



# West Bali

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## Best Places to Eat

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## Best Places to Stay

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## Why Go?

Few who dive or snorkel the rich and pristine waters around Pulau Menjangan forget the experience. It's part of Taman Nasional Bali Barat (West Bali National Park), the only protected place of its kind on the island. Many take the challenge of trekking through the savannah flats, mangroves and hillside jungles.

On the coast, waves pound the rocky shore and surfers hit the breaks at funky beaches like Balian and Medewi. Some of Bali's most sacred sites are also here, from the ever-thronged Pura Tanah Lot to the Unesco-nominated Pura Taman Ayun and on to the wonderful isolation of Pura Rambut Siwi.

The tidy town of Tabanan is at the apex of Bali's *subak*, the system of irrigation that ensures everybody gets a fair share of the water. The lush green fields all around attest to its success. On narrow backroads you can cruise beside rushing streams with bamboo arching overhead and fruit piling up below. Or go for the spectacle of huge beasts and flying mud: a bull race.

## When to Go

The best time to visit west Bali is during the dry season in April to September, although recent weather patterns have made the dry season wetter and the wet season drier. Hiking and trekking in Taman Nasional Bali Barat is much easier when it isn't muddy, and the waters of Pulau Menjangan are at their world-class best for diving when clear. Along the coast, however, the west has yet to develop a peak season – although surfing is best in months without an R.

## West Bali Highlights

- ❶ Plunging into the depths at Bali's best dive spot, **Pulau Menjangan** (p254), or enjoying the show while snorkelling the **2 Revolving** in the classic beach-funk vibe of **Balian**
- ❷ Nailing the long left-break at **Pantai Medewi** (p247)
- ❸ Nailing the long left-break at **Pantai Barat** (p247)
- ❹ Beach (p246), where surfer dives and stylish diggs rub shoulders

- ❺ Enjoying your own corner of serenity at **Pura Taman Ayun** (p243)
- ❻ Discovering, by foot or boat, Bali's national park, **Taman Nasional Bali Barat**

(p251) and hoping against hope to discover Bali's sole unique species, the possibly extinct Bali starling

❽ Enjoying the morning spirituality of **Pura Tanah Lot**

(p243) before it's replaced by afternoon avarice

❾ Discovering your own **backroad paradise** of low-hanging fruit, arching bamboo and rushing water

