



BEST OF SUMATRA

8 Days/7 Nights

Day 1: Medan - Bohorok

(L)

This morning your guide and private car will meet you at Polonia Airport or your hotel in Medan and transfer you to Bohorok. (3.5 hours, 90 kilometers)

Along the way you will stop for lunch at a local restaurant and at Asam Kumbang Village. This village is famous for its palm oil and rubber plantations, soy farms and its crocodile farm.

Arrive mid-afternoon in Bohorok and check in to your hotel.

Then, depart for a walk into the jungle and a chance to see Sumatra's famed Orangutans at the Bohorok Orangutan Rehabilitation Station. Inaugurated in 1973, the center has rehabilitated and released more than 200 orangutans of Sumatra and Kalimantan origin who were either rescued from poachers or who have been born in the center. These orangutans are taught how to survive before they are release into the remote areas of Mount Leuser National Park.

First you'll cross the river with traditional canoe, then trek to the feeding site of Orangutans. You are almost certain to see several of these amazing animals in their semi-wild habitat as they gather to feed at 1500.

After feeding time return to your hotel for dinner at leisure.
Overnight in Bohorok.

Day 2: Bohorok - Brastagi

(B, L)

This morning after breakfast you'll drive to Brastagi in the Karo highlands.

You'll pass through Medan (3.5) then continue southwards via Sembahe and Sibolangit to Brastagi (2 hours, 67 km) stopping for lunch en route.

Reach Brastagi this afternoon. The area is known for its cool climate, orchids, flowers, vegetables and fruits and the most famous of which is the "Marquisa" or known as passion fruit which is commonly made into a refreshing fruit-drink. It is also home to the Batak Karo people, who have unusual wedding and funeral ceremonies which can lasts for days and dozens of other unique traditions and rituals which they still practice.

Take a short tour of the town to visit a traditional village at Peceren and see the fruit market which is swarming with activity and scenes from traditional Karo life.

Then continue to your hotel for check in. Dinner is at your leisure this evening.
Overnight in Brastagi.

Day 3: Brastagi - Parapat - Samosir

(B, L)

Today's journey takes you to Samosir Island, (an island within a volcanic lake) via the town of Parapat.

The drive to Parapat takes 5 hours and you'll set off after breakfast. Along the way you will stop at to see the 120 meter Sipiso-piso waterfall which is located in the Batak highlands. The beautiful fall is formed by an underground river that then plunges from a cave into Lake Toba caldera. You'll also visit Rumah Bolon, the former royal palace, which has great views over the lake.

After lunch you will reach Parapat, a small town on the eastern shore of Lake Toba, where you will cross to Samosir Island by ferry boat (45 minutes). This small island is located in the middle of Lake Toba, the caldera lake of the Toba Volcano, which was formed over 75000 years ago.

Check in to your hotel for dinner and an evening at leisure.

Overnight on Samosir Island.

Day 4: Samosir Island Excursion

(B,L)

Today you will spend a full day exploring Lake Toba and its shores by boat (0800-1500)

Surrounded by towering volcanic walls, you will cruise along the calm waters of this 100 kilometer long lake. You'll visit traditional villages on the shores including Tomok, where you will see the tombs of former Sidabutar Kings. Also visit Ambarita whose villagers are known for making chairs and tables out of stone and which was the infamous execution place of the Siallang Kings. Finally, stop at Simanindo where you'll be treated to a performance of Batak Toba traditional dance called *Tor-Tor* and visit the fascinating museum.

Lunch will be served at a local restaurant en route and you'll return to your hotel mid-afternoon. The remainder of today is at your leisure.

Overnight on Samosir Island.

Day 5: Samosir Island - Sipirok

(B, L)

Catch an early morning ferry (0700) to cross back to Parapat and then continue by road to Sipirok.

On the way several stops will be made in this picturesque corner of the island. You'll see clove and pineapple plantations, stop to visit Balige- a charming fishing and farming village- and the Sipoholon Hot springs. Take a walk along the banks of the Sarulla River for a chance to stretch your legs and see beautiful views of rice terraces that surround you. Lunch will be at a local restaurant along the way.

Around 1700 you'll reach Sipirok and check in to your hotel. Dinner is at leisure this evening.

Overnight in Sipirok.

Day 6: Sipirok - Bukittinggi

(B, L)

Today is another long day of driving across Sumatra, but with plenty of fabulous scenery and interesting sites. You'll start early today - around 0730- to reach Bukittinggi by 1800.

You'll also stop in Sihepeng village, a small village filled with coconuts, pepper fields and vanilla and cardamom gardens. The landscape then changes to tropical rain forest at Rimba Panti.

Later this morning, the drive takes you over the equator where you can stop and take photos. Urban legend says that crossing the line backwards will bring good luck, so give it a try!

Lunch is served en route and late this afternoon you'll arrive in Bukittinggi.

The long drive is rewarding: this charming town is surrounded by volcanoes, lakes and villages of the Minangkabau people. The town is situated at 930 meters above sea level on the Agam plateau and generally has cooler air compared to the rest of the island.

Check in to your hotel and dinner is at leisure this evening.

Overnight in Bukittinggi.

Day 7: Bukittinggi Excursion

(B, L)

Spend today exploring Bukittinggi and its surroundings. The main town sites will be seen on foot, as Bukittinggi is very small and everything is located close together, with a car to take you to the further locations.

During the day you will visit the impressive Sianok Canyon. The canyon is noted for its network of underground bunkers and tunnels built by the Japanese during World War II. There is a two-story observation tower that overlooks the Sianok Canyon, which you may climb to the top of for panoramic views of the area.

You will also see Fort De Kock, built by the Dutch during Padri Wars. Although little remains of the original fortifications, it provides fine views over the town from its hilltop position.

In town, you will visit Minangkabau Museum which houses an impressive collection of traditional costumes, weapons, sculptures and wood carvings from the Minangkabau people. Nearby you will also see the town's large clock tower 'Jam Gadang' and the Pasar Atas Market. The market is open daily but on Wednesdays and Saturdays it is especially busy with people coming from neighboring villages to buy and sell their wares.

Take a short drive out of town to Batusangkar stopping en route at Tabek Patah, where you will have fantastic views of the rice terraces. Stop at the village of Baso, where you will see traditional weaving. In Batusangkar you'll visit Pagaruyung, the former palace of the Minangkabau Kingdom before returning to Bukittinggi via Lake Singkarak.

You'll reach your hotel around 1600 and the remainder of this evening is at leisure.

Overnight in Bukittinggi.

Day 8: Bukittinggi - Padang - Departure

(B)

After breakfast drive to Padang Airport (approximately 2 hours) on Sumatra's west coast for your departure flight.

Along the way a stop will be made at the Anai valley waterfall.

*******END OF SERVICES*******

E&OE