



South Bali & the Islands

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Why Go?

You won't have seen Bali if you haven't fully explored south Bali. The island's capital, Denpasar, sprawls in all directions from the centre and is a vibrant place, offering traditional markets, glitzy malls, great eating and plenty of Balinese history and culture, even as it threatens to absorb the tourist hubs of Seminyak, Kuta and Sanur.

The Bukit Peninsula (the southern part of south Bali) has multiple personalities. In the east, Tanjung Benoa is a beach-fronted playground of modest resorts while Nusa Dua attempts to bring order out of chaos with an insulated pasture of five-star hotels. On the west side, however, is where the real action is. Small coves and beaches are dotted with edgy little guesthouses and five-star eco-resorts. The vibe, derived from the fab surfing around Ulu Watu, is funky and free.

To the east, the haunted island of Nusa Penida dominates the horizon, but in its lee you'll find Nusa Lembongan, the ultimate island escape from the island of Bali.

When to Go

The best time to visit south Bali is outside the high season, which is July, August and the weeks around Christmas and New Year's Day. Visitor numbers spike and rooms from Bingin to Tanjung Benoa and Sanur to Nusa Lembongan may be filled. Many prefer April to June and September when the crowds are manageable. Surfing is best at the world-class breaks along the west coast of the Bukit Peninsula from February to November, with May to August being especially good.

Best Places to Eat

- » Bumbu Bali (p109)
- » Cak Asm (p123)
- » Teba Mega Cafe (p98)
- » Manik Organik (p116)

Best Places to Stay

- » Hotel La Taverna (p113)
- » Indiana Kenanga (p129)
- » Temple Lodge (p101)
- » Alila Villas Ulu Watu (p104)

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