



Lombok

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Laut Biru Bar & Restaurant (p297)
- ➔ Nugget's Corner (p293)
- ➔ Taliwang Irama (p275)
- ➔ Spice (p281)
- ➔ Coco Beach (p282)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Rinjani Beach Eco Resort (p283)
- ➔ Qunci Villas (p281)
- ➔ Tugu Lombok (p283)
- ➔ Blongas Bay Lodge (p297)
- ➔ Pearl Beach (p277)
- ➔ Sempiak Villas (p296)

Why Go?

Long overshadowed by its superstar neighbour across the Lombok Strait there's a steady hum about Lombok that catches the ear of travellers looking for something different from Bali. Blessed with exquisite white-sand beaches, epic surf, a lush forested interior, and hiking trails through tobacco and rice fields, Lombok is fully loaded with equatorial allure. Oh, and you'll probably notice mighty Gunung Rinjani, Indonesia's second-highest volcano, its summit complete with hot springs and a dazzling crater lake.

And there's much more. Lombok's southern coastline is nature on a very grand scale: breathtaking turquoise bays, world-class surf breaks and massive headlands. Development on these splendid beaches is just around the corner, but until that moment comes, they are still natural wonders to explore over much-improved roads.

If you're going to the Gilis, a Lombok stopover is a must. It's easy to get around the Lombok-Gilis-Bali triangle.

When to Go

- ➔ Lombok is hot, sticky and tropical, with a marked rainy season (roughly late October and April). Climbing Gunung Rinjani can be more difficult than usual at this time.
- ➔ The driest months coincide with the peak tourist period in July and August. You'll need to balance crowds versus ideal weather.
- ➔ The rainy season offers an excellent time to catch a local festival, such as the spectacular rice-throwing event called Perang Topat (held at Pura Lingsar in November or December), Peresean stick-fighting competitions (in December) or the Narmada buffalo races (in April).

Lombok Highlights

1 Tanjung Desert (p277) Taking the ride of your life on the temperamental break at Desert Point, Bangko-Bangko.

2 Gunung Rinjani (p287) Tackling Lombok's incomparable sacred peak (and Indonesia's second-highest volcano), which lures trekkers with a challenging climb and surreal rewards.

3 Pantai Mawan (p296) Setting eyes on this beach for the first time might make you gasp. But go on, gasp again as you contemplate that there are a dozen more in south Lombok just like it.

4 Sembalun Valley (p285) Beholding the idyllic mountain splendour from this high-mountain bowl that is Lombok's own Shangri-La.

5 Gili Gede (p277) Wandering the filigreed southwest coast and discovering offshore islands which deserve the sobriquet 'the next Gilis'.

