modern History

Burgeoning nationalism combined with Japanese occupation of the archipelago during WWII served to weaken Dutch resolve, and it finally transferred sovereignty to the new Indonesian republic in 1949. Achmed Soekarno, the foremost proponent of self-rule since the early 1920s, became President. In 1957, after a rudderless period of parliamentary democracy, Soekarno overthrew the parliament, declared martial law, and initiated a more authoritarian style of government, which he euphemistically dubbed "Guided Democracy". Once in the driving seat,

Soekarno, like many like-minded military strongmen, set about consolidating his power through monument-building and socializing the economy, a move that paradoxically opened up a huge divide between the haves and have-nots and left much of the

population teetering on the edge of starvation. Rebellions broke out in Sumatra and Sulawesi, Malaysia and Indonesia came perilously close to an all-out confrontation and instability was the general order of the day. Things came to a head in 1965, the eponymous Year Of Living Dangerously, when an attempted coup (purportedly by a Communist group) threatened Soekarno's hold on power.

Soekarno won that particular battle but lost the war when the man responsible for putting the coup down, General Soeharto, wrested presidential power from him in 1966. Soeharto started off with a nice line in political reconstruction, but the promises of economic reform and greater government transparency quickly degenerated into much of the same-old same-old. Nepotism, cronyism and grandiose spending, coupled with the brutal massacre of East Timorese nationalists in Dilli in 1975, proved that much of the talk was mere rhetoric. By March 1998 Soeharto was out of touch with the people and, perhaps seeing the writing on the wall, awarded himself only five more years in office. He never made it—by the end of May that year, with the economy freefalling and street violence flaring, he was out of office and the vice-president, BJ Habibie, was installed.

Habibie, never popular to begin with, mouthed the same promises of reform and even appeared willing to consider independence for East Timor, but it was all too little too late. The uncompromising stance by East Timor set off a chain reaction and sectarian violence, student protests and increased demands for independence spread like wildfire through Ambon, Kalimantan and Papua. Rogue militia groups, widely thought to be controlled and equipped by the Indonesian military, rampaged through East Timor after it overwhelmingly voted for independence in 1999; local police forces and parts of the army were sent in to quash other rebellions; protesting students were killed in the streets and the whole country went to hell in a handbasket.

A UN peacekeeping force brought stability to East Timor but prompted Indonesian outrage at the “meddling in internal affairs”. When the dust finally settled the East Timorese had been granted independence over the smoking ruins of their country. Soon afterwards Abdurrahman Wahid became Indonesia's first democratically elected president. By 23 July 2001, he'd lost the confidence of parliament and was replaced by the inscrutable Megawati Sukarnoputri.

Recent History

Indonesia faces numerous crises—rising Islamic extremism, military insubordination, official corruption, a fledgling and fragile democratic process, and the many separatist movements threatening to tear the country apart. On 12 October, 2002, bombs targeting Western tourists claimed around 200 lives in Bali. An extremist group with links to Al-Qaeda was responsible. Religious violence also plagued the Maluku islands, where Christians and Muslims reached a short-lived peace deal in February 2002.

In April 2002, masked gunmen massacred 14 Christian villagers. Fighting between Christians and Muslims has claimed more than 6000 lives since 1999. In Irian Jaya and Aceh, guerrillas have been fighting for independence from Jakarta for decades.

Megawati Sukarnoputri's presidency deserves credit for restoring social stability and economic growth but was widely condemned as ineffectual in combating rampant institutional corruption. In September 2004, 80% of Indonesian voters turned up to vote in the country's first direct presidential ballot. Charismatic retired general—and sometime crooner—Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (who holds an American management degree and is often referred to as SBY) won handsomely.

As the closest country to the epicenter of the earthquake and resulting tsunami in December 2004, Indonesia suffered the most physical damage and loss of human life. It's estimated that more than 128,000 people were killed and half a million were left homeless, mainly in Aceh and North Sumatra regions. A massive national and international aid operation responded to the tsunami and the affected areas are recovering slowly.

Mother Nature continues to test the resilience of the Indonesians. A devastating earthquake hit Java near the city of Yogyakarta in May 2006, causing thousands more casualties and in July of the same year an offshore earthquake caused a tsunami that ripped into West Java, devastating the area around Pangandaran. Meanwhile a mud-volcano, caused by gas drilling, continues to spew forth mud, displacing thousands near Surabaya.

Since coming to power, SBY has made battling corruption and growing Islamic fundamentalism a priority. Aside from these campaigns, the most successful domestic achievement of his government has been the peaceful resolution of the Aceh conflict, after complex negotiations and decades of bloody strife. But according to some experts, the June 2006 release from prison of radical Muslim cleric Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, who was implicated in the 2002 Bali blasts, may yet cause the president a few headaches. The introduction of an anti-pornography bill into parliament by Islamic parties highlighted the divide between secular and religious forces in Indonesian politics. The proposed law called for restrictions on everything from kissing in public to semi-naked traditional dancing and was only passed in a heavily revised form. President Yudhoyono will need all of his charm and political nous to keep the many voices of his enormous nation working together in harmony.

The Language

Indonesia is united more than anything else, by its common language. The millions of people who live on the nation's many thousands of islands, each with its own local language or dialect are able to communicate effectively using their national Bahasa. As a traveller, being able to speak a few words of Indonesian will assist you in your endeavours to get around, and will certainly endear you to the local people you meet.

- Good morning—[Selamat Pagi](#) (sel – a – mat pa- gee)
- Good afternoon—[Selamat Siang](#). (sel – a – mat shiang)
- Good evening—[Selamat Sore](#) (sel – a – mat sorry)
- Good night—[Selamat Malam](#)
- Goodbye—[Selamat Tinggal](#) (selamat ting-gal)
- How are you?—[Apa Kabar?](#)
- I am fine—[Kabar Baik](#) (kabar ba-ek)
- What is your name?—[Siapa nama anda?](#)
- My name is...—[Nama saya...](#)
- Nice to meet you—[Senang berkenalan dengan anda](#)
- See you later—[Sampai jumpa lagi](#)
- Goodbye (Said to people leaving)—[Selamat jalan](#)
- Goodbye (Said to people staying)—[Selamat tinggal](#)
- I do not understand—[Saya tidak mengerti](#) (Saya tee –daak men gert ee) almost silent k on the end of tidak
- I do not speak Indonesian—[Saya tidak mengerti bahasa](#)
- Yes—Ya / [Tentu](#)
- O.K.—[Beres](#)
- No / not—[Tidak / bukan](#) (Fine just to say boo – kan)
- Thank you—[Terima kasih](#)
- You're welcome—[Kembali](#)
- Please—[Tolong / Silakan](#)
- Please help me—[Tolonglah saya](#)
- Excuse me—[Permisi](#)
- Sorry—[Ma'af](#)

Fun Stuff

Scuba Diving

There will be plenty of opportunity to dive during our 4–5 days in the Gili Islands. The water is super warm, unbelievably clear, and the sea-life and coral reef are amazing. Indonesia has the great conditions for good scuba diving, so we highly recommend it. If you don't plan to go diving, just going snorkeling is also an amazing experience. The dive shop we go through is Trawangan Dive. They have great staff, it's right next to our accommodation, and they have a pool for you to do your skills in. Check out their website here.

There are essentially 2 options for courses you could take before going on your trip. The first is to do an entire "Open Water Scuba Diving" course, which will give you your diving certification. As a certified diver, once you are in Indonesia it will cost anywhere from \$40–\$80 for a day of diving—depending on which island we are on. With each day of diving, you would do 1 - 3 dives.

If you wanted to get certified, but did not want to spend that much time while you are on your trip, the second option for becoming certified is to use PADI's "eLearning". This allows you to do the classroom portion of the certification at home, and then just concentrate on the fun underwater parts while in paradise! In this case you would pay PADI for the first part of the course online (~\$150), and then pay for the underwater part on the island. Be sure to say that you will be completing your course at Trawangan Dive when you register. The classroom portion could probably be completed in a day or two at home. Then you could expect a morning of learning skills and then 4 fun dives while on the island.

Once certified, you'll be able to go to a maximum depth of 18 meters, and being certified you'll feel confident in your abilities because of everything you learned from the classes. You would then be a PADI certified "Open Water" diver, which is acknowledged around the world and never expires!

Diving is the kind of experience that might just uncover a hidden passion you never knew you had! It is a pretty amazing feeling to be underwater for almost an hour watching all this incredible tropical sea-life all around. We highly recommend taking the time to do the course before you leave. The course can normally be completed over a weekend, but they often have all sorts of options for how you can spread it out over a few weeks.

Diving is somewhat expensive compared to the rest of your spending in Indo, but it's quite cheap compared to other places in the world, and the quality of experience makes it well worth it. If you plan to dive, it is almost better to have a separate budget set aside for diving so that you can more easily rationalize it as an important cost while you are away.

In order to find information about dive shops in your area, look in the yellow pages under "Divers", or "Divers Instruction" for listings. You could also check out the Campus Recreation at a college or university because they will often offer courses. It is best that you take a PADI certification course though because this is the type of course you will take in Asia (and most of the world), and so it is most easily transferable. If that isn't possible, it is fine to take another certification course. It will just mean that once you are in Asia, you will have to do an extra few hours of review with an instructor to fulfill sections of the PADI course that you missed.

If any of you decide on the dates for a course that you are going to take, let us know and we could give you the email addresses of other people in your group as well. This way, perhaps a bunch of you could all take the course together, and even start to get to know each other.

1-Day Discover Diving Course

If it doesn't look like your budget is going to fit in an Open Water course there is another option with the "Discover Diving" course. Basically, you spend a couple of hours in a pool getting the basics down and learning how to feel comfortable being underwater and relying on the equipment for breathing. Once you're ready you head- out for a day of diving. You only go to a maximum of 12 meters (if you're comfortable) and you get a nice little taster of scuba. This normally costs around \$80–100 but at least it gives you a chance to take advantage of this opportunity to dive!

Ideas for Reading

Buying some sort of guidebook on Indonesia would also be a good idea because it'll have lots of info on things like the culture, history, and geography. It'll have maps and in-depth info on traveling the country. Books like the Lonely Planet or the Rough Guide are especially good if you are planning to travel on your own after the trip because they have all sorts of info on how to get around, where to stay, what to do, and how much things cost. There are also other books like National Geographic and the Insider Guide that have lots of pictures and are better for giving a more in-depth background on the country in general. If you don't need the practical travel information, a book like this might be better.

A good place to start is Amazon, Chapters-Indigo or your favourite local book store!

Surfing

Indonesia is well known for its surf and for good reason—it has some of the worlds best surf breaks which host numerous world class surf competitions and demonstrations. We will have the opportunity to catch some waves on the 10-day trip. In Bali, we will be staying on Kuta beach which is a great place to learn to surf—good surf schools and consistent waves of all sizes makes it a lot of fun.

The Gili Islands also have some surf breaks but they break over coral and can be very dangerous if you don't know what you are doing so, for most people, this is not a good spot to be surfing.

At all of these spots there are surf instructors that can give you lessons and places on the beach that you can rent a surfboard from. If you have never surfed before or aren't confident you should definitely hire an instructor for a lesson, they will teach you the basics, some safety principles, and get you out there and help you catch some small waves or white water. A board rental will cost you anywhere from 3 to 10 dollars per day depending on how long you want it, where you are and what type of board it is—a lesson will cost between 20 and 40 dollars for 1–2 hours of lessons which will tire out most beginners.

If you've never surfed before and you'd like to give it a try one thing you could do to get ready is start swimming laps before the trip. Stronger swimmers make better surfers!

Trip Locations

Ubud

Gili Islands

Kuta Beach, Bali

You will receive your confirmed Free & Easy Traveler trip itinerary with the exact routing at least 30 days prior to your departure.

Please be advised we are constantly keeping an eye out for warnings and are well informed on the happenings in the places we go. Our ground team is frequently sending us first hand updates, ensuring the destinations we bring our groups to are safe!

Community Forests International (CFI)

Free & Easy Traveler has joined forces with Community Forests International (CFI) to turn the joy of world travel into an act of global conservation. Travel is an extremely important part of our lives, getting to see and experience the world is what keeps us all connected and reminds us that we all live in the same world and deal with the same problems. But traveling around the world comes at a price and we are well aware of the many buses, planes, ships, etc. that we use to travel that harm the environment. Greenhouse gas emissions are driving increasingly dangerous climate change to the point that some of the places we love most are under threat and we don't want to contribute to the continuing destruction. So we decided to take action.

We Travel Carbon-Free

By tracking the flights of our staff members and calculating the resulting greenhouse gasses, we support CFI to go out and protect and manage a forest in Canada to pull those gasses back out. These emissions become securely stored at CFI's Whaelghinbran Farm. Read more about how CFI offsets our carbon [here](#).

One Traveler, One Tree

But we didn't stop there. Much of the work that CFI does supports community tree planting efforts in Africa and Canada. This work is having incredible results, and we wanted to strengthen their efforts so we decided that for each traveler that comes on a trip with us, we'll provide CFI with the support to plant a tree to help offset that traveler's carbon emissions.

These trees are being used as tools of environmental and social restoration. In Canada, some of these trees were planted along a degraded watercourse and will go on to provide habitat for salmon, trout, hawks and kingfisher, just to name a few. In Africa, where CFI was born, these trees were planted as a part of ongoing restoration of degraded lands on the island of Pemba, Tanzania. These trees rebuild the soil that was too poor to grow crops, allowing for trees like mangoes and cassava to thrive and produce food.

We look forward to continuing our relationship with CFI and, along with your help, making the world a greener place to live and travel in! If you want to offset your travel emissions with CFI, or want to support tree planting around the world, find out how [here](#).