

Surabaya

East Java · Indonesia

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



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Overview

Surabaya is the capital of East Java and the second-largest city in Indonesia. It is a working port city, not a resort. Visitors come for its role in the fight for independence, for old Dutch, Chinese and Arab quarters, and for strong local food.

The city suits a short stop of one to three nights. Most people combine it with Bromo, Malang or Yogyakarta. It is hot and busy, so plan outdoor visits for the morning and use the afternoon for museums and malls.

When to visit

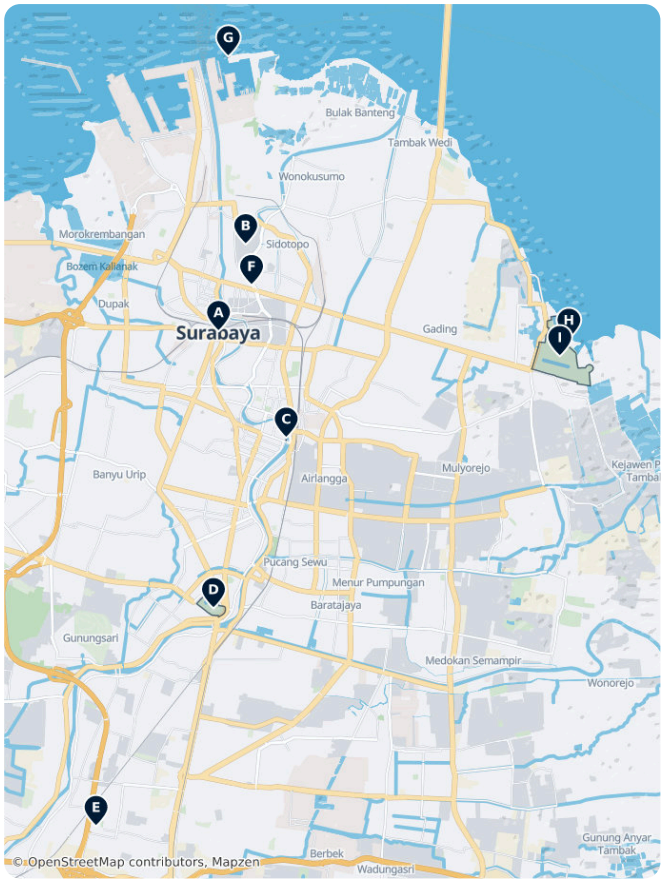
The dry season runs from about June to September, with the most sun and the least rain. October is hot and humid before the rains arrive. From December to March, expect frequent heavy rain, often in the afternoon. November brings the first rains.

The main annual event is Heroes' Day on 10 November. The city remembers the 1945 Battle of Surabaya with ceremonies, especially around the Heroes Monument. It falls at the start of the wet season, so bring a rain jacket.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	30° / 32° Feels like 34°	24° / 24°	30 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	29° / 31° Feels like 34°	24° / 23°	28 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
March	Poor Poor for sightseeing	30° / 31° Feels like 35°	24° / 24°	29 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 11 (Extreme)
April	Poor Poor for sightseeing	30° / 32° Feels like 35°	25° / 23°	25 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
May	Poor Poor for sightseeing	31° / 32° Feels like 35°	24° / 23°	16 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)
June	Fair Fair for sightseeing	31° / 32° Feels like 34°	24° / 22°	Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 8 (Very high)
July	Good Good for sightseeing	31° / 32°	23° / 21°	Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)
August	Good Good for sightseeing	32° / 33°	23° / 21°	Muggy, humid air · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
September	Good Good for sightseeing	33° / 35°	24° / 22°	Muggy, humid air · Calm winds · UV 11 (Extreme)
October	Poor Poor for sightseeing	33° / 36° Feels like 37°	25° / 23°	13 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 11 (Extreme)
November	Poor Poor for sightseeing	32° / 35° Feels like 36°	25° / 24°	25 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 10 (Very high)
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	30° / 32° Feels like 35°	25° / 24°	29 rainy days · Oppressive humidity · Calm winds · UV 9 (Very high)

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

Top sights



- A Heroes Monument is the city's main symbol. This 41 m pillar opened in 1952 and honours the Battle of Surabaya. A museum under the monument tells the story of 10 November 1945.
- B Sunan Ampel Mosque is the center of the old Arab quarter. Pilgrims come to the tomb of *Sunan Ampel*, one of the first Islamic preachers on Java. Dress modestly and expect worshippers at prayer times.
- C Submarine Monument is a real Soviet-built submarine on the Kali Mas river. You can go inside and see the cramped crew spaces.
- D Surabaya Zoo is a historic zoo from 1916 in the south of the city. It has Komodo dragons and Bali starlings. Animal welfare there has been criticized, so check recent reviews before you go.
- E Al-Akbar National Mosque is a very large mosque in the south of the city. Visit outside prayer times.
- F Hong Tiek Hian Temple is a Chinese temple in the old Chinatown quarter. It shows the strong Chinese heritage of the old town.
- G Jalesveva Jayamahe Monument is a 30 m navy statue by the port of Tanjung Perak. It stands near the port and also works as a lighthouse.
- H Sanggar Agung Temple is a large coastal Chinese temple at Kenjeran, on the east side. Nearby, I Kenjeran Park is a seaside park, and the long Suroboyo Bridge is a popular spot at sunset.

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What to experience

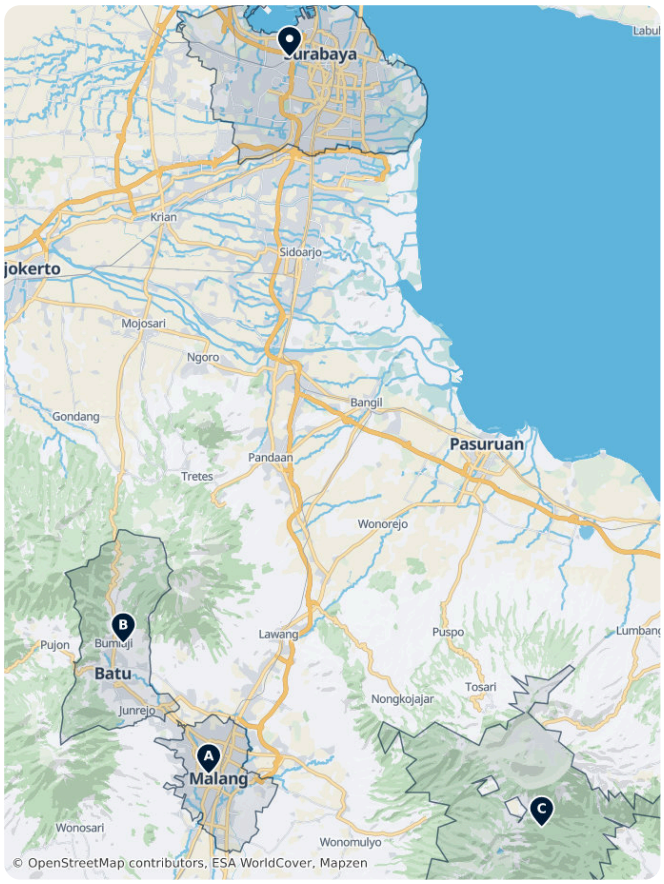
Surabaya is best seen through its local rituals and neighborhoods.

- Join the Heroes' Day crowds on 10 November at the Heroes Monument. Ceremonies remember the 1945 battle.
- Ride the Suroboyo Bus, the city bus that began a plastic bottle recycling scheme in 2018.
- Walk the lanes around the Ampel mosque in the evening, when pilgrims and market stalls fill the streets.
- Watch the sunset from the Suroboyo Bridge at Kenjeran, then walk the seafront.

Day trips

Surabaya has good day trips in all directions. Travel times below are for normal traffic and can be longer at rush hour.

- Gresik: About an hour by car to the north. This old port town has the tombs of Sunan Giri and Maulana Malik Ibrahim, two early Islamic preachers on Java. It is a pilgrimage destination.
- Trowulan and Mojokerto: About one to one and a half hours by car. Trowulan has major ruins from the Majapahit kingdom. See the red-brick gates Wringin Lawang and Bajang Ratu, the Tikus Temple bathing pool, and the small museum.
- Madura: Cross the 5.4 km Suramadu Bridge, which opened in 2009 and is now free to use. The first town across is Bangkalan. Madura is known for bull racing, batik and sate.
- Malang and Batu: About two to three hours each way by car or train. A Malang has colonial streets and cafes. B Batu is cooler and has orchards and parks.
- Bromo: Too far for an easy day. Most visitors stay one night near the volcano, to see sunrise over C Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park. Check volcano activity before you go.



Where to explore

East Java has several major destinations within reach of Surabaya.

Mountains and cities

- Malang is a university city with colonial architecture and a cool climate.
- Batu is a hill town with farms, parks and mountain views.
- Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park is the park with the Bromo volcano and the Tengger sand sea.

Further east

- Banyuwangi is the gateway to the Ijen crater and to the ferry to Bali.
- Baluran National Park is a national park with dry savanna and wildlife.

Getting there

- By air: Juanda International Airport (SUB) is in Sidoarjo, about 12 km from the center. It has domestic flights across Indonesia and international flights to Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong. DAMRI buses connect the airport to Purabaya bus terminal. Taxis and app cars use the toll road to the city.
- By train: Surabaya has three main stations. Surabaya Gubeng serves Yogyakarta, Solo, Bandung and the east towards Banyuwangi. Surabaya Pasar Turi serves Semarang and Jakarta, with the Argo Bromo Anggrek taking about nine hours to Jakarta. Book through the official KAI railway site or the KAI Access app.
- By bus: Purabaya terminal (also called Bungurasih) in Sidoarjo is the main long-distance terminal. Osowilangon in the north is the other large terminal.

Getting around

- Public transit: Surabaya has no metro. The city runs Suroboyo Bus and Trans Semanggi Suroboyo, which cover main roads. The city started Suroboyo Bus in 2018 with a plastic bottle recycling scheme.
- Taxi and ride-hailing: Grab and Gojek are the easiest way to cross the city.
- On foot: Distances are long and the heat is strong. Walking works in the old town and on Jalan Tunjungan, but use a car or motorbike taxi between areas.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Low

Distances are long and it is hot and humid. The old town and Jalan Tunjungan can be walked, but use a car or motorbike taxi between areas.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Heavy traffic and heat make cycling impractical for visitors.

Driving

- Car: Not worth it in the city. Traffic is heavy, and motorbikes fill the roads. Traffic drives on the **left**. For day trips, hire a car with a driver.
- Tolls: Toll roads to Malang, Mojokerto and Gresik need a prepaid e-toll card. Cash is not accepted.
- Parking: Most malls and hotels have parking. Street parking is informal and paid to local attendants.

Food & drink

Surabaya food is bold, with shrimp paste and rich spices. Try rawon, a dark beef soup colored by black nuts. Rujak cingur is a salad of vegetables, rice cake and cow snout in a peanut and shrimp paste sauce. Lontong kupang is rice cake with small cockles. Semanggi is a leaf salad in peanut sauce.

Eat at small warung stalls and food courts rather than a single restaurant. Good clusters are in the old town around Ampel and Jembatan Merah, and in the food courts of Tunjungan Plaza.

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

Surabaya is generally safe for visitors. The main risks are traffic and petty theft such as bag snatching from motorbikes. Keep bags on the side away from the road and do not hold phones near the curb.

Tap water is not safe to drink. Use bottled or filtered water. Mosquitoes carry dengue, so use repellent, especially in the rainy season. The heat is strong, so drink often and rest in the afternoon.

History

Local legend links the city name to a fight between a shark, *sura*, and a crocodile, *baya*. The city dates its founding to 1293, in the time of the Majapahit kingdom. Later, the Dutch made it a major trade port, and the old town around Jembatan Merah and the compound of House of Sampoerna come from that colonial era.

Surabaya is best known for the Battle of Surabaya in November 1945, soon after independence was declared. A famous earlier moment took place at Hotel Majapahit, then the Yamato Hotel, where the Dutch flag was torn down from the tower and changed into the Indonesian flag. The battle is remembered every year on Heroes' Day, 10 November, and at Heroes Monument. This is why Surabaya is called the City of Heroes.

Sunan Ampel Mosque shows an older layer. It marks the early spread of Islam on Java, from the 15th century.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Indonesia at a glance:

CURRENCY
IDR Rp

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



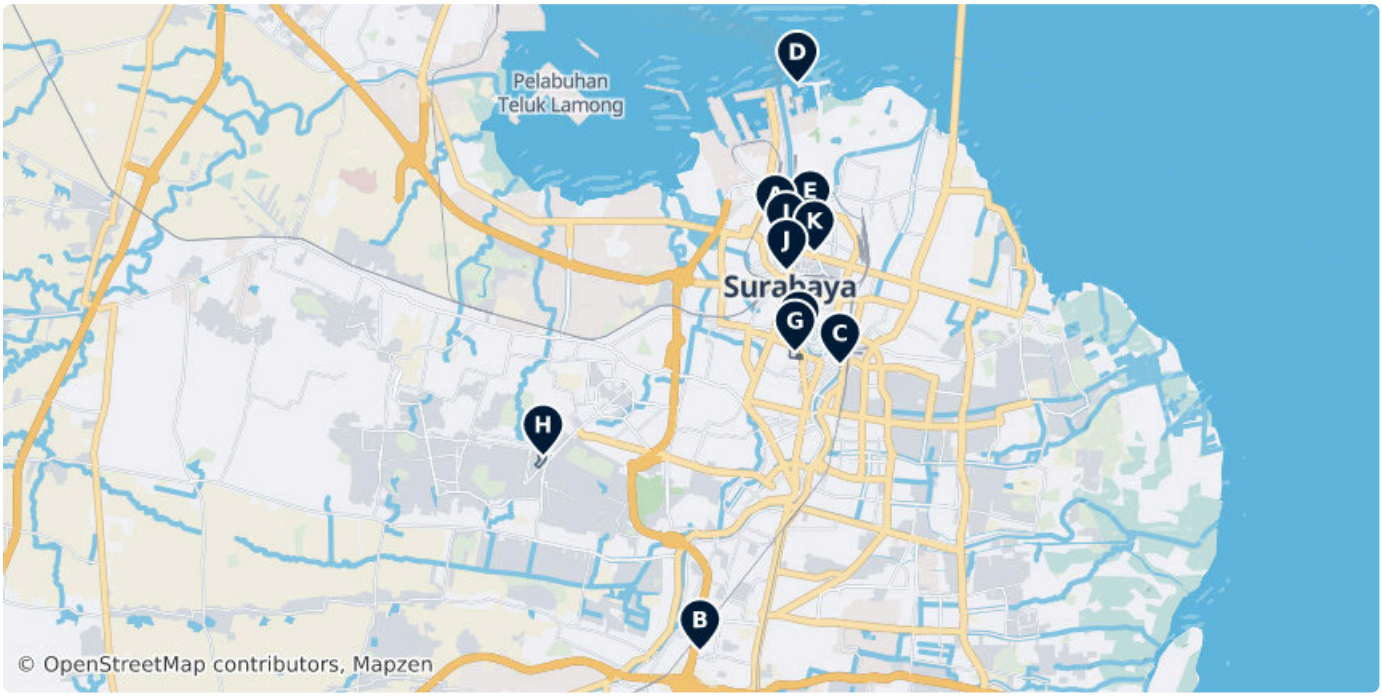
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Indonesian

TAP WATER
Not safe to drink

Kota Surabaya Essentials

Surabaya, Indonesia's "City of Heroes," preserves its revolutionary and colonial history through landmarks like the Dutch-era Hotel Majapahit and the House of Sampoerna museum. The city's religious landscape includes the massive Al-Akbar Mosque with its distinctive blue domes and the ancient Sunan Ampel Mosque. As a major maritime hub, Surabaya features the KRI Pasopati submarine museum and the 30-meter Jalesveva Jayamahe statue. Modern development is represented by Pakuwon Mall and Tunjungan Plaza, two of the largest shopping complexes in the country.





A House of Sampoerna

Housed in a 19th-century Dutch colonial building, this museum explores the history of Indonesia’s clove cigarette industry. Visitors can view historical artifacts and observe workers hand-rolling cigarettes on the upper floor.

Jalan Sampoerna, Surabaya 60163, East Java, Indonesia (-7.23099, 112.73415)

Mo–Sa 09:00–18:00

houseofsampoerna.museum



B Al-Akbar National Mosque

One of Indonesia's largest mosques, notable for its five turquoise domes and a 99-meter minaret accessible to visitors. The architecture features modern Islamic design with intricate calligraphy and a vast prayer hall.

Jambangan 60233, Indonesia (-7.33652, 112.71523)



C Submarine Monument

A decommissioned Soviet-built Whiskey-class submarine, the KRI Pasopati 410, served the Indonesian Navy before being converted into a museum. Visitors can explore the interior sections, including the torpedo rooms, command center, and engine room.

Jalan Pemuda 39, 60272 Embong Kaliasin, Genteng, Kota SBY, Jawa Timur, Indonesia (-7.26538, 112.75031)

Mo–Su 08:00–21:00

monkasel-surabaya.com, +62 315-490410



D Jalesveva Jayamahe Monument

This 30.6-meter copper statue of a naval officer stands atop a building within the Indonesian Navy base. It commemorates the country's maritime history and houses a museum showcasing naval uniforms and equipment.

(Unnamed Road), Semampir 60155, Indonesia (-7.19549, 112.73962)



E Ampel Mosque

Ampel Mosque is an ancient mosque located in the Ampel sub-district, district Semampir, Surabaya, East Java.

(-7.22995, 112.74284)

F Hotel Majapahit

The Hotel Majapahit is a historic hotel in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia, opened in 1911.

(-7.25984, 112.74013)

hotel-majapahit.com, +62315454333



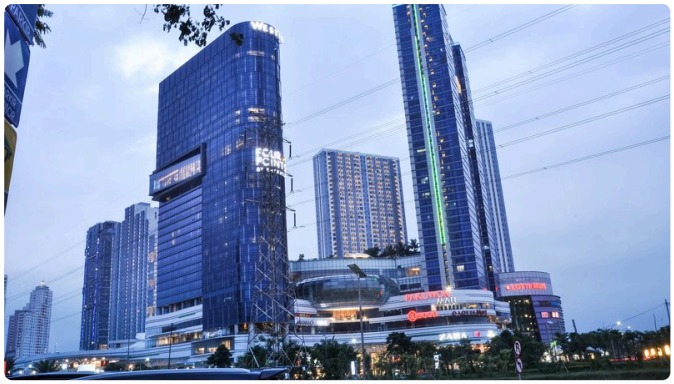
G Tunjungan Plaza

Tunjungan Plaza is a superblock in Surabaya and is the second-largest shopping center in Indonesia after Pakuwon Mall, both owned-and...

Tegalsari 60261, Indonesia (-7.26226, 112.73907)

Mo–Su 10:00–22:00

tunjunganplaza.com, +62315311088



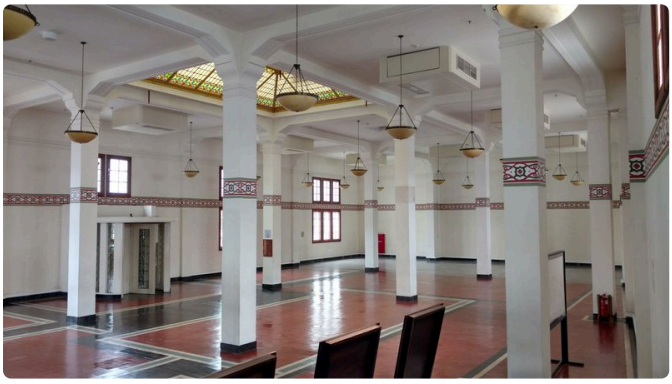
H Pakuwon Mall

Pakuwon Mall is a shopping mall in Surabaya, Indonesia. It is the largest mall in Indonesia with a net leasable area of 200,000 m2.

(Unnamed Road), Lakarsantri 60216, Indonesia (-7.28815, 112.67588)

Mo–Su 10:00–22:00

pakuwonmall.com, +62 811 331 8811



I Museum Bank Indonesia, Surabaya

Bank Indonesia Museum is a bank museum located in Surabaya, Indonesia.

Surabaya (-7.23536, 112.73682)

Tu–Su 08:00–16:00



J Church of the Birth of Our Lady

The Church of the Birth of Our Lady, also known as the Kepanjen Church, is a Roman Catholic church in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia.

16 Jalan Kepanjen, Surabaya 60175, Indonesia (-7.24208, 112.73695)



Hong Tiek Hian Temple

One of the oldest Chinese temples in Surabaya, believed to date back to the 13th century. Located in the city's Chinatown, it features traditional architecture and frequently hosts traditional Potehi puppet performances.

34 Jalan Dukuh, Simokerto 60162, Indonesia
(-7.23742, 112.74390)

tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g297715-d10112159-R...

DATA SOURCES

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