



Sulawesi

POP 17.5 MILLION

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Best Places to Eat

- » Lae Lae (p640)
- » Rumah Makan Kawana (p667)
- » Raja Sate (p681)
- » Gazebo (p654)

Best Places to Stay

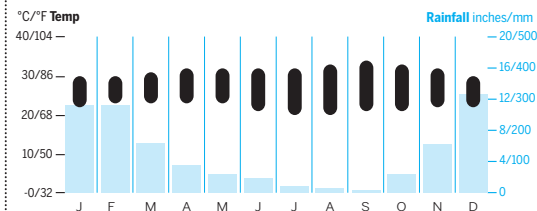
- » Living Colours (p684)
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- » Poya Lisa Cottages (p674)

Why Go?

If you think Sulawesi looks crazy on the map, just wait until you see it for real. The massive island's multilimbed coastline is drawn with sandy beaches, fringing coral reefs and a mind-boggling variety of fish. Meanwhile, the interior is shaded by impenetrable mountains and jungles thick with wildlife such as the rare nocturnal tarsiers and flamboyantly colourful maleo birds. Cultures have been able to independently evolve here, cut off from the rest of the world by the dramatic topography. Meet the Tana Toraja with their elaborate funeral ceremonies in which buffaloes are sacrificed and *balok* (palm wine) flows freely; nearby in Mamasa life revolves around the Christian church, and in the far north the Minahasans offer you spicy dishes of everything from stewed forest rat to grilled fish; the coastal regions are mainly inhabited by the Bugis, Indonesia's most famous seafarers.

When to Go

Makassar



Apr–Oct Dry season: roads are in more passable shape and seas are more calm

Nov–Mar Lembeh Strait critters tend to come out of the muck more in the wet season

Jun–Aug The best months to experience Tana Toraja's biggest funeral ceremonies



Sulawesi Highlights

- 1** Snorkelling or diving along unbelievably rich coral drop-offs – some of Asia’s best – around chilled-out **Pulau Bunaken** (p683)
- 2** Attending an elaborate funeral ceremony in **Tana Toraja** (p649)
- 3** Island-hopping from one outrageous beach to the next in the paradisaical **Togean Islands** (p672)
- 4** Walking the beaches, diving the waters and exploring the diverse countryside around **Pantai Bira** (p644)
- 5** Feeling the cool air off glistening Danau Poso at the quiet lakeside towns of **Pendolo** (p666) and **Tentena** (p666)
- 6** Spotting sprightly tarsiers, ornery black macaques and a bevy of birds at **Tangkoko-Batuangas Dua Saudara Nature Reserve** (p689)
- 7** Exploring one of Jacques Cousteau’s favourite diving haunts: the remote and rarely visited **Tukangbesi Islands** (p694)