



Timor-Leste

📍 670 / POP 1,167,242

Includes ➔

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Dili..... | 792 |
| Atauro Island..... | 798 |
| Baucau..... | 799 |
| Maubisse..... | 802 |
| Hatubuilico & Mt Ramelau..... | 802 |
| Same & Betano | 802 |
| Oecussi | 803 |

Best Colonial Relics

- ➔ Pousada de Baucau (p799)
- ➔ Balibo Fort Hotel (p801)
- ➔ Pousada de Maubisse (p802)
- ➔ Prisão do Apelo (p801)
- ➔ Escola do Reino de Venilale (p800)

Best Places for Culture

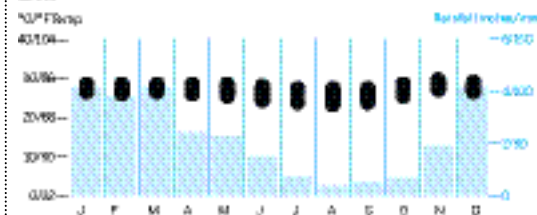
- ➔ Resistance Museum (p792)
- ➔ Balibo Flag House (p801)
- ➔ Santa Cruz Cemetery (p792)
- ➔ Chegal Exhibition (p792)
- ➔ Lospalos Cultural Centre (p801)

Why Go?

With mountains to climb, untouched reefs to dive, and ancient traditions that have survived the ravages of war, Asia's newest country offers some of the world's last great off-the-beaten-track adventures. Get an insight into Timor-Leste's dark history in Dili's museums, then venture out of the capital for wild cultural experiences. Head for the hills to hike to jungle caves, wander misty mountain village markets, and sip local coffee on the terrace of a grand Portuguese *pousada*. Bump along diabolical roads in search of your own perfect beach, stopping for photos of the stunning seascapes as you grip the rugged cliffs along the north coast road. Strap on a snorkel and marvel at the pristine reefs that fringe the north coast and Atauro Island, or delve deeper with Dili-based dive companies, which have spent the past decade discovering world-class sites. Trailblaze your way through this amazing country, and find out what everyone else has been missing.

When to Go

Dili



May–Nov (Dry Season) There's little rainfall and good weather, though it can get very dusty.

Sep–Nov It's whale-watching season as pods of whales migrate through the Wetar Strait.

Dec–Apr (Wet Season) Heavy rain makes the landscape lush; some roads are impassable in the districts.

DON'T MISS

One of the world's highest concentrations of dolphins and whales ply the deep channels off Timor-Leste's north coast; keep your eyes peeled for cetaceans during the boat trip to Atauro Island.

Fast Facts

Area 14,870 sq km

Capital Dili

Emergency police ☎ 333 1283

fire and ambulance ☎ 115

Exchange Rates

| | | |
|-----------|------|----------|
| Australia | A\$1 | US\$0.70 |
| Euro | €1 | US\$1.12 |
| Singapore | S\$1 | US\$0.79 |
| UK | UK£1 | US\$1.53 |

Daily Costs

Dorm bed US\$12–15

Local restaurant meal
US\$3–12

Single dive US\$45–50

Entering the Country

Nicolau Lobato International Airport Taxi to centre US\$10 (around 10 minutes). *Mikrolet* (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 (US\$). Anything under US\$1 can be paid in East Timorese Centavos (cv).

Language Portuguese and Tetun (official languages), Bahasa Indonesia, local dialects.

Money International ATMs very scarce outside Dili. 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, Telkomsel and Telemor SIM cards can be used in unlocked phones.

ITINERARIES

One Week

From Dili it's off to the island's east, stopping for photos along the spectacular coast before overnighing in Baucau. Head to Ossu and hike Mt Mundo Perdido (Lost World) or take on a smaller hike to Fretilin cave hideouts before spending the night by the river at Hotel Wailakurini. Next, to Com for lunch then onto Tutuala, from where you can reach the sacred Jaco Island for magnificent snorkelling. Return to Dili to explore museums and markets, and cap off your trip by heading out to Atauro Island for at least one night.

One Month

Complete the one-week itinerary then return to Dili for some diving and head west to Liquiçá for luxury camping at Caimeo Beach. Continue toward the Indonesian border, stopping at Maubara Fort for lunch. Overnight at the new Balibo Fort Hotel (opposite Balibo Flag House), before heading south via Marobo and Bobonaro to Suai, with its traditional villages and beach, then turn east and head back into the mountains via Ainaro or Same to Hatubuilico to climb Mt Ramelau. Head back to Dili via misty Maubisse.

Essential Outdoor Activities

Diving & Snorkelling There's excellent diving and snorkelling along the north coast (particularly east of Dili) and off Atauro Island. Sacred Jaco Island's turquoise waters are snorkel-heaven. Diving conditions are best (with up to 30m visibility) during the dry season.

Hiking Timor-Leste offers tempting terrain for hikers from casual to serious; 10-day north-to-south coast hikes are not unheard of. Popular day hikes include Mt Ramelau, the nation's highest peak, while Mt Manucoco on Atauro offers a diversion from beach-bumming. Mt Matebian beckons more serious hikers. Check www.trekkingeasttimor.org for info on routes.