



Timor-Leste

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Best Colonial Relics

- » Pousada de Maubisse (p797)
- » Pousada de Baucau (p795)
- » Maubara's fort (p797)
- » Balibo's fort (p797)
- » Fatusuba Fort (p798)

Best Places for Cultural Connections

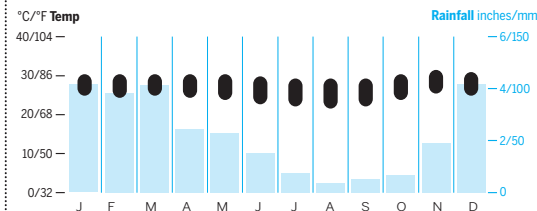
- » Australia Flag House (p797)
- » Resistance Museum (p791)
- » Santa Cruz Cemetery (p791)
- » Chega! Exhibition (p790)
- » Lospalos (p797)

Why Go?

With mountains to climb and untouched reefs to dive, Asia's newest country, Timor-Leste, is a winner. It's home to a youthful population and a diverse international presence that adds just the right amount of spice. Its capital, Dili, has all the bright lights, but venture out for wild cultural experiences. Stay in a grand Portuguese *pousada* on a misty hilltop, or at a quiet island ecolodge. Get rowdy dancing the night away at a Timorese wedding, journey down roads alongside herds of buffalo, then wind up through rainforests dotted with coffee plants. Keep an eye out for whales as you grip the cliffs along the north-coast road. Photogenic white sand beaches with aqua waters tempt swimmers, and for those who want to delve deeper, Dili-based dive companies have spent the past decade discovering world-class dive sites. Trailblaze your way through this amazing country; it's adventure with a smile.

When to Go

Dili



May–Nov (Dry Season) There's little rainfall and good weather (though Dili gets a little dusty).

Sep The sun is bearing down during the excitement of the Tour de Timor bike race.

May The country is drying out as the Dili Marathon takes centre place.

DON'T MISS

Even if you're not a scuba diver, getting under the water in Timor-Leste is a must. Grab a snorkel and ask around for the best spot for **snorkelling**. You won't believe your eyes.

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 15,007 sq km
- » **Capital** Dili
- » **Country Code** 2670
- » **Emergency** police 2121, 723 0365; ambulance 2723 3212; fire 2723 0686

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	US\$1.03
Canada	C\$1	US\$1.00
Euro zone	€1	US\$1.32
Indonesia	1000Rp	US\$0.11
Japan	¥100	US\$1.20
NZ	NZ\$1	US\$0.81
UK	£1	US\$1.58

Set Your Budget

- » **Dorm bed** US\$15–20
- » **Local restaurant meal** US\$3–\$10
- » **Snorkelling** US\$10

Entering the Country

- » **Nicolau Lobato International Airport** Taxi to centre US\$10, airport transfer \$18 (five minutes). Microlet (local bus) from main road US\$0.25.
- » **Dili Seaport** In central Dili, taxis around the city US\$2.

At a Glance

- » **Currency** US dollars. Anything under US\$1 can be paid for in East Timorese Centavos (cv).
- » **Language** Portuguese (official language), Bahasa Indonesia, Tetun and other local languages
- » **Money** ATMs in Dili and Baucau. Major supermarkets and more expensive hotels take credit cards.
- » **Visas** Visa on arrival at Dili airport or seaport; US\$30 for 30 days. Most nationalities need a visa in advance for land border arrivals.
- » **Mobile Phones** Good coverage throughout major population centres. Timor Telecom SIM cards can be used in unlocked phones.

ITINERARIES

One Week

From Dili it's off to the eastern end of the island, stopping along the spectacular coast before overnighing in Baucau. Use Baucau as a base for multinight trips to the colonial relic of Venilale and the Timor Village Hotel ecoresort at Loi Hunu. Then explore Com, the stunning views at Tutuala, and the stunning beach at Jaco Island. Return to Dili and cap off your trip by heading out to Atauro Island for a few nights.

One Month

As above, then head west to Batugade, close to the Indonesian border. Turn inland to Balibo for a slice of history, and on to Maliana, overlooking the verdant Nanura Plains. The next day head south via Bobonaro to Suai, with its pretty villages and beach, then turn east and head back into the mountains via either Ainaro or Same to Hatubuilico to climb Mt Ramelau. Next stop is Maubisse with its old Portuguese *pousada*, then back to Dili.

Essential Outdoor Activities

- » **Diving and snorkelling, Dili** At the western end of Av de Portugal, the Pertamina Pier's pylons provide a habitat for countless sea creatures. Just west of the airport, an amazing array of sea critters at Tasitolu continues to amaze divers.
- » **Trekking, Mt Ramelau** Watch the sunrise from Timor-Leste's highest peak: on a clear day you can see both coasts.