

Shalimar Villas

Visitor's Info

About Bali

Bali is an island with a famous beautiful landscape and is one of the, almost 18.000 thousand islands of Indonesia, that has its own uniqueness. Located in the south of equator and a part of Sunda Islands, Bali lays in between Java and Lombok Islands. The combination of friendly people with the various cultures makes Bali an unforgettable island for those who have ever experienced it.

Language

There are more than 500 languages and dialects spoken across the Indonesian archipelago, but it is Bahasa Indonesia that is embraced as the national language.

Bahasa Bali is used mostly by the native people of Bali in daily life. It is greatly complicated by its caste influences. There are three levels of Bahasa Bali: Low, Middle and High. It is possible to identify the social status of a person through the kind of the language that they use to communicate. Hopefully, almost everyone related to the tourism industry speaks English.

Religion

Balinese population is around four million, and the local religion is Hinduism. Religion and culture is a unity that cannot be separated in Bali.

Religion has big impact on Balinese daily life. Various kinds of religious ceremonies are commonly found at the temples, either large or small. A small temple can be found in each home for devotions and offerings to the gods.

Climate in Bali

Bali has a wet season and a dry season, with average temperatures varying between 26°C and 32°C in the rainy season and between 24°C and 28°C in the dry season.

The wet season starts in November and ends in March. This does not mean that you will have rain every day or all day. Sometimes it will rain "cats & dogs" for one hour, some days you will get no rain, or it can also rain for the whole day, but most often during the night.

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Currency

The official currency in Bali and the rest of Indonesia is the Rupiah (IDR).

Upon arrival in Bali, try to avoid changing currency at the airport, as you will get the worst exchange rate of the island. The best way to change your foreign currency into Rupiah is at an official Money Changer. They are widely distributed along the island.

Beware of many unofficial money changers offering "especially attractive" exchange rates and they will try to cheat you (they do it with a smile, but they do!). In any case, make sure you always count the money yourself after they hand you the money before leaving the office.

The best exchange rate is normally given on working days from 9 am to 5 pm. Out of this period, as well as on Saturdays, Sundays, and official holidays, the exchange rate will drop below the official exchange rates that you would normally find on the Internet.

If you arrive in Bali at a reasonable time and you need to change money, you can ask your driver to stop at any of the official Money Changers on the way to the villa.

Credit Cards

It is quite common in Bali to withdraw money from ATM cash machines with your own credit card and pin code.

Most major credit cards are accepted in many shops, restaurants, and hotels, but although it is forbidden by the Bank of Indonesia since already several years, some establishments will try to overcharge between 3% and 5% on top of the bill for administration costs if you use a credit card. Don't accept it.

Electricity

Most electricity home lines in Bali are 220V using the two-pronged plugs variety like most European Union countries. It is easy to find plug adapters in many shops in Bali but if you have electrical devices that use a different type, we suggest you bring your own adapters as the local ones are not quite good in quality.

Time

Indonesia has 3 time zones, WIB, WITA and WIT. Bali is part of the WITA time zone which is, in summertime, 8 hours ahead of GMT.

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Visa

For most countries, there is a free tourist entry valid for a maximum stay of one month. For other countries, a VISA should be applied in an Indonesian Consulate before arriving to Indonesia. Some of these VISAS could take several days to process. Details of VISA formalities should be checked before departure at the nearest Indonesian Consulate in your home country.

Please ensure before departure that all passports are valid at least 6 months before entering Indonesia.

Driving in Bali

In Bali you will drive on the left.

If you wish to hire a car during your trip and drive it yourself, you must be over 18 years of age and must carry a valid International Driving License.

Some foreigners drive motorcycles and cars without a valid International Driving License, and a small "donation" will probably get them out of trouble if the police caught them driving without a valid license but, in case of an unfortunate accident or causing an injury to a local, the foreigner will probably face a nightmare with the police, paying ridiculous amounts of money, fines, and probably spending a "long holiday" in one of the worst jails in the world.

Because of this, if you don't have an International License, we recommend you hire a car with a driver and enjoy your holidays in peace.

Guests Registration

All guests staying at any commercial villa or hotel in Indonesia are required by law to be registered with the local Police upon arrival. Failure to comply with this obligation may lead to severe legal and financial penalties to the villa operator.

Upon check-in, the Villa Manager will request the passport of each guest for the purpose of police registration and will be returned within one (1) day once the registration process has been completed.

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Health

For a visit to Bali, you do not need vaccinations. Bali has no Malaria or other contagious tropical diseases, but a few observations and cares should be taken as in any other tropical country:

- Even though it is not a big issue in Bali, the use of a mosquito repellent is advised in certain locations, especially while in the proximity of rice fields and rivers and mainly one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset.
- Never drink water from the tap, drink only bottled water. You can find it everywhere under the commercial name AQUA and many other brands.
- Remember that Bali is close to the equator, so special care should be taken using an effective sun block to protect the skin from radiation.
- If you want to swim at the sea, you should be aware of the strong currents in some areas, especially in the west coast of Bali. Please, be careful with kids and only swim in safely marked areas.

In case you need hospital care, there are many high-quality centers in Bali, but most of them are expensive if you don't have an international medical insurance, so please ensure you have your own travel insurance before traveling to Indonesia.

Illegal Drugs

Indonesia gives a harsh punishment to drug users and even death penalty to drug traffickers. For your own sake, please, do not bring or use drugs in this country. Avoid also relating to people connected with drugs or assisting to parties where drugs are involved. You could be involved in a nightmare you will never forget.