

North Bali

By Shannim Mohd Saad

North Bali boasts magnificent natural beauty, sacred temples not known to visitors, phenomenal sunrise, volcano trek adventures and wondrous waterfalls.

The thrill of chasing waterfalls, jumping off 20 metre cliffs into crystal clear rivers, trekking active volcanoes, spotting dolphins and embracing the beauty of nature North Bali has to offer will fix your cravings for off the beaten path Bali. North Bali retains its quietness and peacefulness, still untouched by massive tourism. It is where you will find the raw and rural Bali.

Here are some of North it's best, still under the tourists radar.



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Sekumpul Waterfall

With water cascading rapidly from a mighty 80 metre high, these mammoth sized waterfalls are surrounded by lush green forests, overgrown with thickets of ferns and hanging vines, making it feel like a scene from Avatar. It is definitely the most beautiful waterfall in Bali.

The hike to Sekumpul waterfall is fairly steep. It is however a beautiful hike through a deep green forested valley, crossing crystal clear streams every now and then. You will be rewarded by the phenomenal view of Bali's best waterfalls. Take your time, go for a swim in the refreshingly cold turquoise lagoon, have a little picnic and enjoy the spray of the magnificent falls on your skin. It is very relaxing, in fact, therapeutic.

Entrance fee is required. The fee includes a tour guide for the entire trip around the waterfalls.

TIP: Wear sensible footwear as some of the areas can be slippery. You have to cross streams, so good grip sandals or trainers is advisable.

Aling-aling Waterfall

Famed for its cliff jumping and waterfall sliding actions, this is the perfect destination for adventure seekers. From a tiny 5 metre drop for younger children up to 20 metre killer stunts for the daredevils, the thrills and spills of a trip to Aling Aling will surely make your heart jump.

Aling Aling Waterfall is located in the charming village of Sambangan. This wondrous waterfall is surrounded by a luscious jungle. The path cuts through beautiful rice terraces before descending into the deep green valley.

There is a series of waterfalls in Aling Aling and a few lovely rock pools for swimming.

The walk from Aling Aling Waterfall is relatively easy. It is a picturesque hike through the tropical forests with a lookout point to witness an aerial view of the waterfalls.



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Mount Batur

Epic sunrise, stunning views and fascinating forests, add Mount Batur to your Bali bucket list and thank me later.

At sunrise, the glistening orange and gold rays bursting from the silhouette of nearby Mount Agung are unbelievably beautiful. The panoramic landscapes of this active volcano rising from lush green valleys and pristine lakes below will leave you starstruck. The climb at an ungodly hour to catch the sunrise from the peak is totally worthwhile.

Geologists believe that Mount Batur sits in a super volcano that used to be 3500 metres above sea level. A huge eruption over 25000 years ago took a huge chunk of the volcano which collapsed into a chamber. Now, Mount Batur, the second highest peak in Bali stands handsomely at 1717 metres. The big chamber is now filled by a lake named Danau Batur.

A local guide is required to trek up the mountain. There are companies that offer pick-up and drop-off from your locations too. Their costs often include a guide. Here are some quick facts about Mount Batur:

- Distance: 3 – 5 km (2-3 miles) return
- Elevation Gain: 500 m (1,650 feet)
- Top Elevation: 1,717 metres (5,633 feet)
- Difficulty: Moderate
- Duration: 2 – 4 hours return



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Shannim Mohd Saad is a wanderlust and a travel enthusiast. She has eternal cravings for adventure. Travel Writing is her passion. Follow her on Instagram @epicadventuress and her blog epicadventuress.com. You may also reach her at shannimpym@gmail.com

Munduk

If you long for some cool climes or want to get away from Bali heat, then Munduk is the place to be.

Munduk is Bali's best kept secret, tucked away in a quaint little village in the highlands of North Bali. It is surrounded by lush forests, cascading waterfalls, coffee plantations and rice fields.

It is the place to totally immerse into nature. Go for forest hikes, chase the waterfalls, walk the gorgeous rice terraces or enjoy the view of wild Munduk has to offer.

The panoramic twin lakes of Lake Buyan and Lake Tamblingan are located in Munduk. These turquoise blue lakes formed after volcanic eruptions thousands of years ago are bridged by deep rainforests between them.

Munduk has some of the most incredible bamboo houses and glamping sites in Bali. Remote and romantic, this is a great place for a couple's getaway. It is the perfect spot to escape the buzzing Ubud and the south of Bali.



Jatiluwh Rice Fields

Spanned across 600 hectares of land, Jatiluwh offers spectacular views of its rural rice fields. A walk around these picturesque rice terraces is absolutely breathtaking. The green and golden landscape looked like beautifully crafted patterns crawling uphill leading up to the skies.

Jatiluwh, recognised as a World UNESCO site is still under the tourists radar. The accessibility of this region keeps the Kuta and Canggu crowd away. Make sure you make your way there before the next Bali swing is built!

Jatiluwh Rice Fields



Lovina

Lovina, best known for dark spinner dolphins frequenting along its coast, is a low key beach destination. It has a charming feel of old Bali.

Witnessing pods of dolphins leaping to the water surface of Bali Sea playfully chasing boats is the highlight of Lovina. Kayaking, paddle boarding, snorkelling and diving are some other activities you could do around Lovina.

The beaches in Lovina are not crowded at all. You can enjoy your cocktails on bean bags with sand between your toes or read your favourite book on your sunbeds without getting hassled by persistent sarong sellers. Magnificent sunsets too!



Add North Bali to your Bucket List

North Bali is truly magical. Take your time, embrace the beauty of everything it has to offer, spend a week or so in this part of Bali and you will understand what I mean. Some people came and never left.



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