

Semarang

Central Java · Indonesia

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



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Overview

Semarang is the capital of Central Java and a port city on the north coast of Java. The city mixes Dutch colonial buildings, Chinese temples and Javanese and Muslim traditions. It is hot, busy and less polished than Yogyakarta, and that is part of the appeal.

Most visitors stay one or two nights. The city suits travelers who like architecture, history and street food. It is also a practical base for the Hindu temples on Mount Ungaran, the Dieng Plateau, Borobudur and the Karimunjawa islands.

When to visit

The dry season, from about June to September, is the best time to visit. Skies are clear and rain is light. Days are hot all year, so sightseeing is easiest in the morning and late afternoon.

The rainy season runs from about November to March. Rain can be heavy and some low areas near the coast flood. Roads to the mountain temples can be wet and cloudy.

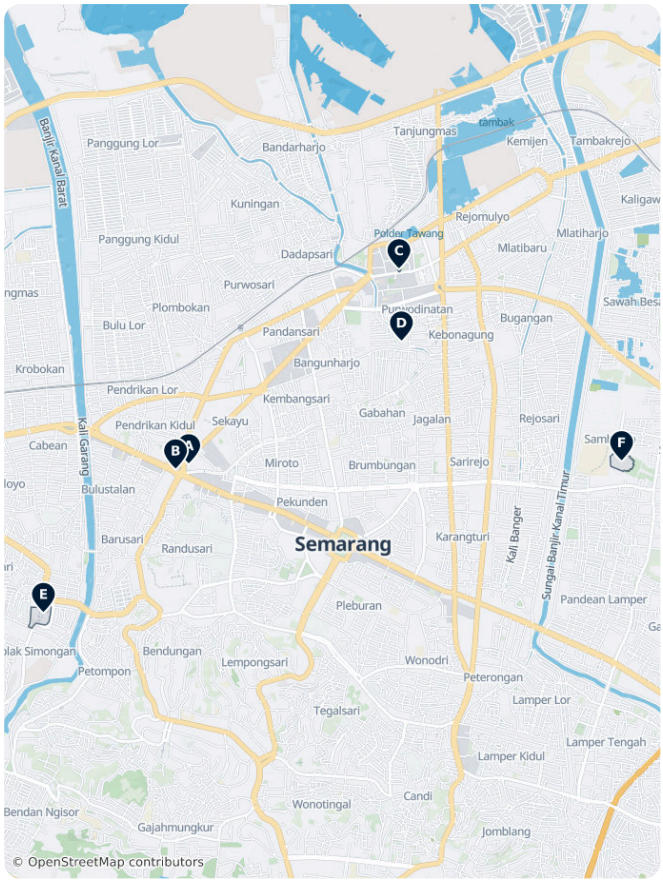
The biggest event is Dugderan, a carnival in the days before Ramadan. The date moves each year with the Islamic calendar, so check it before you book.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	28° / 30° Feels like 32°	24° / 23°	30 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	28° / 30° Feels like 32°	24° / 23°	28 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
March	Poor Poor for sightseeing	29° / 30° Feels like 33°	24° / 22°	30 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
April	Poor Poor for sightseeing	29° / 30° Feels like 34°	23° / 22°	27 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
May	Poor Poor for the beach	30° / 31° Feels like 34°	23° / 22°	19 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)
June	Good Good for the beach	30° / 32° Feels like 34°	23° / 21°	Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 8 (Very high)
July	Great Great for the beach	30° / 32° Feels like 33°	23° / 21°	Muggy, humid air · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)
August	Great Great for the beach	31° / 33°	23° / 21°	22 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
September	Great Great for the beach	32° / 34°	24° / 22°	21 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds · UV 11 (Extreme)
October	Fair Fair for the beach	31° / 34° Feels like 35°	24° / 23°	17 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 11 (Extreme)
November	Poor Poor for sightseeing	30° / 33° Feels like 34°	24° / 23°	26 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	29° / 30° Feels like 33°	24° / 23°	30 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights

- **A** Lawang Sewu was built from 1904 as the head office of the first railway company in the Dutch East Indies. Its name means "a thousand doors". It has stained glass, a grand staircase and a small museum of railway history.
- **B** Tugu Muda stands across the road from Lawang Sewu. It is a monument to the fighting in the city in October 1945.
- **C** Gereja Blenduk is a domed Protestant church from 1753 in the old Dutch quarter, the Kota Lama. It is the oldest church in Central Java. The streets around it have restored colonial offices, cafes and small galleries.
- **D** Tay Kak Sie Temple is a large Chinese temple in the Chinatown area. It is colorful and active, and it is the starting point of the yearly procession to Sam Poo Kong.
- **E** Sam Poo Kong Temple is the oldest Chinese temple in Semarang. The complex has five temples in a mix of Chinese and Javanese styles. It is linked to the Chinese Muslim admiral *Zheng He*, who landed here in the early 15th century.
- **F** Great Mosque of Central Java is a very large mosque on the east side of the city. It has a 99 m observation tower and giant umbrellas in the courtyard. Visitors should dress modestly.



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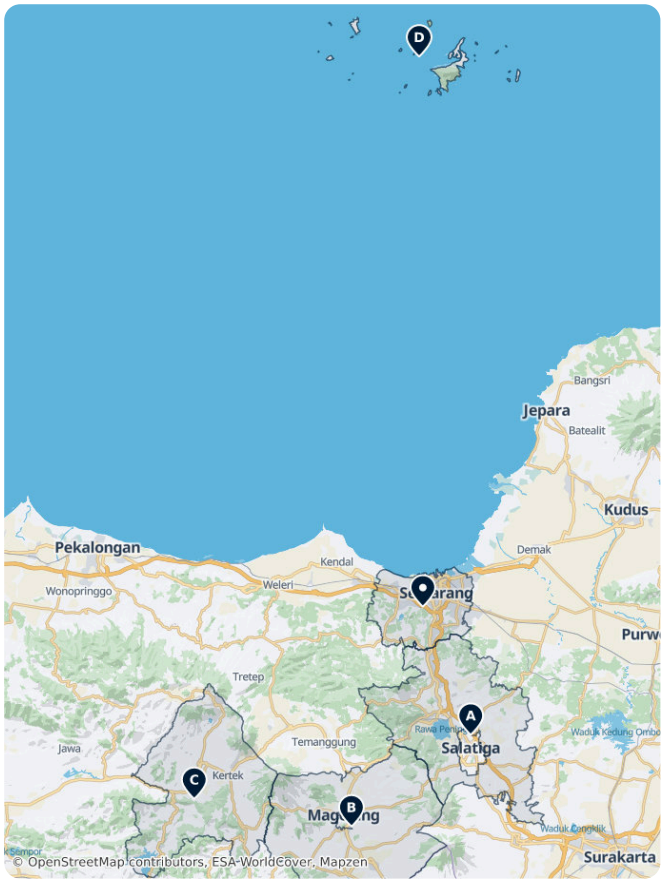
What to experience

- Dugderan: A carnival held in the days before Ramadan. A drum and a cannon mark the start of the fasting month, and a parade crosses the center. The festival features Warak Ngendog, an imaginary animal with a dragon head and goat legs.
- Zheng He procession: Each year, on the 30th day of the sixth lunar month, Chinese Indonesians carry statues from Tay Kak Sie Temple to Sam Poo Kong Temple to mark the arrival of Zheng He in Semarang.
- Kota Lama in the cool hours: The restored Dutch quarter is best in the early morning or after 4 PM, when it is cooler.

Day trips

Semarang is a good base for hill temples, highland scenery and islands. Mountain roads and Karimunjawa are slow, so start early.



- Gedong Songo Temples: Hindu temples from the 8th or 9th century on a hill near Bandungan, on the slopes of Mount Ungaran. The site is in A Semarang Regency, south of the city. Five groups of temples sit at about 1,270 m, so the air is cooler.
- Borobudur: the great Buddhist temple lies in B Magelang Regency. It is a full-day trip by road. Start very early to avoid the heat and the crowds.
- Dieng Plateau: a high volcanic plateau with ancient temples, crater lakes and cold nights. It lies in the Wonosobo area; see C Wonosobo. It works best as an overnight trip.
- D Karimunjawa Islands: a group of islands in the Java Sea with beaches and snorkeling. Most visitors take a ferry from Jepara, and there are limited flights from Semarang. Plan at least two nights and check current ferry and flight schedules.

Where to explore

- Around the city: Semarang Regency lies south of the city and holds Bandungan and Mount Ungaran.
- Inland: Magelang Regency for Borobudur, and Wonosobo for the Dieng Plateau.
- Offshore: Karimunjawa Islands for island and beach stays.

Getting there

- By air: Ahmad Yani Airport (SRG) is about 6 km from the center. It has many domestic flights, including Jakarta, Surabaya and Denpasar, and a route to Kuala Lumpur. A Trans Semarang bus route and taxis serve the terminal.
- By train: Long-distance trains from Jakarta and other cities on Java stop at Semarang Tawang station, next to the Kota Lama. Book through KAI, Indonesian Railways.
- By bus: Intercity buses stop at terminals on the edge of the city, such as Mangkang. Travel to the center by taxi or ride-hailing car.
- By sea: Karimunjawa is reached by ferry from Jepara, and the schedule changes. Check current departures before you plan.

Getting around

- Trans Semarang: A bus network with several main lines, a route to the airport and feeder lines. Fares are low. Ask about the payment method at the shelter, because it can change.
- Taxi and ride-hailing: Grab and Gojek cars and motorbikes are the easiest way to cross the city.
- On foot: The Kota Lama and Lawang Sewu area can be walked in the cooler hours. Sidewalks are patchy elsewhere, and distances between sights are long.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The Kota Lama and Lawang Sewu area is walkable in the cooler hours. Elsewhere distances are long and sidewalks are patchy.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Heavy traffic and heat make cycling impractical for most visitors.

Driving

- Traffic keeps to the left. City roads are crowded with motorbikes, and local driving habits take time to learn.
- A car with a driver is the usual choice for Gedong Songo, Borobudur and Dieng. It avoids the stress of mountain roads.
- For the city itself, ride-hailing is easier than driving.
- Toll roads connect Semarang with other cities on Java. Payment is electronic, so ask your driver or rental company.

Food & drink

Semarang has its own dishes. Look for lumpia, a fried or fresh spring roll filled with bamboo shoot, and tahu gimbal, fried tofu with shrimp fritters and peanut sauce. Wingko babat, a baked coconut cake, and bandeng presto, a soft-boned milkfish, are popular gifts.

For eating, go to areas rather than single restaurants. The Chinatown streets around Gang Lombok and the Kota Lama have many small eateries and evening food stalls. Food courts in the malls near Simpang Lima square are an easy air-conditioned option.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Gado-Gado · gado-gado
A vegetable salad with tofu and tempeh, dressed in peanut sauce.

Padang rice · nasi padang
A dozen or more small dishes brought to the table at once; you pay only for what you eat.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Krupuk · kerupuk
Deep-fried prawn or fish crackers, a common side at nearly every meal.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Martabak · martabak manis
A thick, folded pancake filled with chocolate, cheese, or nuts, sold from street carts in the evening.

DRINKS

Kopi Tubruk · kopi tubruk
Coarsely ground coffee steeped directly in the cup, Indonesia's everyday way of drinking coffee.

SIGNATURE DISHES

Nasi Goreng · nasi goreng
Indonesia's everyday fried rice, usually with egg, chicken, and a fried cracker on the side.

Satay · sate
Skewered, grilled meat served with a peanut or sweet soy sauce.

Rendang · rendang
Slow-cooked beef in coconut milk and spices, originally from West Sumatra.

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Safety & health

Semarang is generally safe for visitors. Petty theft happens in crowded markets and on buses, so keep phones and bags close. Traffic is the main danger, especially when crossing roads.

Drink bottled or filtered water. Mosquitoes carry dengue in the rainy season, so use repellent. Parts of the northern coast flood at high tide and after heavy rain, so avoid those areas in the wet season.

History

Semarang grew as a port and a trading center. Local tradition ties the city to the Chinese Muslim admiral *Zheng He*, who is remembered at Sam Poo Kong Temple. Chinese merchants settled in the Chinatown area, around Tay Kak Sie Temple.

The Dutch made Semarang a colonial center. Gereja Blenduk dates from 1753, and Lawang Sewu was built in the early 1900s for the railway company. During the Japanese occupation, the basement of Lawang Sewu was a site of torture and executions. In October 1945, fighting at the building killed many Indonesian fighters. Tugu Muda remembers the battle of that month.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Indonesia at a glance:

CURRENCY
IDR Rp

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



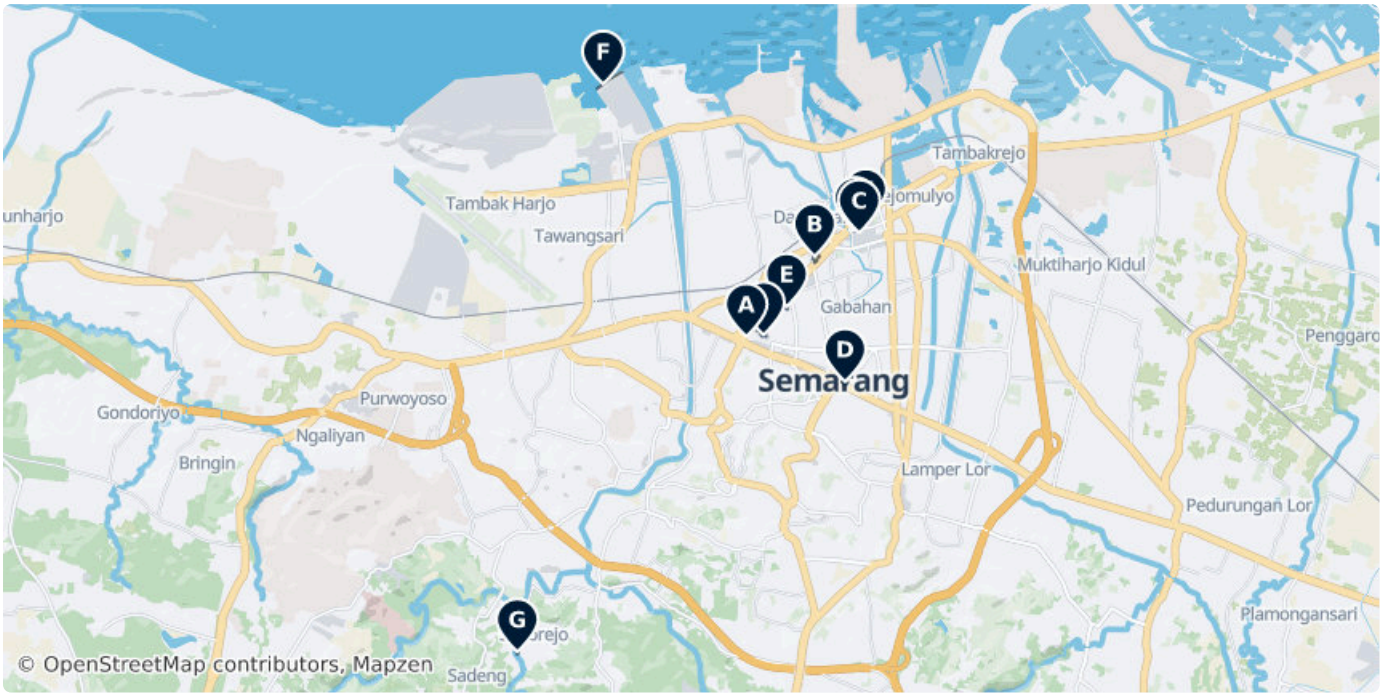
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Indonesian

TAP WATER
Not safe to drink

Semarang Essentials

Semarang showcases a mix of Dutch colonial architecture and modern urban developments. The historic Kota Lama district features the root-covered walls of Rumah Akar and the Oudetrap Theatre, while the iconic Lawang Sewu stands as a monument to the city's railway history. Modern life centers around the Simpang Lima square and various shopping hubs like Pollux Mall Paragon and DP Mall. Coastal views at Pantai Marina and the traditional Javanese atmosphere of Kampung Jawi provide diverse cultural perspectives.





A Lawang Sewu

Former headquarters of the Dutch East Indies Railway Company built in 1904. It is characterized by its numerous doors, large stained-glass windows, and Dutch colonial architecture.

Jalan Pemuda, Semarang Tengah 50131, Indonesia (-6.98391, 110.41040)

B Queen City Mall Semarang

A multi-story retail complex featuring a mix of local and international brands, a cinema, and a renovated modern interior.

Jalan Pemuda 35, Semarang (-6.97244, 110.42021)

Su 10:00–22:00

queencity.id

C Rumah Akar Kota Lama Semarang

A historic ruin in the Old Town where massive tree roots have integrated into the brick walls, creating a natural architectural fusion.

(-6.96911, 110.42660)

D Plaza Simpang Lima

A long-standing shopping center located at the city's central landmark square, specializing in electronics and local fashion.

Jalan Ahmad Yani, 50241 Semarang (-6.99032, 110.42457)

E Pollux Mall Paragon Semarang

A luxury shopping destination housed in a building designed to resemble a cruise ship, featuring high-end retail and dining.

Jalan Pemuda, Semarang (-6.97960, 110.41617)

Mo–Su 10:00–22:00

F Pantai Marina

A coastal recreation area offering views of the Java Sea, breakwater walks, and small boat rentals for local sightseeing.

(-6.94791, 110.38986)

G Kampung Jawi

A cultural village showcasing traditional Javanese architecture, local cuisine served in earthenware, and an evening atmosphere lit by oil lamps.

(-7.02879, 110.37749)

H Oudetrap Theatre

A 19th-century building in the Old Town with a distinctive gambrel roof, currently serving as a venue for art performances and community events.

(-6.96753, 110.42755)

I DP Mall Semarang

A modern retail hub located near the city center, known for its extensive food court and international fashion retailers.

(-6.98364, 110.41287)

Mo–Su 10:00–22:00

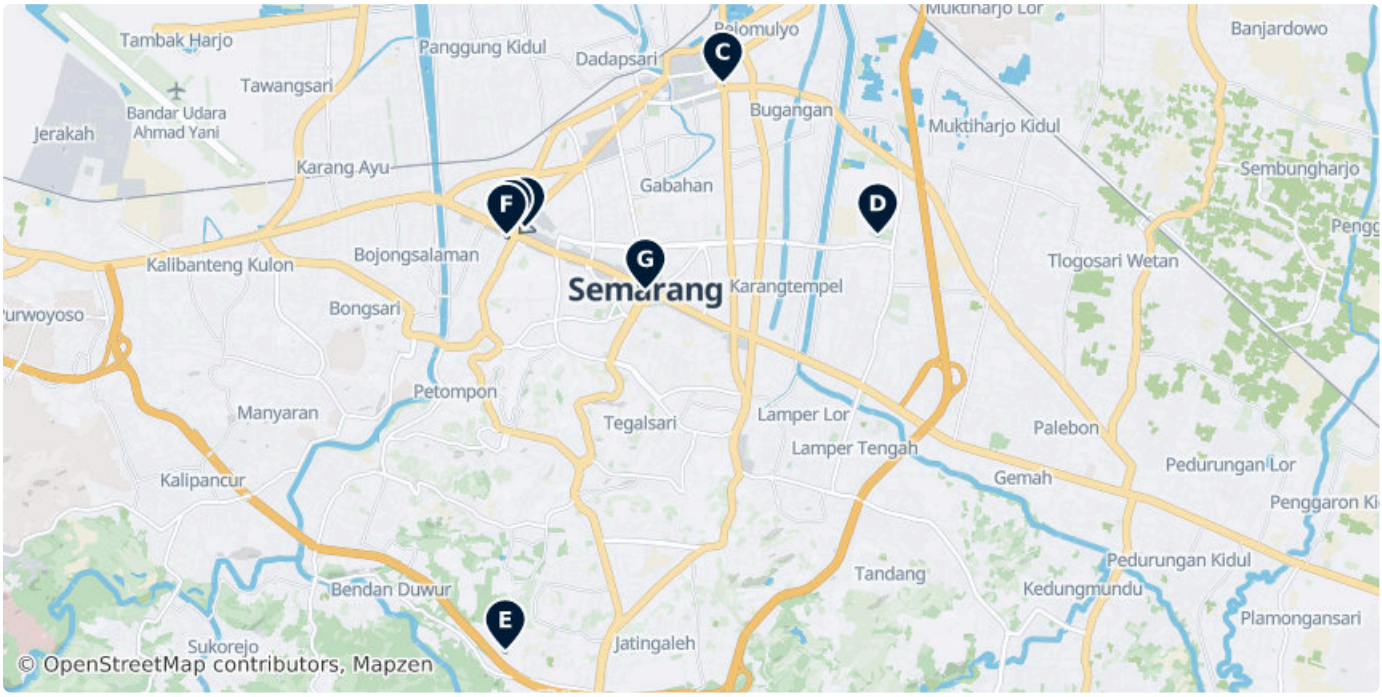
J Miwiti Space

A contemporary creative hub and art center located in a restored building within the historic district, hosting exhibitions and collaborative workshops.

Semarang (-6.96875, 110.42601)

Must See Semarang

Semarang's historical core features a blend of Dutch colonial architecture and Indonesian heritage. This collection includes Lawang Sewu, the former headquarters of the Netherlands-Indies Railway Company, and Tugu Muda, a monument dedicated to the 1945 struggle for independence. The list covers specialized museums documenting the region's Islamic history and military past, alongside the city's central gathering point at Simpang Lima. Visitors can explore the preserved Old Town district through Museum Kota Lama and visit the military artifacts housed in the former Dutch courthouse of Museum Mandala Bhakti.



A Lawang Sewu

Former headquarters of the Netherlands-Indies Railway Company built in 1904. Known for its Dutch colonial architecture, numerous doors, and stained glass windows.

(-6.98407, 110.41067)

B Tugu Muda

Stone monument commemorating the five-day battle between Semarang's youth and Japanese forces in October 1945. Located at the intersection of five major streets.

(-6.98432, 110.40933)

C Museum Kota Lama

Immersive museum located in the historic Old Town district, utilizing digital technology and artifacts to showcase Semarang's urban development since the 16th century.

Jalan MT. Haryono, Semarang (-6.96942, 110.43083)

-

D Museum Pusat Perkembangan Islam Jawa Tengah

Located within the Great Mosque of Central Java complex, this museum documents the history and cultural influence of Islam across the province.

Jalan Gajah Raya, Semarang (-6.98474, 110.44664)

Mo–Su 08:30–14:30

E Plasa Kepodang Membara

A commemorative plaza and public space located within the historic Old Town district.

(-7.02685, 110.40865)

F Museum Mandala Bhakti

Military museum housed in a former Dutch courthouse built in 1930. Displays weaponry, uniforms, and artifacts from the Indonesian National Armed Forces.

Jalan MGR. Sugiopranoto, Semarang (-6.98480, 110.40879)

semarang.yogyes.com/id/places/129/

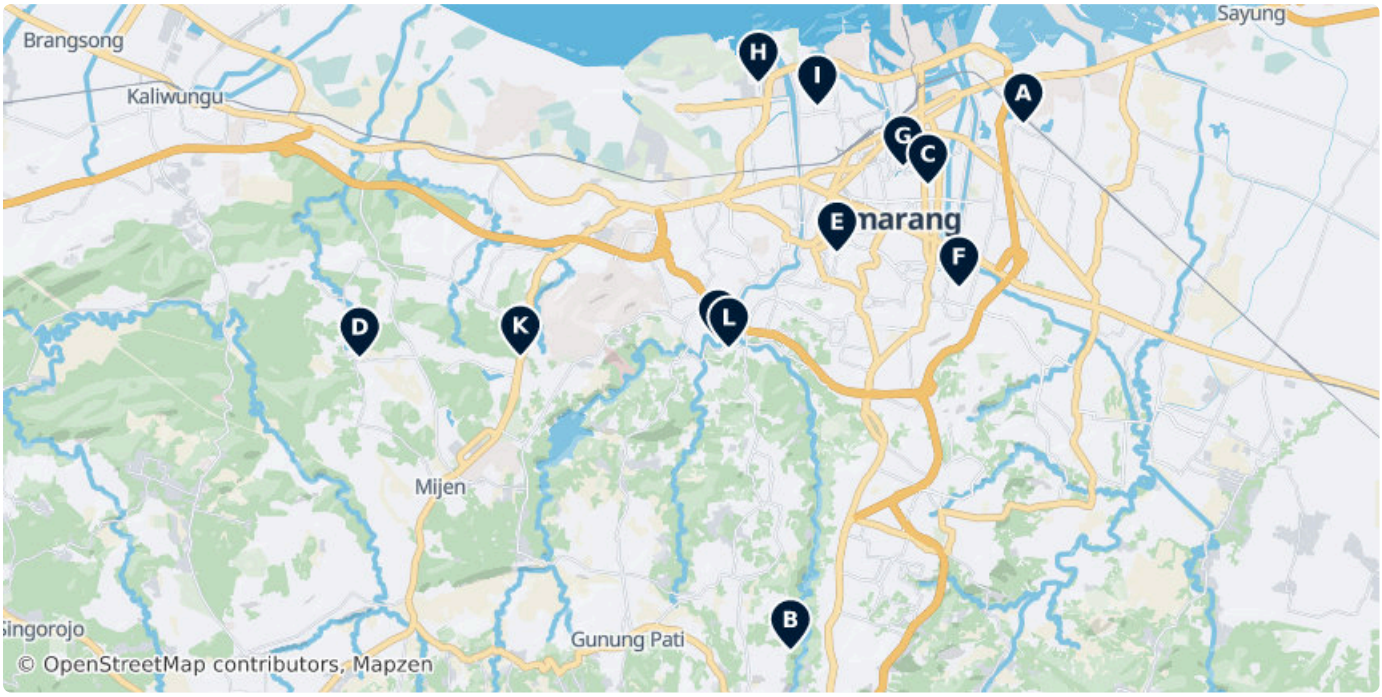
G Lapangan Simpang Lima

Large public square and park situated at the junction of five primary roads. Serves as a central hub for public events and local recreation.

Semarang 50242, Indonesia (-6.99037, 110.42294)

Religious Heritage Sites

Semarang's religious landscape is defined by its history as a multicultural port city where Javanese, Chinese, and European influences converge. This collection highlights the city's spiritual diversity, featuring Balinese-style Hindu temples like Pura Agung Giri Natha, historic Chinese shrines in the traditional Chinatown district, and expansive Buddhist complexes near the coast. The list also includes significant Christian landmarks and Catholic pilgrimage sites, illustrating the architectural and cultural evolution of the region's faith communities.



A Vihara Kinnara Kinnari

Buddhist temple featuring traditional ornaments and a quiet space for meditation.

Jalan Condro Rejo, Genuk 50113, Indonesia
(-6.96783, 110.45505)

B Vihara Buddhadipa

Buddhist place of worship and meditation center.

(Unnamed Road), Tambangan 2 50215, Indonesia
(-7.09212, 110.39966)

C Vihara Mahabodhi Maitreya

Buddhist temple dedicated to the Maitreya Buddha.

476 Jalan Ligu Utara, Semarang Timur 50121, Indonesia
(-6.98223, 110.43240)

D Pura Buwana Mandala

Hindu temple located in the western part of Semarang.

Jalan Padaan, Ngaliyan 50213, Indonesia
(-7.02306, 110.29719)

E Pura Agung Giri Natha

The largest Hindu temple in Semarang, featuring Balinese architecture and a prominent hilltop location with views of the city.

(Unnamed Road), Gajahmungkur 50232, Indonesia
(-6.99825, 110.41075)

F Klenteng Hwie Tik Sie

A historic Chinese temple located within the city's traditional Chinatown district.

74 Jalan Lamper Sari, Semarang 50265, Indonesia
(-7.00642, 110.43977)

G Klenteng Tek Hay Bio

Also known as the Temple of the God of the Sea, this historic shrine is located near the coastal area.

107 Jalan Wot Gandul, Semarang Tengah 50139, Indonesia
(-6.97793, 110.42643)

H Vihara Mahavira Graha

A large Buddhist complex located near Marina Beach, known for its grand Chinese-style architecture and extensive grounds.

Jalan Marina Raya, Semarang Barat 50255, Indonesia
(-6.95817, 110.39202)

I Vihara Semesta Maitreya

Buddhist temple focused on the Maitreya tradition.

45 Jalan Kalimas Raya, Semarang Utara 1 50135, Indonesia
(-6.96362, 110.40604)

J Gereja Isa Al Masih

Christian church serving the local community.

(Unnamed Road), 50187, Indonesia (-7.01894, 110.38247)

K Gereja St Theresia Avilla

A Catholic church located in the Bongsari area.

(Unnamed Road), Ngaliyan 50218, Indonesia
(-7.02269, 110.33540)

L Gua Maria Sartika

A Catholic devotional site featuring a Grotto of Mary used for prayer and pilgrimage.

(Unnamed Road), 50187, Indonesia (-7.02080, 110.38501)

DATA SOURCES

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IMAGE CREDITS

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