

# Indonesia

## Population

Indonesia has lots of people. In fact, it's the fourth biggest country in the world. There are over 275 million people living there. The capital city – Jakarta – has over 10 million people alone!



Indonesia is made up of over 17,500 different islands. As you can imagine, there are lots of different ethnic groups, each with their own culture and language. There are more than 700 languages spoken around the country! However, most Indonesians are Muslim. 87% of the population are Muslim, making it the country with the most Muslims in the world. Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism are also followed by some Indonesians.

About half of Indonesians live in the city. And about half live in country – in small, remote villages or on farms. With a climate that allows lots of things to grow, there are lots of farmers.



People work in all types of jobs. In the city, some common jobs are salesman, waiters, drivers, teachers and factory workers. In the country, most people are farmers or fisherman. A person working in Indonesia typically earns around 404,000 IDR a day, or \$38.90 In Australian dollars. This is a bit different to here in Australia where, on average, workers earn around \$188!

## Culture & Traditions

With so many different ethnic groups, the motto of Indonesia is 'Bhineka Tunggal Ika' or 'unity In Diversity'. It means that everyone can live together side by side, no matter what their differences.

Religion is a big part of life for many Indonesians. It is often said that 'In Indonesia, religion comes first'. Many people follow certain rituals and ceremonies everyday: starting their day by putting out offerings for gods, or stopping school for prayer time.

Family is also important for Indonesians. It is not strange for there to be lots of generations living together under the same roof – the children, the parents and the grandparents, too!

Indonesians take great care with etiquette, and are careful to show respect to one another. They greet one another with by bowing with their hands placed together, or with a handshake.

### **Celebrations**

Indonesians love to celebrate! They often make a huge deal of big life events, such as weddings and funerals.

In October, Indonesians celebrate the Full Moon Festival. During this colourful festival, people dress up in traditional clothes and come together to pray. Temples are decorated in yellow, gold and flowers and traditional dishes are cooked, such as rice cakes.



Many of the Muslim celebration are also celebrated by many Indonesians. Perhaps the most important of these is Eid al-Fitr. On this day, Muslims celebrate the end of the Ramadan, the month when they have been fasting from sun-up to sun-down. They come together to share a big meal, often starting with something sweet.

### **Food**

The food in Indonesia is very different to here in Australia! Indonesian cuisine is colourful, full of flavour and often spicy. They eat a lot of rice, fish, coconut, peanuts, chilli, lime and tropical fruits. Be it breakfast, lunch or dinner, almost every meal is based around rice! Something called 'nasi goreng' is considered Indonesian's national dish. It is a fried rice served with pickled carrots and cucumbers. And no Indonesian table is complete without sambal. This is a chilli-based sauce that will leave your nose running!

