



Sumatra

POP 50 MILLION

Includes »

Medan.....	490
Bukit Lawang.....	495
Berastagi.....	500
Danau Toba.....	504
Pulau Nias.....	511
Banda Aceh.....	519
Pulau Weh.....	523
Banyak Islands.....	527
Gunung Leuser National Park.....	530
Padang.....	533
Mentawai Islands.....	540
Bukittinggi.....	545
Danau Maninjau.....	553
Bandarlampung.....	577

Best Places to Eat

- » Restoran Bunda (p522)
- » One-One (p530)
- » Ikan Bakar Pak Agus (p537)
- » Jenny's Restaurant (p509)

Best Places to Stay

- » On The Rocks (p498)
- » Abdi Homestay (p553)
- » Casa Nemo (p524)
- » Spice Homestay (p537)
- » Swiss-Belinn Medan (p492)

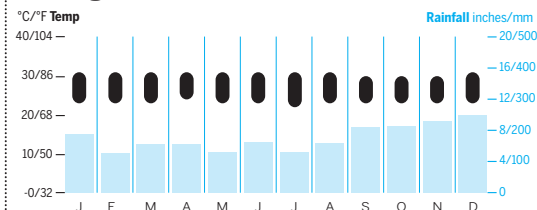
Why Go

Few isles tempt the imagination with the lure of adventure quite like the fierce land of Sumatra. An island of extraordinary beauty, it bubbles with life and vibrates under the power of nature. Eruptions, earthquakes and tsunamis are Sumatran headline grabbers. Steaming volcanoes brew and bluster while standing guard over lakes that sleepily lap the edges of craters. Orangutan-filled jungles host not only our red-haired cousins, but also tigers, rhinos and elephants. And down at sea level, idyllic deserted beaches are bombarded by clear barrels of surf.

As varied as the land, the people of Sumatra are a spicy broth of mixed cultures, from the devout Muslims in Aceh to the hedonistic Batak Christians around Danau Toba and the matrilineal Minangkabau of Padang. All are unified by a fear, respect and love of the wild and wondrous land of Sumatra.

When to Go?

Padang



Mid-Jun Take in the chaotic canoe races at the Danau Toba Festival.

Mid-Aug Place your bets at Takwengon's horse racing carnival.

Dec-Jan Most of Sumatra is getting a monsoon soak, but northern Aceh bathes in sun.

Sumatra Highlights

- 1 Lounging away a few days on the cool shores of **Danau Toba** (p504) and sharing a few drinks with the fun-loving Batak folk
- 2 Ogling our orangutan cousins in the wild jungles of **Bukit Lawang** (p496)
- 3 Hiking up beyond the clouds to the steaming peaks of the volcanoes around the hill town of **Berastagi** (p501)
- 4 Swimming with sharks and turtles in the coral garden off **Pulau Weh** (p523), an underwater paradise
- 5 Exploring the heartland of the matrilineal Minangkabau people from the sleepy **Harau Valley** (p553) to spectacular **Danau Maninjau** (p553)
- 6 Getting the real jungle experience in the steamy forests around **Ketambe** (p531), at the heart of the Gunung Leuser National Park
- 7 Living the surfer dream and searching for barrels around remote west-coast islands such as the **Mentawai** (p540) and **Banyak Islands** (p527)

