



## SEMARANG

### INDONESIA

Over 17,500 islands make up the vast nation of Indonesia. This is a beautiful archipelago covered with lush tropical forests, countless rice paddies, spice and coffee plantations, and towering volcanoes. Indonesia has a population nearing 240 million.

The island of Java is the nation's 5th largest. With 136 million people, Java is not only the most densely populated Indonesian island, it is one of the most densely populated regions on earth. The people are a mix of cultures; Javanese, Chinese, Arab, Indian and European. There are various religious faiths practiced however most of the people are Muslim.

On the north coast of Java is the city of Semarang. For centuries this city has been a vital port. During the Dutch Colonial Period, Semarang shipped the spices of Central Java back to the Netherlands where they made their way to markets all across Europe. Semarang is often considered the cradle of Javanese culture. It was from here in central Java the culture developed and spread.

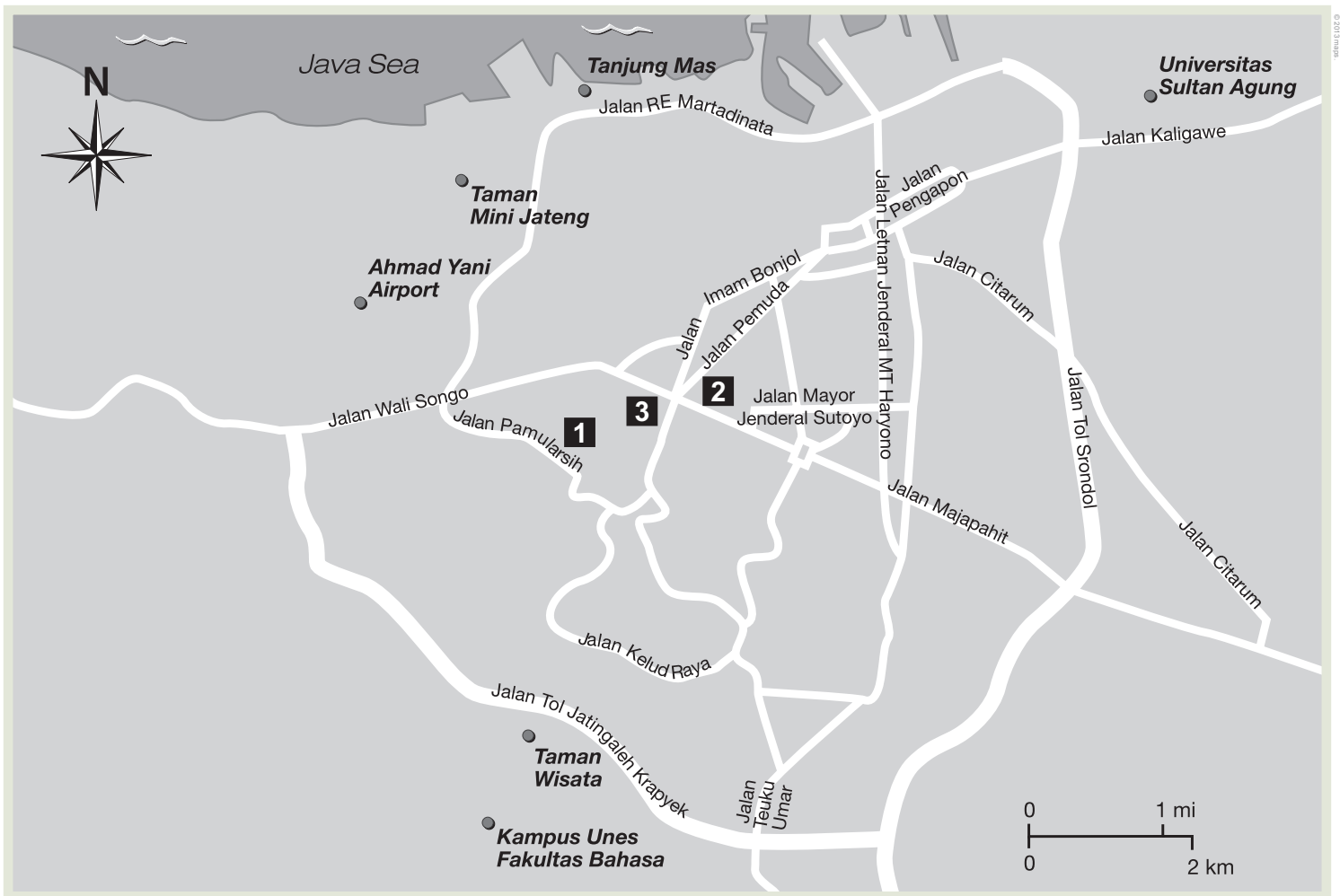
Today, as a bustling manufacturing center and administrative capital of Central Java Province, Semarang has grown into the country's fifth largest city and boasts a population over 1.5 million. However, one of the most important features of the city which continues as it has for centuries is the port and Semarang's access to the sea.



#### HISTORY

Among the greatest of history's sea-going explorers was the Chinese Ambassador of the Ming Dynasty, Admiral Zheng He. In the early 1400s, sailing the oceans from northeast China to Southeast Asia, the islands of Indonesia, on to India, Arabia and the coast of Africa; the exploits of his many voyages are nothing short of amazing. Barely describable is the magnificence of the Admiral's trading and treasure fleets. The Admiral had hundreds of massive ships, the largest of which could have easily carried the combined Niña, Pinta and Santa Maria as cargo. On one of his great voyages the fleet was making its way through the Java Sea when the Admiral's highly respected deputy commander became ill. It was thought best to put him ashore. After repairs and resupply Admiral Zheng had to sail on, yet he often returned to the town his deputy commander and loyal men who stayed behind founded upon the north coast of Java ... Semarang.

For Europeans the attraction of the East Indies centered upon spices. Though the Portuguese were the first to arrive in the region in the late 1400s it was the Dutch who were eventually able to gain control over Indonesia. In 1602 the parliament of the Netherlands awarded a monopoly charter to a group of Dutch investors who formed the United East India Company (VOC). Profit came relatively quickly while growth and expansion of the company's power and influence throughout Indonesia seemed to know no bounds. Though they were long since the de facto colonial rulers over the vital port of Semarang, the VOC was given official control by Indonesian King Sunan Amangkurat II in 1678.



The Dutch controlled Semarang and Indonesia up to the invasion of the Imperial Japanese Army in 1942. Following the defeat of Japan in 1945 the Netherlands expected to reclaim their former colony. The people of Indonesia stood their ground, declared independence and took up arms to defend their cause. Sukarno, a fervent nationalist, became Indonesia's first "president". His dictatorial rule lasted from 1945 to 1967. He was overthrown by the general who became the next dictator of Indonesia, Suharto. Suharto ruled until he was forced to resign in 1998. The first free elections were held in Indonesia the following year.

Indonesia has faced many of the same political challenges other nations have faced after centuries of colonial control, foreign military occupation and autocratic rule. However, the notably diverse people of Indonesia have astounded the skeptics, experts and political pundits. They have done nothing less than set an example for the rest of the world as they continue on the path of strengthening their free and democratic society.

### SEMARANG PLACES OF INTEREST

**1 Sam Po Kong** (Gedung Batu) is a beautiful temple built in honor of Chinese Admiral, Zheng He. The temple has numerous stone carvings, sculptures, shrines and tombs. The cave behind the temple has been a place of pilgrimage for centuries.

**2 Lawang Sewu** is a Dutch building constructed during the Colonial Era as an administrative office. Said to have "a thousand doors" the handsome structure has served as a military hospital and headquarters. After years of being abandoned continued restoration will add another jewel to historic Semarang.

**3 The Mandala Bhakti Museum** is housed in a Colonial Era Court of Law. Today the museum is a tribute to Indonesian heroes and exhibits an extensive collection of historic military hardware and artifacts.

### Beyond Semarang

**Borobudur** is the largest Buddhist monument in the world. Constructed between 778 and 856 this pilgrimage site used over two million cubic feet of carefully carved stone. A little more than a century following the temple's completion the site was mysteriously abandoned. Later covered by volcanic ash, the temple complex was rediscovered in 1814 and painstakingly excavated and restored.



**Ambarawa** is a historic city with an interesting antique train museum. Visitors have the opportunity board a Lori-Train for a ride up into the cool, lush Tlago Agro Highlands.

## SHORE EXCURSIONS

To make the most of your visit to Semarang and surrounding areas we suggest you take one of our organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult your Shore Excursion Order Form or contact the Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, be advised to take only necessary items and secure any valuables onboard.

## LOCAL CUSTOMS

**Bargaining:** Larger stores have set prices. Local vendors may bargain.

**Tipping:** Tipping is not required but is accepted and appreciated.

## LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES

The melting pot of ancient cultures has made the variety and quality of dishes available in Semarang simply mind-boggling. Indonesian classics together with Chinese, Thai and Indian all combine to give any food lover their "Moment of Zen." If you are from or have lived for a period of time in this part of the world then you know how amazing the food can be. Some of the most popular dishes in Semarang include: Tahu Gimbal is a steaming bowl filled with tofu, spiced cabbage, fried prawns, eggs, peanut sauce and Indonesia's popular creation, a soy-bean cake known as tempe. Wingko tripe is actually a sweet and tasty cake made with a mixture of coconut milk, sugar, rice flour, grated coconut and vanilla. Bandeng Presto is local milkfish which has been covered with a mixture of fermented black rice, onions garlic, and chili then prepared in a pressure cooker. Lumpia is Indonesia's delicious version of the Spring Roll. Ayam Taliwang is chicken covered with a rich chili sauce then fried or grilled. Sate Ikan Tanjung is fresh pieces of snapper or tuna which have been soaked in coconut milk with garlic, chili and spices then wrapped and grilled.

Cendol combines thick coconut milk and pure palm sugar syrup with Jackfruit. It is very refreshing on a hot day.

## SHOPPING

The talented artisans of Semarang are famous for the quality of their hand-made furniture. Mahogany and rattan are two of the most popular materials used in the wonderfully designed pieces. Central Java is well known for its high quality silver jewelry and batik fabric.

There are a number of modern shopping malls scattered around Semarang. One of the most famous is called "Simpang Lima". This mall has everything you might imagine. The traditional market is known as "Pasar Johar". Not far from the waterfront, this market is teeming with an amazing variety of fruits and vegetables. Visitors will also find a wonderful and interesting collection of arts, crafts and souvenirs.

## LOCAL CURRENCY

The local currency is the Rupiah (Rp). The banks and exchanges prefer to have clean notes in large denominations. You can exchange traveler's checks and smaller notes but

you will not receive the best rate.

If you are planning to make a number of small purchases try to carry small bills. Small vendors might not be able to provide change to large notes.

The face of the Rupiah is printed with the likeness of Indonesia's beloved and revered Kings. Always try to be respectful when handling the currency.

## POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE

There are three Post Offices in Semarang: Post Office Brumbungan on Jalan Tunggal Mas Raya, approx 2.5 miles from Semarang port; Post Office Purwodinatan, on Jalan Pemuda, Semarang; Post Office Cabean, on Jalan Pamularsih, Semarang.

Dial the following access numbers to use a personal calling card:

AT&T: 001.801.10

MCI: 001.801.11 (using Indosat) or 007.801.11 (using PT Telkom)

## TOURIST INFORMATION

There is a Tourist Information counter run by the Department of Tourism of Central Java located near the exit door of passenger terminal building.

## TRANSPORTATION

**Vehicle Rentals:** An International Driver's License is required if you want to rent a car or motorcycle. Buses and taxis are widely available. It is not recommended for tourists to rent motorcycles or scooters. Being unfamiliar with the local roads, driving conditions and customs can make for a dangerous outing.

Taxis are easily found at major hotels and tourist destinations. Major taxi companies are metered and charge according to the distance of your trip.

## USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

Locals will ask "How are you?" or "How is your family?" Locals will often say hello in this manner to a tourist. This is common courtesy on their part. Be careful not to assume they speak any more English than this.

Good Morning - Selamat Pagi

Good Afternoon - Selamat Siang (12pm – 3pm),  
Selamat Sore (3pm – 6pm)

Good evening - Selamat Malam

How are you? - Apa khabar?

How much does it cost? - Berapa harga yang ini?

No, thank you. - Tidak, terima kasih.

Thank you very much. - Terima kasih banyak

