



West Bali

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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-thraged 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.

