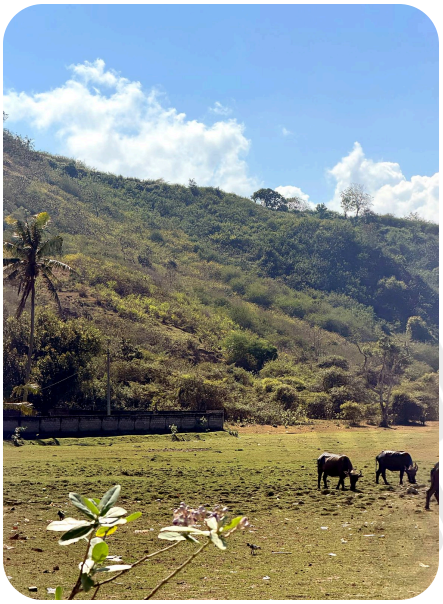
Know Before You Go: Lombok.

How to do Lombok well: when to go, where to stay for the vibe you want, and how to thrive.

4 min read · Last refreshed 14 October 2026







WHEN TO GO

Apr–Jun, Sep–early Oct

Dry, sunny and fewer crowds.

HOW LONG

7+ days

The trip in is a hassle, and the Gilis are close.

BEST FOR

Surf, cafes, beaches

Plus pilates and recovery.

BUDGET

15–25% less than Bali hotspots

Rooms and food, 2026 estimates. Flights are extra.

Budget, compared with Bali hotspots (2026 estimates) -

- **Rooms:** roughly 15 to 25% cheaper than a comparable stay in Canggu or Uluwatu.
- **Food:** cafes and warungs cost less than in Bali's hotspots, and the gap is widest at local warungs.
- **Scooter:** about 60,000 to 80,000 IDR a day ($3 to $5), close to Bali prices.
- **Getting there (extra versus Bali):** a flight from Bali is about 400,000 to 1,200,000 IDR ($22 to $67) one way, and the airport taxi is about 120,000 to 250,000 IDR ($7 to $14). Book flights early, because last-minute fares can be 2 to 4 times higher.
- These are estimates for 2026, so confirm current prices when you book.

When to go.

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Absolutely go: late April to June, and September to early October. Dry, sunny and calmer than the peak.

Think twice: July and August, and December and January. July and August are the busiest, and rooms book up quickly. December and January are the wettest months.

Surfers: November to March brings the biggest, most consistent waves on the south coast, for experienced surfers who are confident in the water. If you are learning, April to October is friendlier.

What the wet season is like: heavy tropical downpours, usually in the late afternoon or evening, and often clearing within an hour or two. Mornings are often sunny. Wet roads are slippery, so if you are not confident on a scooter, hire a driver or plan around the showers.

Event weekends: MotoGP and the Pocari run

- **MotoGP:** the Indonesian Grand Prix is on the 2027 calendar for 29 to 31 October, with race day on 31 October (MotoGP).
- **POCARI SWEAT Run Lombok:** the 2026 edition was on 11 to 12 July (Kontan). Expect mid-July 2027 (TBC). The 2025 edition was in September, so the date can move.

- **Rooms go early:** before this year's race, Mataram hotels rated three stars and up averaged about 80% occupancy, some hit 97%, and a handful were fully booked, mostly by corporate guests. Two-star and budget hotels sat around 60% (Suara NTB).
- **For either event:** book a refundable room the day you pick your dates, and look at Senggigi and Mataram before settling for anything far from the action. If your dates are flexible, a week either side is calmer and cheaper.

What to know.

Culture. Lombok's Sasak community is mostly Muslim, so you will hear the call to prayer through the day. It is part of daily life rather than a disturbance. Dress modestly in villages, and light sleepers can ask how close a stay is to the nearest mosque.

Noise. The main street in Kuta is busy. The beaches and the stays further out are quiet.

Safety. A bag-snatching case was reported in Kuta Lombok in February 2026 (ANTARA). Keep bags on the side away from the road and avoid walking alone at night with valuables.

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How long to stay.

My recommendation: a week or more. The trip in takes effort, and the Gili Islands are close enough that you will want time for them.

What I did: 10 days, mostly in Kuta, and I left wanting more. I wish I had made time for 1 to 2 days on the Gilis.

Why I left early: I left before the Pocari marathon to avoid the crowds, the congestion and the inflated

pricing. Restaurants like Mama Pizza were already booking out.

PARTY

Gili Trawangan

The biggest and most social island, with the most restaurants, bars, dive shops and nightlife.

EASY MIDDLE

Gili Air

Cafes, yoga and beach bars, but calmer than Trawangan. A good pick if you are unsure.

QUIET

Gili Meno

The smallest and quietest, with empty beaches and turtles close to shore. Fewer places to eat and stay.

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Where to stay.

THE LIVELY BASE

Kuta

The most hotels, restaurants and surf, and the busiest town. It is about 2 hours' drive to the harbor for the Gili Islands (Trawangan, Meno and Air).

THE QUIET BEACH

Selong Belanak

About 30 minutes west of Kuta. Calmer and more residential. Rent a scooter or arrange a driver to get around.

THE RESORT STRIP

Senggigi

Big beach resorts on the west coast, about 45 minutes from the airport, with boats to the Gilis. Fewer cafes and bars than Kuta, so it feels more like a resort stay.

THE BACKUP

Mataram

Lombok's capital city. Go when you cannot find a room anywhere else, like MotoGP weekend. Expect traffic, malls, markets and local restaurants, not a beach. Senggigi is the nearest beach.

Want surf, cafes and the most choice? Stay in Kuta.

Want quiet beach days? Stay in Selong Belanak.

Landing late, or heading to the Gilis? Stay in Senggigi.

Everything is full? Try Mataram.

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Where I would book

KUTA

- **Leha Leha Kuta Lombok**, *my pick:* a boutique studio hotel with a pool and garden. It is close to everything we wanted but quiet and safe at night, with 24-hour guards, and we scootered everywhere. The owner is Lisa, so tell her Holly sent you. Rates have been listed from about $67 to $102 a night (lehalehakutalombok.com).
- **Rawa Lombok** (central Kuta), *the in-town pick:* rustic-modern, with a rooftop pool and the Markisa restaurant. Instagram @rawa.lombok

SELONG BELANAK

- **Bukit Indah Boutique Accommodation**, *the family-run pick:* four-poster beds, outdoor bathrooms and big breakfasts, rated 4.9 on Tripadvisor.
- **Ola Ola Lombok**, *the surf-tips pick:* a guesthouse about an 8-minute walk from Selong Belanak Beach (Trip.com).

- **Driftwood Lombok**, *the bungalow pick:* four traditional bungalows, about 1.5 km from the beach (Booking.com).

SENGGIGI (ON THE MANGSIT STRETCH)

- **Qunci Villas**, *the splurge pick:* the only five-star of the three, with 78 rooms, three pools and a spa. Around $134 a night in one listing (listing).
- **Katamaran Hotel & Resort**, *the beachfront pick:* on the beach, with infinity pools and two restaurants, rated 9.4 out of 10 from over 500 reviews (listing).
- **Puri Mas Boutique Resort & Spa**, *the best-value pick:* a small resort with sunset views, around $97 a night in one listing (listing).

MATARAM (WHEN EVERYTHING ELSE IS FULL)

- **Aston Inn Mataram**, *the reliable chain pick:* a modern mid-range hotel on Jl. Panca Usaha (Aston).
- **Lombok Astoria Hotel**, *the four-star pick:* in Rembiga, on the road toward Senggigi (listing).
- **Golden Palace Hotel Lombok**, *the pool-and-spa pick:* a premium city hotel in Cakranegara (listing).
- These all sold out before MotoGP 2026, mostly to corporate guests. For event weekends, two-star and budget hotels were the ones with rooms.

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Insider tip: I always message the hotel or B&B directly on WhatsApp instead of booking through an app. **Second tip:** ask for a better price, especially for a week or more or in the quieter months. I often did, and it worked.

Getting there and around.



Fly from Bali

25 to 55 minutes. My pick.



Fast boat

1.5 to 3.5 hours. The budget option.

Public ferry

4 to 5 hours. I wouldn't recommend it.

Scooter

60,000 to 80,000 IDR a day. The norm in Kuta.

Flying from Bali (my pick)

- It takes about 25 to 55 minutes on a propeller plane, and the ride is bumpy, as island flights tend to be.
- The airport is easy and clean, with no security line.
- Book early, because last-minute prices can be 2 to 4 times higher.

Fast boat and public ferry

- **Fast boat from Padang Bai:** 1.5 to 3.5 hours, then about 2 hours by road to Kuta from the west-coast port. It is the economical option, though not the cleanest, and some people get seasick (I did).
- **Public ferry:** 4 to 5 hours. I wouldn't recommend it.

Airport to Kuta

- Use the official taxi counter in arrivals, or a driver your hotel arranges.
- It takes 25 to 45 minutes and costs about 120,000 to 250,000 IDR.
- Agree on the price first, and ignore touts quoting low fares.

Scooters, Grab and Gojek

- **Scooters:** about 60,000 to 80,000 IDR a day. An international driving permit with a motorcycle endorsement is technically required. Avoid riding at night, and see the wet-season note above if you are not a confident rider.

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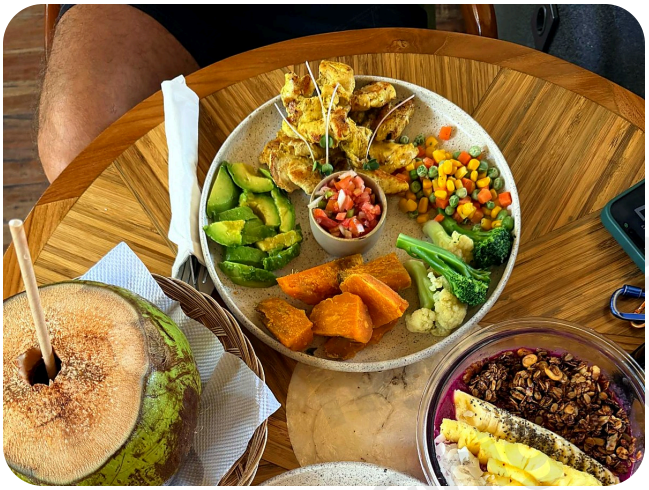
- **Grab and Gojek:** do not count on them in Kuta. They work best around the airport and Mataram, and they are hit or miss in Senggigi. Install both apps, and ask your stay to arrange a driver.

Finally, a few things to do.

These are my personal picks, from the days I was there.



An easy day in Kuta, from my picks

Morning: a flat white at Caffeine, with avo toast from the truck next door.

Late morning: a reformer class at The Slow Studio, then the sauna and ice bath.

Afternoon: a boat out to Gerupuk for a surf, then Merese Hill at sunset.

Evening: the build-your-own at OZ, then Darkito Chocolat at Brutal Gelato.

Surf: where to go

Go

Gerupuk (inside and outside)

The true Lombok surfing experience, with a beginner-friendly wave inside and a fast right outside. It was crowded. You need a boat to the break, about 50,000 to 100,000 IDR each way. Boat operators may pressure you to buy a ride on your own, so park away from the main parking lot.

Decent

Mawi

A good all-rounder with consistent swell, though a bit crowded. The scooter ride to the parking is rough, dirt and bumpy, and the cell signal is the worst of all the spots.

Decent

Don Don

A mellow A-frame that is fun but crowded. You need a boat to the break.

Decent

Areguling

Plan for about a 30-minute paddle out, or take a boat to the break for about 50,000 to 100,000 IDR each way.

Hesitate

Ekas

Two breaks. Inside Ekas is a long, friendly wave for intermediates and longboarders, best on lower tides (Surfline). Outside Ekas is a fast, hollow reef break for experienced surfers (Surfline). Make sure the surf is pumping before you commit. The boat to the break takes about 30 minutes and costs at least 500,000 IDR. Watch your scooter, because theft is a risk.

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Hesitate

Desert Point

Not recommended. It is too far, too crowded and not worth the trip. Experts only.

Eat and drink

DINNER

- **Granita**: order the caprese panini or the vegan breaded pumpkin on a baguette. It is a little outside town, so you will want a scooter.
- **OZ Restaurant**: the build-your-own is my pick, and the French toast with Dubai pistachio kunafa is the other standout. White walls and big mirrors make it a photo spot, so go early.

- **GURU**: a garden cafe on Jl. Baturiti I. Get the Spanish tortilla or the Santiago Bernabéu toast.

COFFEE AND BRUNCH

- **Kami**: the Mont Blanc coffee, a sweet vanilla coffee with cold foam and a hint of orange.
- **Kult Cafe & Shop**: top-floor views, the Mont Blanc coffee and a sardine-heavy menu.
- **Bush Radio**: a warehouse-style cafe. Get the dragon fruit and berry smoothie bowl or a grilled cheese with a flat white.
- **Honey Jack**: the Honey Beef Burger, or the Japanese bread toast with smoked salmon. Croissants and sourdough are baked daily.
- **Caffeine**: a coffee truck known for its flat white. Pair it with avo toast from Avokuta, the truck ten meters away, and take home a bag of the house beans.
- **de Lekka**: a Dutch snack bar on Jl. Baturiti I. Get the bitterballen, the frikandel or the patatje oorlog, and add a matcha and a Belgian cookie.

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SWEET

- **Chunk Cookies & Coffee Shop**: in downtown Kuta. Get the Chunk Classic, reheated so the chocolate is nearly melted, with an iced long black.
- **Brutal Gelato & Bakery**: the Darkito Chocolat, dark chocolate gelato with Lombok vanilla in a crunchy chocolate shell.

Move

PILATES

- **Panass Pilates Club**: best for color, fun and variety, with reformer, mat, Afro Dance and pole classes under one roof. Try the reformer Burn class (beginner to intermediate) or Core & Ass with Astrid or Anita, whom reviewers call attentive. The studio is women-owned, and after class the cafe serves coffee and banana bread. You will need grip socks.

- **The Slow Studio**: best design and the best locker room in town, and great for content. It has a luxury feel, spacious changing rooms and a good playlist. It is reformer only, with Flow, Sculpt, Core and Dynamic classes (Flow is not a gentle stretch class), and coach Echa gets repeat praise. Follow it with the recovery (sauna, ice bath and magnesium pool), which is 50% off when you book a class.
- **SAWA Studio**: infrared hot mat pilates, the first studio in Kuta to do it. Reviewers rave about the hot pilates classes and the calm, warm atmosphere.

GYM

- **Xeno Fit**: a big open bamboo gym with CrossFit, Hyrox, yoga and mat pilates classes included in the day pass. It was a bit underwhelming for me, but it is the obvious pick if you want classes.
- **fitQUEEN**: women-only and air-conditioned, built around morning classes like booty and core, yoga and pilates.
- **Loka Gym**: best for function. A no-frills gym designed for Hyrox, with Muay Thai classes and a big recovery setup. Loka's restaurant is attached, with healthy, high-protein smoothies and plates (the protein toast and smoothie bowls are the picks). The Sunday evening barbecue is a local tradition.

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RECOVERY

- **The Slow Studio**: a cold plunge, a magnesium pool and a sauna.
- **Loka**: the biggest setup in town, with a sauna, three ice plunge pools and a magnesium salt pool.
- **Soma House Wellness Center**: traditional and infrared saunas, hot and cold plunges and a saltwater pool. Order the Sweat & Reset tonic (coconut water, ginger, lemon and Himalayan salt) from the cafe before your sauna.

PADEL

- **La Reunion Padel Club**: the first padel club in Kuta, with courts, lessons and a restaurant.

RUN CLUBS

- **Milk Espresso Run Club**: Thursdays at 6:30 am from the cafe. It is about 5 km through town and along Mandalika beach (up to 7 km if you want more), and it ends with coffee.
- **Soma House Run Club**: Wednesdays at 7 am. A relaxed 5 km loop around Kuta, then free use of the sauna, pool and cold plunge until 8:30 am.
- **Xeno Run Club**: Saturdays at 7 am, an energetic community run from the gym that ends with a free coconut at Xeno Hub Cafe.

Also on my saved list

WHERE TO STAY

- **Tias Villas**: boutique villas set among nature, with an infinity pool.
- **Lina Boutique Villas & Spa**: Moroccan-inspired architecture, an indoor pool and a spa.
- **Xanadu Surf & Yoga**: a hilltop retreat with surf and yoga stays, an infinity pool and an ice bath.

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YOGA AND WELLNESS

- **Mana Eco Retreat**: up to five yoga classes a day, open to non-guests with no booking, plus community classes on Sundays.
- **Matcha Spa**: a treatment to end the week.

NAILS

- **Glaze**: where I went. A spa and beauty club with a nail salon, known for chrome nails. Prices run a little higher than elsewhere.
- **My Spa Lombok**: Russian manicures, gel polish and nail art from about 300,000 IDR.

BURGERS

- **So Smash Burger**: double smash patties with comeback sauce, from about 95,000 IDR. The buns are homemade.

PRACTICAL

- **Smart Laundry**: wash-and-fold on Jl. Mawun, run by two sisters who count and log every item. They also clean sneakers.

VIEWS

- **Merese Hill** at sunset, and the beach at Selong Belanak.

Sources and dates

All checked 14 October 2026. Pages without a printed date are marked undated. Venue picks and tips are editorial opinion.

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- MotoGP: 2027 calendar revealed, official, 25 September 2026
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- Couples Travel Stories: where to stay in Lombok, private guide, undated
- Travel Guides Tip: Lombok travel budget, private guide, 2026
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- ANTARA: Central Lombok head urges arrest after tourist robbery, news agency, February 2026
- Slower Travels: fitness options in Kuta Lombok, private guide, 2026, for run clubs. Food, fitness and stay picks are my own saved places on Google Maps.
- Venue links in the things-to-do section go to each place's own site or Instagram where I could find one, and otherwise to Google Maps. Surf notes, prices and tips are from my own trip.

- Leha Leha Kuta Lombok, venue site; Tripadvisor listing

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