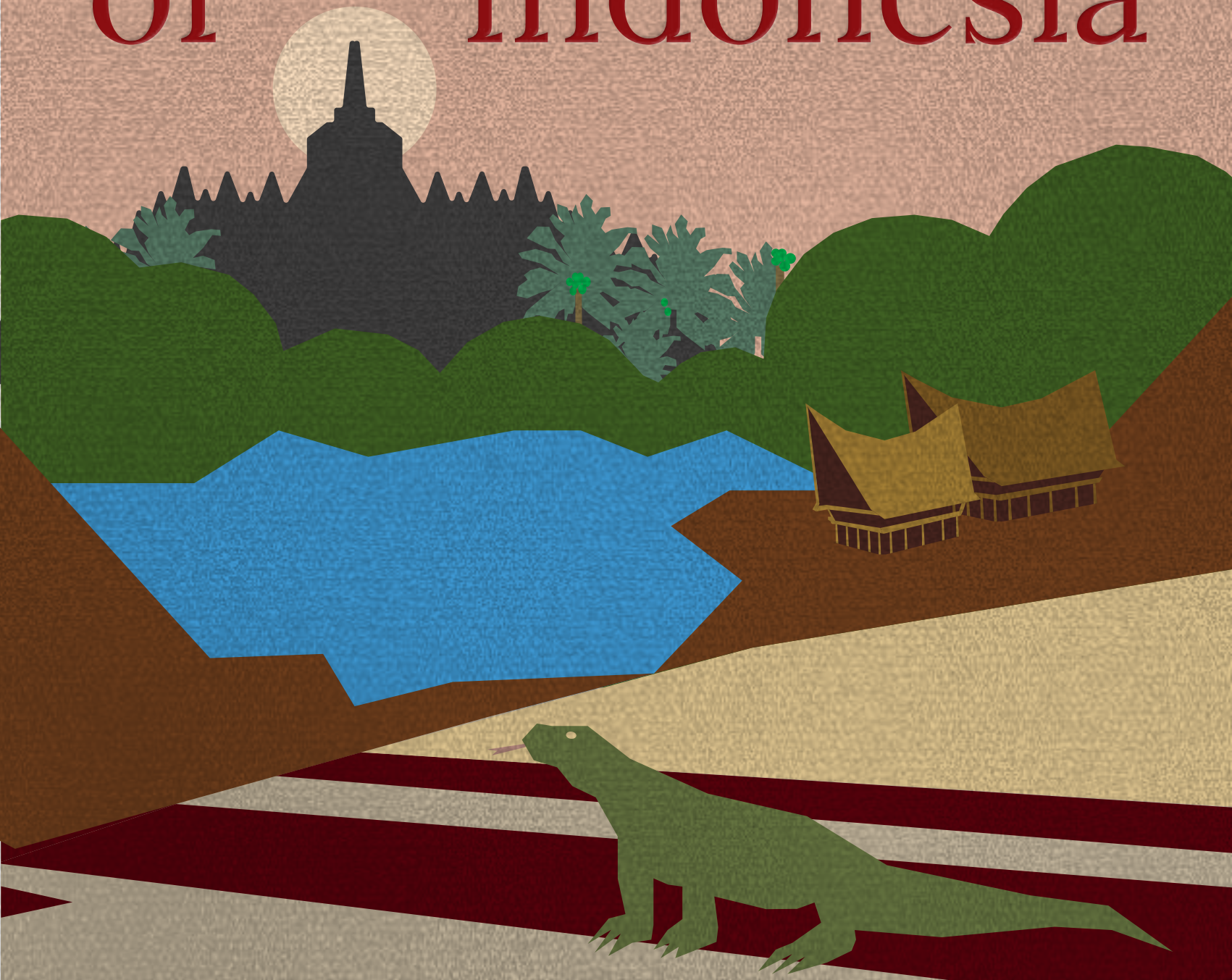


The New Jewels of Indonesia



G20 INDONESIA
2022

Featuring
Our Five Super-Priority
Tourism Destinations



Special Message from the Minister of Public Works and Housing of the Republic of Indonesia

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The New Jewels of Indonesia













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Destinations

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Introduction

When properly implemented, tourism is an effective engine for equitable, sustainable economic development, pumping the money of international visitors directly into local economies at the lowest levels. In Indonesia, however, deficiencies in physical infrastructure have hampered the growth of the tourism industry outside of the world-renowned island of Bali.

In 2020 Indonesian President Joko Widodo designated five regions: Lake Toba in Sumatra, Borobudur in Java, Mandalika in Lombok, Labuan Bajo in Flores and Likupang in Sulawesi as Super Priority Tourism Destinations (DPSP) in a program to jump-start development of the tourist industry in regions with, potentially, the greatest appeal to local, regional, and international travelers.

Like film or fashion, tourism is a glamor industry, where operators and service providers work in exotic, beautiful locales and interact with people from throughout the world. But what makes this glamor and excitement possible is decidedly unglamorous. International tourist destinations require airports and seaports, roads and bridges, ample electricity and clean water to attract international guests.

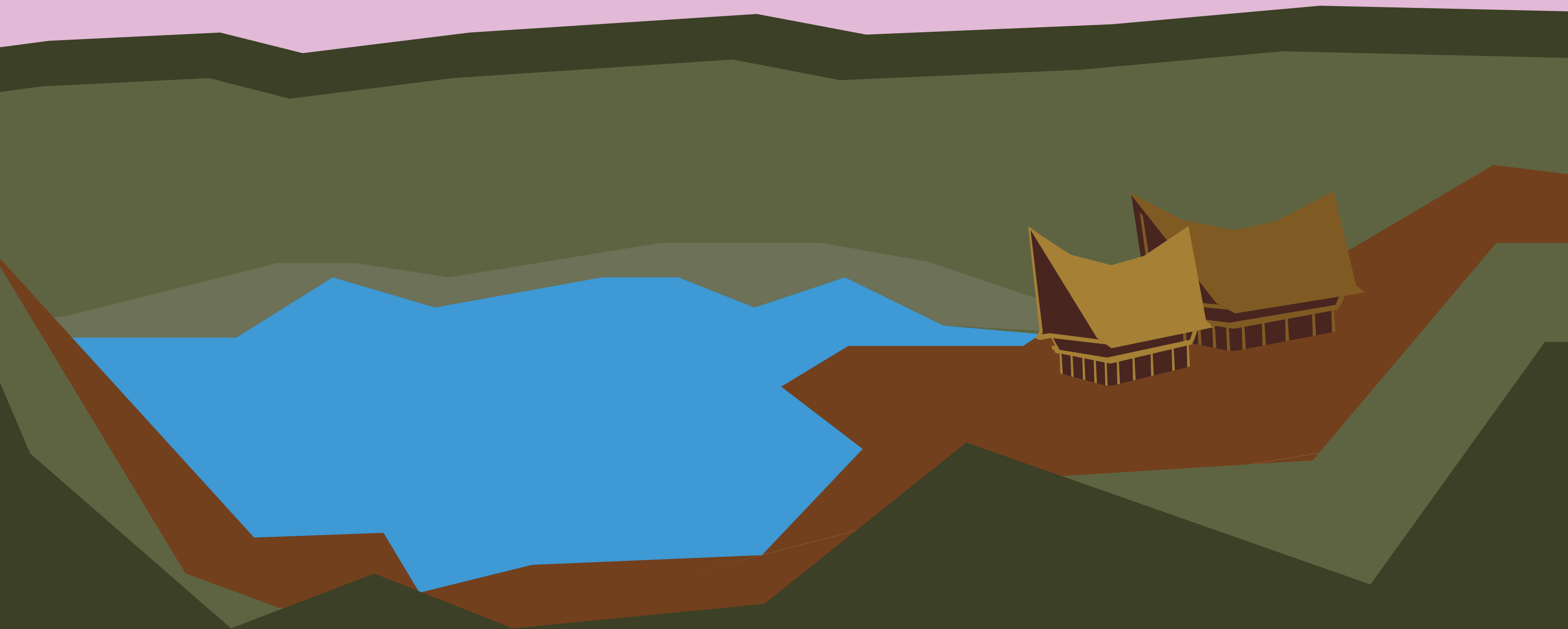
The Ministry of Public Works and Housing, the PUPR, rose to the challenge of keeping visitors to Indonesia safe and comfortable. Designing the projects and closely monitoring the progress of private-sector contractors and colleagues, the PUPR brought modern, efficient infrastructure to areas located, in some cases, a considerable distance from developed urban centers.

In the contemporary tourism world, infrastructure must be more than functional; it must be sufficiently stylish, artistic, charming, and striking for videos and social-media posts. The success in creating such facilities in the DPSP is showcased here in photographs depicting the natural beauty, fascinating culture, and yes, functional infrastructure found at each destination.

But this book also dives deeper in to the lives of those most affected by the visitors passing through their land. The smiles of a husband and wife selling pigeons at Borobudur, the joy of a teenager hunting fish at Likupang, and the laughter of a mother at Sengkol Market, Mandalika, all speak of the belief that accommodating and entertaining international visitors will help to create a better future for all Indonesians.

Lake Toba

Captivating Culture in
Spectacular Highlands



Resplendent in their traditional finery, Tor Tor dancers prepare to perform a ritual dance as part of a Batak wedding ceremony in Simanindo, Samosir.





The stunning Bakkara Valley is only a half-hour drive from Sisingamangaraja XII International Airport, the gateway to the Lake Toba region.





The simple wooden cottages of Tukruk, Samosir, the original backpacker accommodation on the lake, now boast spring beds and other hotel-grade amenities.



The verdant rice fields in Bakkara, Humbang Hasundutan, on the southern shore of the lake attest to the astounding fertility of the volcanic soil.





Captivating Culture in Spectacular Highlands

Seventy thousand years ago, a super-volcano on the island of Sumatra erupted with prodigious fury, disintegrating the peak and pumping sufficient ash and dust into the atmosphere to cool the planet for years. Genetic evidence indicates that this volcanic winter may have brought many large animals in Asia and Africa—including humans—to the brink of extinction. A few geological ages later, the once-again-flourishing human species populated the globe, pushing ever-deeper into unknown regions in search of fertile land and protection from enemies. Some migrations brought a variety of peoples from Maritime and Mainland Southeast Asia across the Strait of Malacca to settle in the fertile volcanic highlands of north-central Sumatra. They became known, collectively, as the Batak. As the Batak groups spread westward, populating a succession of isolated valleys, traditional customs and social attitudes diverged. In modern times, as Christian missionaries and itinerant Muslim clerics proselytized their beliefs, some groups adopted Islam, others Christianity. But all retained the defining values of the Batak: openness, tolerance, and an exuberant attitude to life.

Some adventurous Batak bands climbed the slopes of the now-dormant Toba volcano in search

Traditional dances featuring crockery stem from fertility rituals beseeching the gods to grant a bountiful harvest to fill their plates with rice.



Kampung Ujos Huta Raja on Samosir is a tourism village where PT Betesda Mandiri constructed a gallery, cultural information center, amphitheater, coffee shop and public toilets.







Two children hide behind a centuries old carved-stone Sarcophagus in the ancient settlement of Tipang on the southern shore of Lake Toba.



Two women perform a funeral dance while flanking a Sigale-gale, a wooden effigy of a deceased nobleman in Huta Sialangan on Samosir.



of greener rice fields. Reaching the rim of the broad crater left by the vanished mountain peak, they beheld a panorama of divine beauty: a crystal-blue lake framed by lush forests. This was a gift from the gods, and so they made their new homes on the lake shore and the islands, forming a new branch of their ethnic family tree: the Toba Batak.

Secure in their fertile mountain fastness, the Toba Batak grew into the most populous and powerful of the various Batak ethnicities. Toba Batak people tend to be outgoing and confident, and their lively traditional culture reflects these character traits. On Samosir, a large island constituting about half of the area of the lake, and which is now regarded as the epicenter of Batak culture, the dramatic arched roofs of their jabu houses, with their vivid tones and ornate wooden pillars, speak of prosperous kingdoms whose influence permeates the greater Indonesian society to this day. In the well-kept museums and visitor centers, this cultural heritage is on full display in performances by dancers who, after entertaining visitors, might offer another performance, identical to the smallest detail, at a neighborhood social gathering without a foreigner in site.

Equatorial highlands such as the Lake Toba region offer the best of all worlds: the lush forests and exotic fruits and vegetables of the tropics

with the chill waters and refreshing breezes of temperate climates. At 900 meters altitude, 100 kilometers in length and 30 kilometers at the widest point, Toba is the largest lake in Indonesia and the largest volcanic lake in the world. These outstanding geographical features have led Lake Toba to be named a UNESCO Geopark, where visitors and the surrounding community can learn about and practice natural resource conservation and sustainable tourism.

The salubrious environment and geographical bounty of Toba entices visitors with a multitude of attractions: water sports, trekking, or simply lazing about and chatting with the locals. When Lake Toba first appeared on the global tourism map in the 1970s, most visitors were backpackers, adventurous youth willing to endure a bone-jarring bus ride from the coast and then entrust their fates to a rickety boat for the crossing to the island of Samosir, where they would spend a few tranquil days in simple wooden cottages. Facilities were ad-hoc or non-existent. One enterprising resident, who happened to live nearest the Panguguran hot springs, charged a minuscule admission to foreign guests, then distributed the proceeds to his neighbors.

Decades on, Lake Toba is extending the famed Batak hospitality to less-resilient, but no-







Traditional dancers clad in simple frocks denoting purity hike to a sacred spot on Hutaginjang hill to perform the Tari Cawan, beseeching the gods for bountiful harvest.



Batak people are delighted when visitors express interest in their customs and traditions, such as this European lady learning the Tari Cawan.







less-appreciative guests. Good roads connect the lake with the Trans-Sumatra highway, the Sisingamangaraja XII International Airport is served by regional carriers, and, most importantly, visitors now cross to Samosir and other settlements on modern ferries from three full-service piers.

Batak history comes to life in Huta Sallagan, the erstwhile seat of Batak sovereignty, that has become a showcase for visitors to Samosir. The Jabu Bolon, royal residences with dramatic upswept roofs and ornate facades flanking the stone-chairs of the council venue where matters of state were decided and justice meted out to wrongdoers. In Kampung Ulos, refurbished Jabu Bolon house weavers creating the distinctive Ulos fabric used for Batak ceremonial dress, with context on Batak history and culture provided an information center and performance venue.

In a few years, Lake Toba has been transformed from a tourist backwater to a premier destination in the Indonesian archipelago, and a fascinating exposition of Indonesian cultural heritage.







A ferry conveying passengers from the new Ajiabata pier to Tomok on Samosir represents the massive improvements of infrastructure made in recent years.





Water from the Sipiso-piso waterfall at the northern reaches of Lake Toba plunges from a cave into the midst of a mountain pine forest.





To increase production from these picturesque rice terraces in Desa Tampahan near Balige, farmers are instituting a government program to plant two crops each year instead of one.



This farmer near Bakkara passes a field of rice. The golden color of the straw indicates that the plants are ready for harvest.







A farmer proudly displays her pineapples grown in Sipahutar, North Tapanuli. Delicious tropical fruits abound in Lake Toba, blessed by copious sun and rain.





Pulau Sibandang, the second largest island in Lake Toba after Samosir, boasts mango trees that still bear delicious fruit though centuries old.







No tourist destination is complete with a gorgeous sunset. The twilight panorama visible from Muara Taput on the south shore checks that box.



Borobudur

Magnificent Monuments
amid Tropical Splendor







← 2

Peron
Platforms

1 →



Ke Wates, Yogyakarta
To Wates, Yogyakarta









Magnificent Monuments amid Tropical Splendor

Rising with solemn majesty from the verdant rice-carpeted Kedu Plain in central Java, Borobudur is the premier tourist attraction in the archipelago and an object of immense pride for all Indonesians. Composed of over 2,500 stone panels wrapped around a small hill, Borobudur is the centerpiece of a complex of Buddhist temples scattered near the Progo River.

Borobudur was constructed at the end of the first millennium by the Sailendra dynasty of Buddhist rulers, one of the two great empires of the Mataram region of the island's heartland. In those halcyon days, Borobudur hosted the Buddhist faithful from throughout the region, who would circumnavigate the terraces on each level of the monument, viewing exquisitely carved bas reliefs teaching the Buddhist path to enlightenment, along with pageants of kings and warriors and intriguing vignettes of quotidian life in ancient Java. Each successive level depicted higher stages of the sacred journey, until the pilgrim reached the unadorned summit symbolizing nirvana, the release from all worldly suffering and strife.

But Borobudur's days of glory were brief. Not long after the monument was fully completed, a series of major eruptions from nearby Mount











Borobudur was constructed as a place of Buddhist veneration and is once again attracts pilgrims from throughout the region and the world.









Merapi rendered the Kedu Plain uninhabitable, prompting the Sailendra court to relocate to East Java. Borobudur was downgraded from spiritual icon to superstitious legend, mysterious ruins buried in volcanic ash and overgrown with dense forest.

In 1814, Thomas Stamford Raffles, the administrator of Java, which was then under British control, learned of these legends and of heaps of carved stones lying in a forest on the Kedu Plain. Raffles had a keen interest in Javanese culture, and so sent a team led by Dutch engineer Hermann Cornelius to investigate the site. This and subsequent teams during the following decades would bring this long-concealed glory of ancient Java into the light of day. Unfortunately, as the world learned of Borobudur, the now-accessible ruins were damaged and looted—and suffered the ignominy of having a teahouse built on the summit.

There were sporadic attempts to protect and restore Borobudur in the 20th century, but wars, revolution and economic strife relegated the refurbishment of ancient artifacts to the bottom of the list of public priorities. In the late 1960s, as the political situation in now-independent Indonesia stabilized and the economy grew, the government assembled a consortium of foreign donors to fund a full restoration of the monument. This work was



Wayang Golek from Java's famed shadow-puppet theater are used to reenact the mythic tales depicted on the carved stone facades of the Prambanan temples.









A trader ready to offer her wares from among the cornucopia of Javanese produce and spices available at the traditional market near Borobudur.





Candi Sewu, a Buddhist temple located a short distance from Prambanan, illustrates how different religions co-existed peacefully in ancient Java.







For six decades, performances of Ramayana Dance, spectacles of art, dance, and drama created by Yogyakarta artists, have awed visitors to Prambanan.

completed in the 1980s, and, in 1991 Borobudur was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Borobudur is now, once again, a place of pilgrimage for both the Buddhist faithful and the curious of any belief. On Vesak Day, which falls in May of each year, tens of thousands of Buddhists from throughout Indonesia, the region, and the world gather at the temple. And on the other 364 days of the year, ten thousand or more domestic and international tourists experience the wonder of Borobudur. This, unfortunately, presents a problem. Though seemingly as resilient and immutable as the surrounding mountains, Borobudur is actually quite fragile. The supporting soil constantly shifts and subsides from water erosion. The Indonesian government continually upgrades drainage networks, and has developed an extensive infrastructure to manage the masses of visitors.

Borobudur is not the only ancient wonder in the region. As the massive temple was being constructed, rulers of the other Mataram empire, the Hindu Sanjaya dynasty, built their own monumental complex in Prambanan near the Opak River to the east. The Prambanan temples are soaring, self-supporting structures representing sacred Mount Meru, dedicated to Hindu deities and carved with dramatic scenes from the epic Ramayana myth cycle.









Both Mataram dynasties disappeared from historic record around the turn of the second millennium. But 500 years later, ancient Mataram was reborn as Islamic sultanates. Grand royal palaces in Yogyakarta and Surakarta attest to the power and cultural sophistication of modern Mataram. Served by a new international airport, Yogyakarta is the gateway to both Borobudur and Prambanan. The Yogyakarta sultans have a long tradition of promoting both education and artistic expression, and have made Yogyakarta a charming university town with a vibrant artistic community. In Prambanan, this synergy of learning and creating brings ancient Java to vivid life with Sendratari performances blending dance and drama in a live-action version of the carved images on the temples forming the stage backdrop. And this glorious past lives on in the palaces and on the streets of Yogyakarta, where courtiers and servants dressed in ceremonial finery perform their duties with diligence and grace, scarcely acknowledging the tourists intent on photographing this exotic pageant that is, to them, another day on the job.

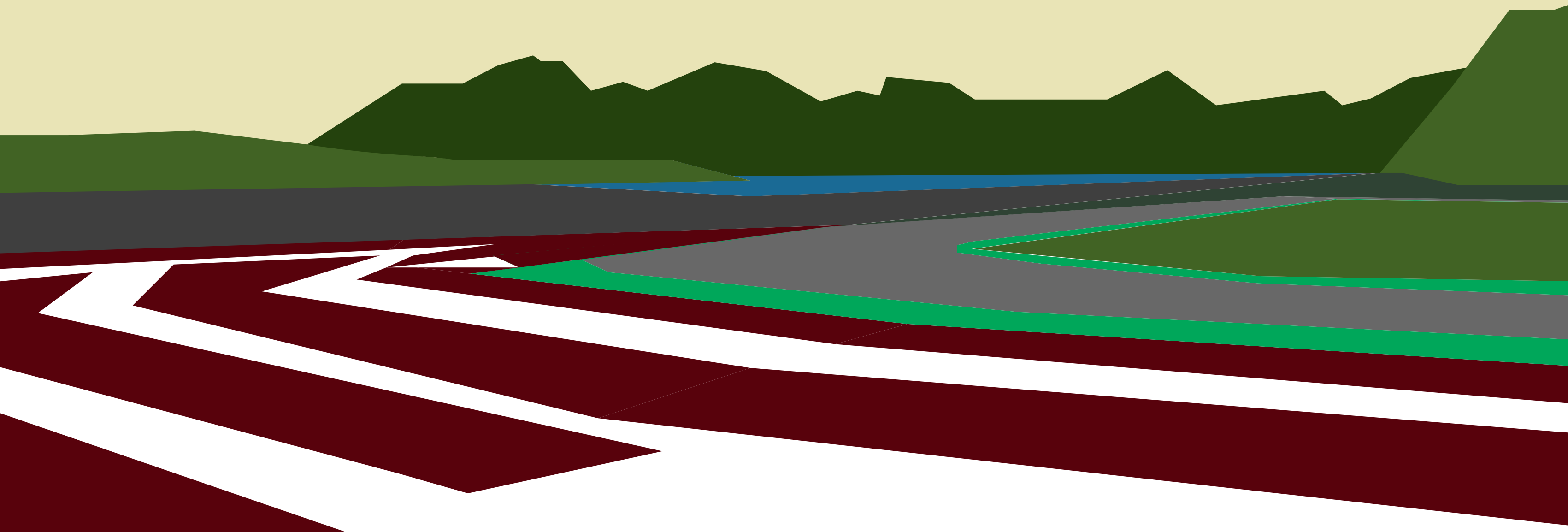
Borobudur reflects the glory of ancient Java, and the new transportation and other infrastructural facilities constructed to preserve and present the monument to the world makes it also a reflection of modern Indonesia.



The evocative ruins of Ratu Boko, thought to be a fortification constructed on a hill, overlook the temples of the Prambanan Plain.

Mandalika

Sun and Sport along a
Breathtaking Beach



A tropical sunset at Senggigi Beach, an informal tourist resort on the west coast of Lombok renowned for a laid-back ambiance.





PT. PP (Persero) led the mega-project to create an international luxury resort encompassing five of the most beautiful white-sand beaches in the archipelago.







Though designed for speeds an order of magnitude faster, a runner tests the track surface, built by PT Bunga Raya Lestari, at the Mandalika Circuit.









Sun and Sport along a Breathtaking Beach

Until recently, the island of Lombok languished in the shadow of neighboring Bali, a sideshow to this world-renowned tourist destination. But now the island is coming into its own as a new international airport brings the world to its door. The showcase destination for visitors to Lombok is Mandalika, a purpose-built beach resort area located a short drive from Lombok International Airport. This stretch of pristine beach was transformed into a model of sustainable tourism with a coordinated infrastructure program, setting the stage for investors from throughout the world to build hotels and other facilities appealing to discerning travelers.

Decades ago, the first visitors to realize the potential of the Mandalika region were surfers, drawn to the excellent breaks along the southern coast. Mandalika is building on this history to promote itself as a family friendly sports destination. The showpiece is the Mandalika Circuit, a track hosting international motor-sport competitions. The distinctive graphic design of the track surface, and the spectacular backdrop of sea and sky against the south hairpin, make Mandalika instantly recognizable in the world of motor racing.

The international character of the Mandalika Circuit is reflected in the luxury hotels gracing the

adjacent beach resort. The stark beauty of the southern coast has inspired graceful minimalist structures that soothe the spirit while inviting the warm tropical breeze into the rooms and interior spaces.

Leaving the environs of the Mandalika resort area, most traces of modernity vanish. The Sasak people, the original inhabitants of this region of Lombok, take pride in their strict adherence to cultural tradition. The Sasak are renowned for their skill in weaving ornate textiles and crafting articles of daily life fashioning handicrafts such as food baskets with beauty and fine workmanship.

The village of Sade, located a short drive from Mandalika, is a showcase for these crafts, as well as the dance traditions and other communal rituals of the Sasak. While Sade has been purposely remodeled as a *desa wisata*, a government-supported village appealing to international visitors, the residents craft their wares and perform their rituals with the same diligence and authenticity as in times past, when a foreign face in Lombok was a rare, noteworthy occurrence.

The signature attraction of Sade is the Peresean dance, a mock battle with rattan swords and shields. Originally a fertility ritual beseeching the gods to end the dry season and send the rains,



Surfers combing the southern coastlines of the Indonesian archipelago for undiscovered breaks were among the first foreigners to discover Mandalika.



Herders take their water buffalo for a stroll along the sands of Selong Belanak Beach to a nearby pasture to graze.







Local residents herding their water buffalo Selong Belanak Beach to graze in the surrounding hills pause to introduce their charges to a visitor.



Several stretches of Senggigi Beach are a fair distance from villages or tourist accommodation, allowing long, restful walks in the sand and surf.

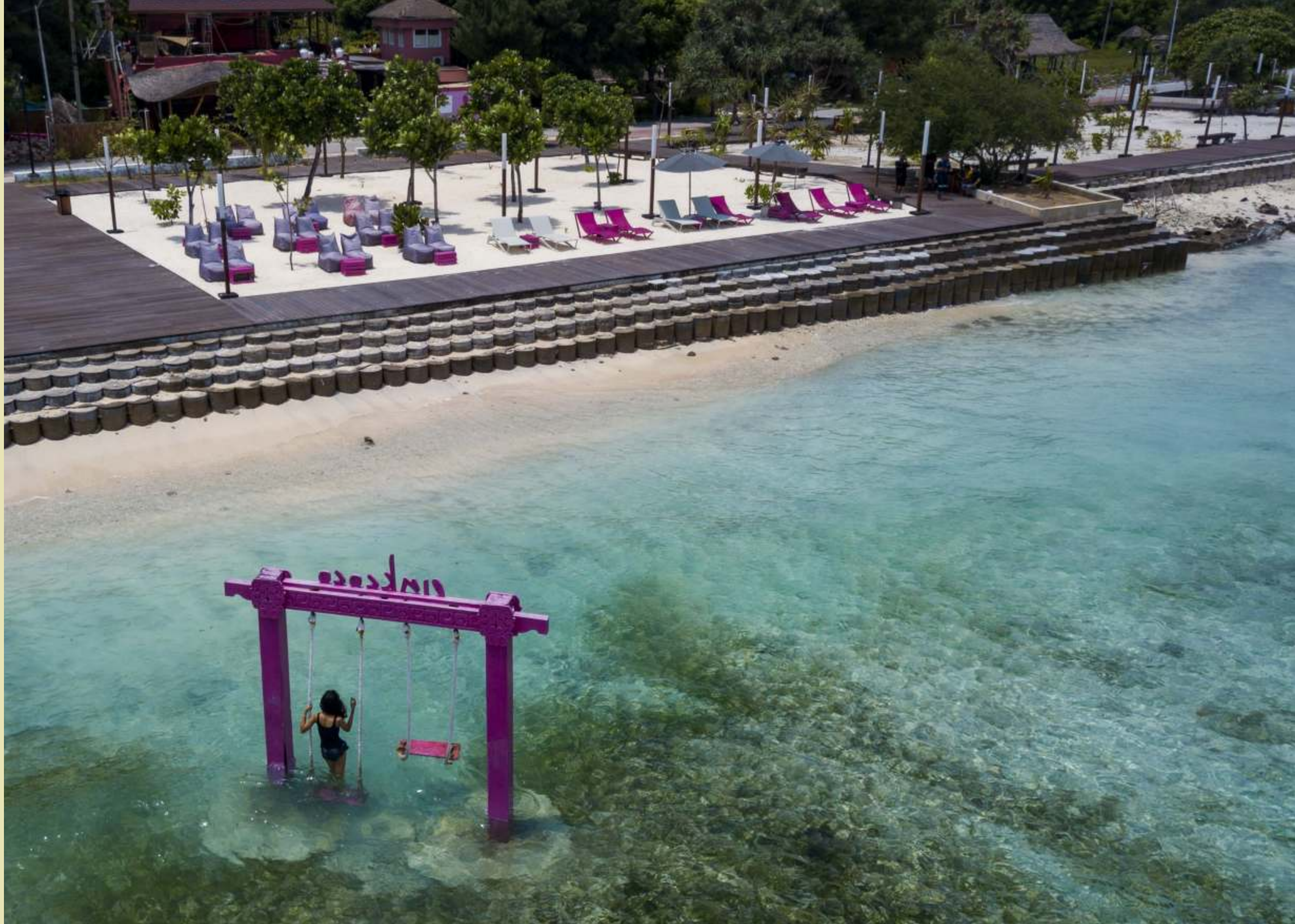














This stunning sunset panorama from Marese Hill graces the end of yet another perfect day at Mandalika resort in southern Lombok.



At sunrise, families comb the sands for *nyale*, an edible sea worm, during the Bau Nyale festival held in February and March of each year.









Gendang Beleg musicians in Sade village prepare to beat an infectious rhythm on handcrafted ritual drums for a traditional dance performance.

the dance is performed, with great enthusiasm, to the stirring tones of the *gamelan* bronze-gong orchestra. The event is halted when one dancer has drawn the blood of the other.

In contrast to the drama and potential for serious injury of the Peresean, the Bau Nyale is a family friendly event that most visitors will enjoy, or even participate in. During evenings in February and March each year, residents flock to Seger Beach on a communal hunt for *nyale*, an edible sea worm. The inspiration for this festival is the legend of Princess Mandalika, a beauty whom all the princes of the island wanted to marry. Worried that the competition for her hand would generate strife among her people, the kind-hearted princess chose instead to sacrifice herself, plunging into the ocean at Seger Beach. None of the hopeful suitors could save her, and since then the *nyale* worms have emerged each year, gifts to her people.

This spirit of humility and community service will serve the people of Mandalika well as they strive to create their own international-grade tourism destination in the shadow of their famous neighbor.







Freshly caught and smoked, this fish-on-a-stick can make a nutritious, tasty snack or, with a plate of rice and vegetables, a full meal.

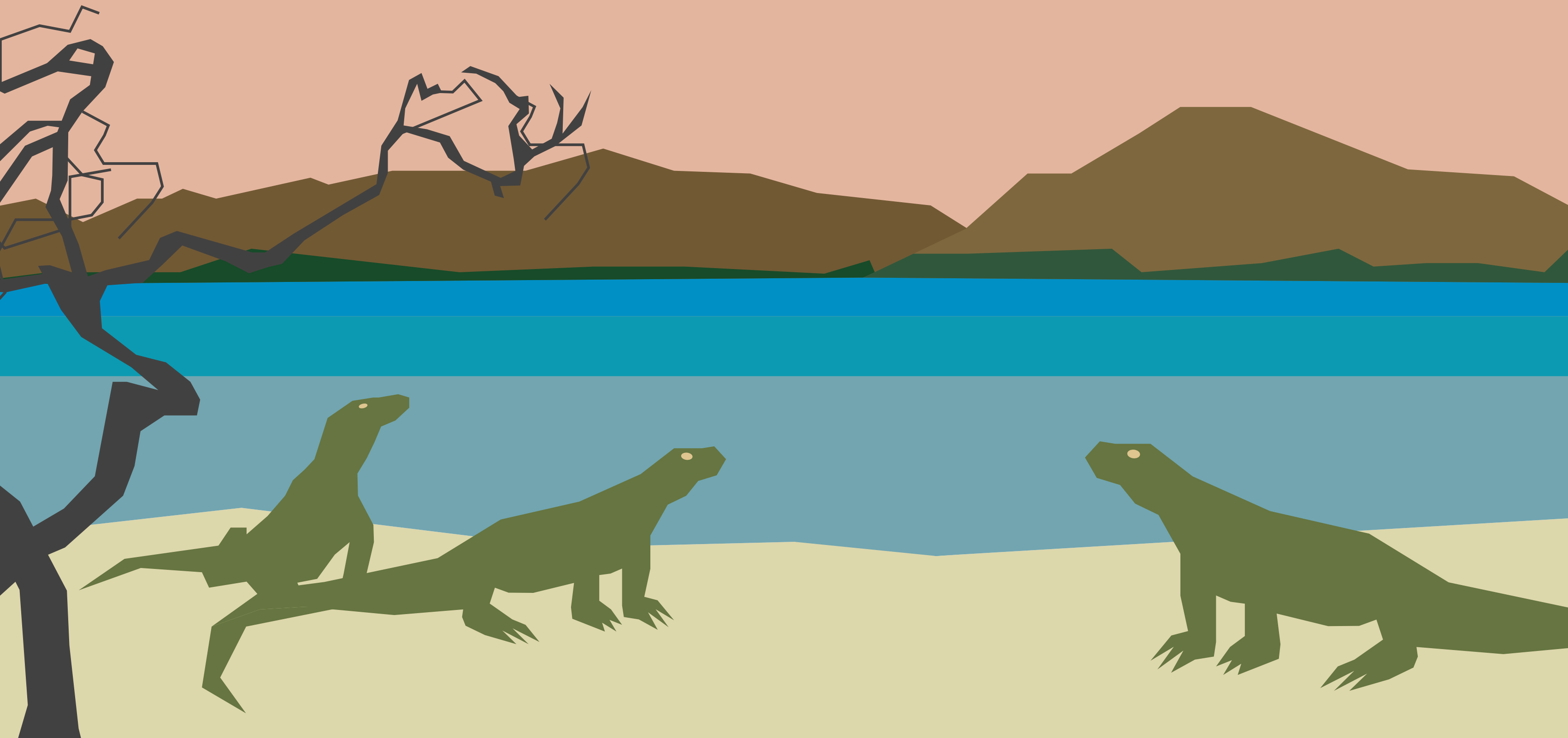


Freshly caught red snapper from the teeming waters south of Lombok await their turn on the coconut-husk grill at Nipah Beach.



Labuan Bajo

Diving and Dragons on a Picturesque Coast







A Komodo dragon checks out the waves at Loh Liang Beach. Dragons are only aggressive if threatened, and are happy to spend their days chilling on the beach.



A park ranger attempts to attract the attention of a Komodo dragon enjoying a moment in the shade at Loh Liang Beach.











A visitor has a surprising and delightful encounter with a wild (and seemingly fearless) deer on the island of Padar.







Diving and Dragons on a Picturesque Coast

The *pinisi*, the majestic wooden sailing schooners that once dominated the seas of Indonesia, have found a new home port in Labuan Bajo, a once-sleepy fishing village with an excellent natural harbor that has been transformed into a global tourist destination. Learning from the chaotic, rag-tag development of other tourist boom towns, local, regional, and national authorities have sought to coordinate growth by investing heavily in infrastructure and promoting a paradigm of sustainable tourism, in which the hordes of strangers passing through town have a largely beneficial economic and societal impact.

Labuan Bajo is the gateway to the world-famous Komodo Island, the home of the largest monitor lizard on earth, the eponymous Dragon. The harsh landscape and monstrous reptiles inspired a vacationing Hollywood set designer to create Skull Island for the 1933 movie *King Kong*. Decades later, the dragon, now as celebrated as a film star, is drawing crowds in such numbers that visits are being carefully managed, so advanced booking is advised.

The dragons used to range throughout eastern Flores, but are now only found on three islands, Komodo itself, Rinca, and Padar, of all which comprise Komodo National Park. The park is a









A dramatic sculpture capturing the primordial savagery of Komodo dragons in a sculpture graces this pier on Komodo constructed by PT Karya Pembangunan Rezeki.





Artful illumination on the pier constructed by PT Wijaya Karya complements the evocative panorama of Labuan Bajo harbor at twilight.



The Labuan Bajo Marina, constructed by PT Brantas Abipraya, hosts sailing and motor craft from throughout the region and the world.



restricted conservation area, and the rangers, besides acting as dragon wranglers for visitors, monitor economic and other activity by the two thousand residents, as well as fishing folk from other areas, to ensure that the natural habitat of this unique creature is preserved.

As the lesser-known habitat, the neighboring island of Rinca is the preferred venue for dragon sighting. The island also teems with other species, including monkeys, deer, and buffalo. Only about a dozen dragons remain on Padar, who prefer to remain out of sight of the increasing numbers of human visitors, drawn to the diving and a distinctive pink-sand beach.

Labuan Bajo (“labuan” means “harbor” in Indonesian) is the only major destination in Indonesia to feature “maritime”, as opposed to “beach” tourism attractions, centered around modern versions of the *pinisi*. For centuries, these sturdy craft transported essential, but distinctly non-glamorous, cargoes such as rice and dried fish among the islands, driving commerce in the archipelago at the most basic level. Now, the master shipwrights are applying their age-old skills to construct a luxury version of the venerable *pinisi*; with air-conditioned cabins, fine-dining kitchens, and a backup diesel engine for windless days. These “boutique *pinisi*”,



With constant sunshine in the dry season and only intermittent showers in the wet, most daily activities in Labuan Bajo are conducted outdoors.





along with other boats of all sizes and styles, ferry visitors to Komodo or Rinca islands for dragon watching, to nearby coral reefs for some of the best diving in the world, island-hopping day trips to savor the attractions of sun, sea, and sand, or on week-long expeditions to the fabled islands of the eastern archipelago.

As a maritime town, delicious fresh seafood is the order of the day in Labuan Bajo. Luxury resorts and upmarket bistros offer innovative takes on classic seafood dishes, often incorporating an artful fusion with local and regional culinary traditions. For those on a budget, numerous food stalls grill whole fish to perfection over a wood or coconut-husk flame, served with steaming rice and vegetable curries. Purists can go directly to the source: the spacious, hygienic Seafood Market, to select the best of that day's catch.

Flores and the other islands of the East Nusa Tenggara chain boast a vibrant textile tradition: ceremonial dress, scarves and blankets with intricate hand-weaves of rich symbolism colored with natural dyes. The Wae Kesambi market is the clearing house for regional textiles, and offers great bargains to visitors with a modicum of bargaining skills.

While the travel facilities at Labuan Bajo are focused on seaborne attractions, landlubbers



are not forgotten. Sightseeing is a breeze: most locations of key historic, cultural, and economic importance are within easy walking distance of hotels and other tourist facilities. The centerpiece is Puncak Waringin Creative Hub, which includes a performance amphitheater and art gallery. Roads to nearby attractions such as Batu Cermin cave have been improved.

Further afield, the interior of Flores is a land of fascinating cultural complexity and challenging geography. The village of Melo, a short drive to the east of Labuan Bajo, showcases the cultural attractions of the Manggarai district of western Flores. The Tari Caci is a version of a fertility ritual, common in the region, in which dancers dressed in ceremonial regalia engage in a mock battle with whips and rattan shields to draw symbolic drops of blood to ensure a good harvest. This outcome is a virtual certainty, as the dancers wield whips fashioned from dried buffalo skin, which can inflict a nasty cut.

A two-hour drive (followed by a three-kilometer walk) from Labuan Bajo is the village of Wae Rebo, famous for distinctive Mbaru Niang conical, multi-level, palm-thatch houses. In 2008, a team of architects and builders from Jakarta, the Indonesian capital, donated their time and skills to assist the residents in refurbishing seven of the







The dried buffalo-skin whips used in the Caci mock battle dance of Moloko tourism village have the potential of inflicting real injury.









Though seemingly lost in a vast rainforest, the Batu Cernin cave welcomes visitors with comfortable facilities provided by PT Karya Shinta Manarito.







traditional houses, an effort which earned the village a UNESCO Cultural Heritage Conservation award and an Aga Khan award for architectural excellence. Located at an altitude of 1,200 meters, Wae Rebo is accessible only on foot, though the hospitable residents will reward arrivals with a cup of their signature single-origin robusta coffee cultivated on the surrounding hillsides.

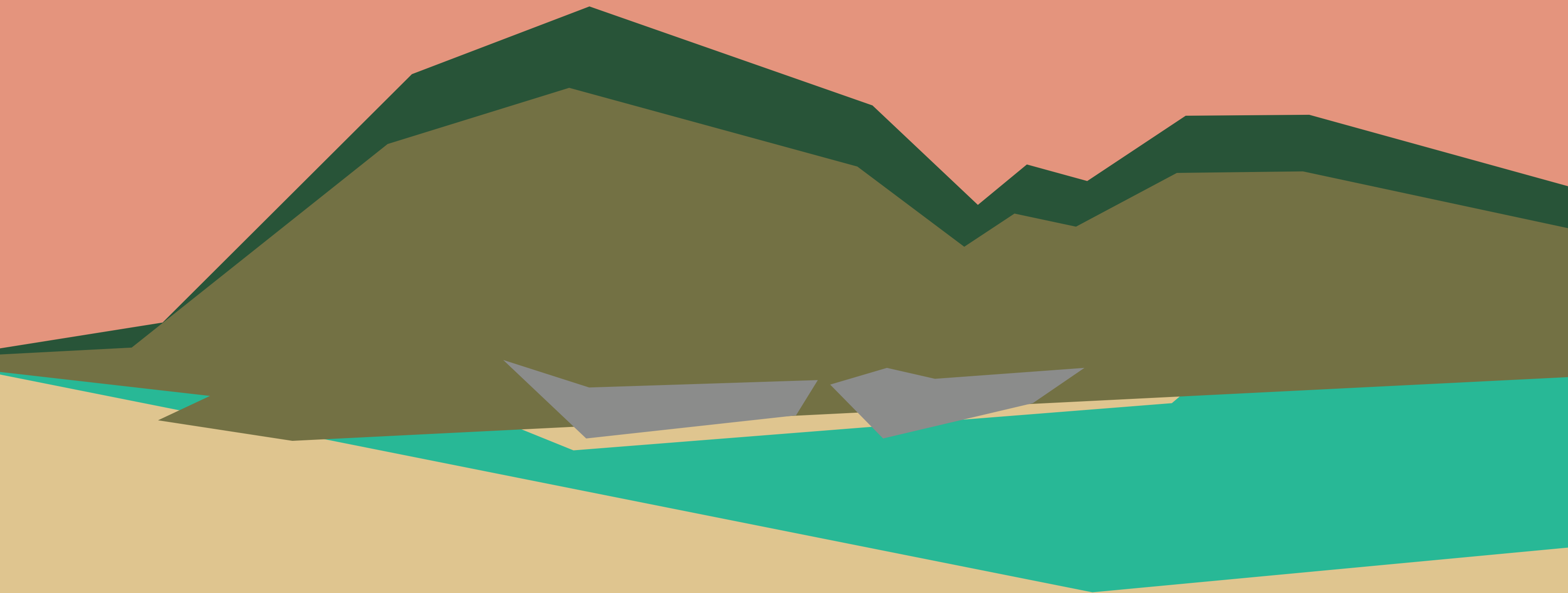
Continuing to the south coast, Mules Island is known locally as “Sleeping Beauty” because the land profile, when viewed from the opposing shore, evokes the image of a sleeping woman. Now Mules is waking as a destination for discerning travelers, drawn by a white sand beach and a pellucid turquoise sea.

As a newcomer on the global travel scene, Labuan Bajo is learning from the experiences of fellow destinations, and is poised to become a fine example of sustainable tourism.



Likupang

Adventure and Discovery
in a Hidden Gem









In contrast to the lush tropical forest on the rest of Pulisan island, this hill sports the *alang-alang* savannah grass used for roofing in traditional architecture.









Adventure and Discovery in a Hidden Gem

Perched on the northern reaches of the Indonesian archipelago and once an strategic entrepôt in the Spice Trade, the Minahasa region on the northern arm of Sulawesi is the beneficiary of cultural influences from the Philippines, China, Portugal, Spain, and, of course, the Netherlands. Minahasa is renowned for an easy-going lifestyle, an educated population tolerant of the ways of visitors, and some of the most sublimely beautiful scenic panoramas in Indonesia—both above and below the waves.

The beach town of Likupang boasts one of the finest white-sand beaches in the archipelago—still pristine and tranquil despite growing numbers of visitors. Divers flock to Bunaken island for the coral reefs and sights of migrating pelagic fish. An alternative, now growing in popularity, is “muck diving” in the mild currents of the sheltered Lembeh Strait. Passionate fishermen can charter fully equipped sport-fishing craft and crews to catch the monster tuna or grouper of their dreams.

Heading inland, the highlands between the towns of Likupang and Manado offer accessible trekking and biking opportunities from easy strolls through the hillside flower gardens to Tomohon to a strenuous hike to the summit of the active Lokon volcano. Tours of the Tangkoko Batuangus Nature Reserve offer the chance to spot the doe-eyed





spectral tarsier, Celebes crested macaque and other rare wildlife species endemic to the island of Sulawesi.

Minahasa is not all rustic charm. Manado, the capital, is the most European of Indonesian urban centers. This rapidly growing city boasts an eclectic blend of agricultural styles and a vibrant dining and nightlife scene. Daily sunset-watching on the Boulevard attracts everyone from fishermen and farmers to international guests of nearby resort hotels.

The cosmopolitan Minahasa people are famous for extending a voluble hospitality to strangers in their midst. In a homestay, the Indonesian term for a private residence renting rooms to guests, tourists are immersed in the daily life of their hosts, and will more than likely be invited to a wedding or other social event. These events feature local delicacies – which are an adventure in themselves. The Minahasa are famed for their inventive cuisine: they can create mouth-watering dishes from anything that flies, swims, walks, crawls, or slithers, spiced with *rica-rica* and other fiery condiments. Whole days can be spent wandering around Likupang or Manado, sampling dishes from vendor carts, food stalls, and restaurants. Those adventurous enough to try exotic “bushmeat” such as bat or dog can wash it all down with a shot of the infamous Cap Tikus (Rat Brand!) a potent spirit distilled from the sap of coconut palms.

An extensive network of new and refurbished roads and bridges make travel between the various tourist centers and attractions fast and pleasant. At many locations, newly built, well-maintained facilities provide amenities, along with information resources to put the object of interest into the context of the area’s complex, many faceted history. Thanks to astute planning and coordination of the local and national authorities, the hidden gems of Likupang and other areas of northern Sulawesi will not lose their luster and the world comes to their door.



At Tu'ur Maasering, an aren palm grove accented with rainbows of LED lighting, visitors can sip freshly distilled batches of Cap Tikus palm spirit.



Dressed for respect in traditional Mimahasa formal wear, a visitor tours the Waruga, a cemetery where remains are interred in stone sarcophagi.







A visitor takes an enthusiastic first look at Manado Tua island in Bunaken, one of the best scuba-diving venues in the world.



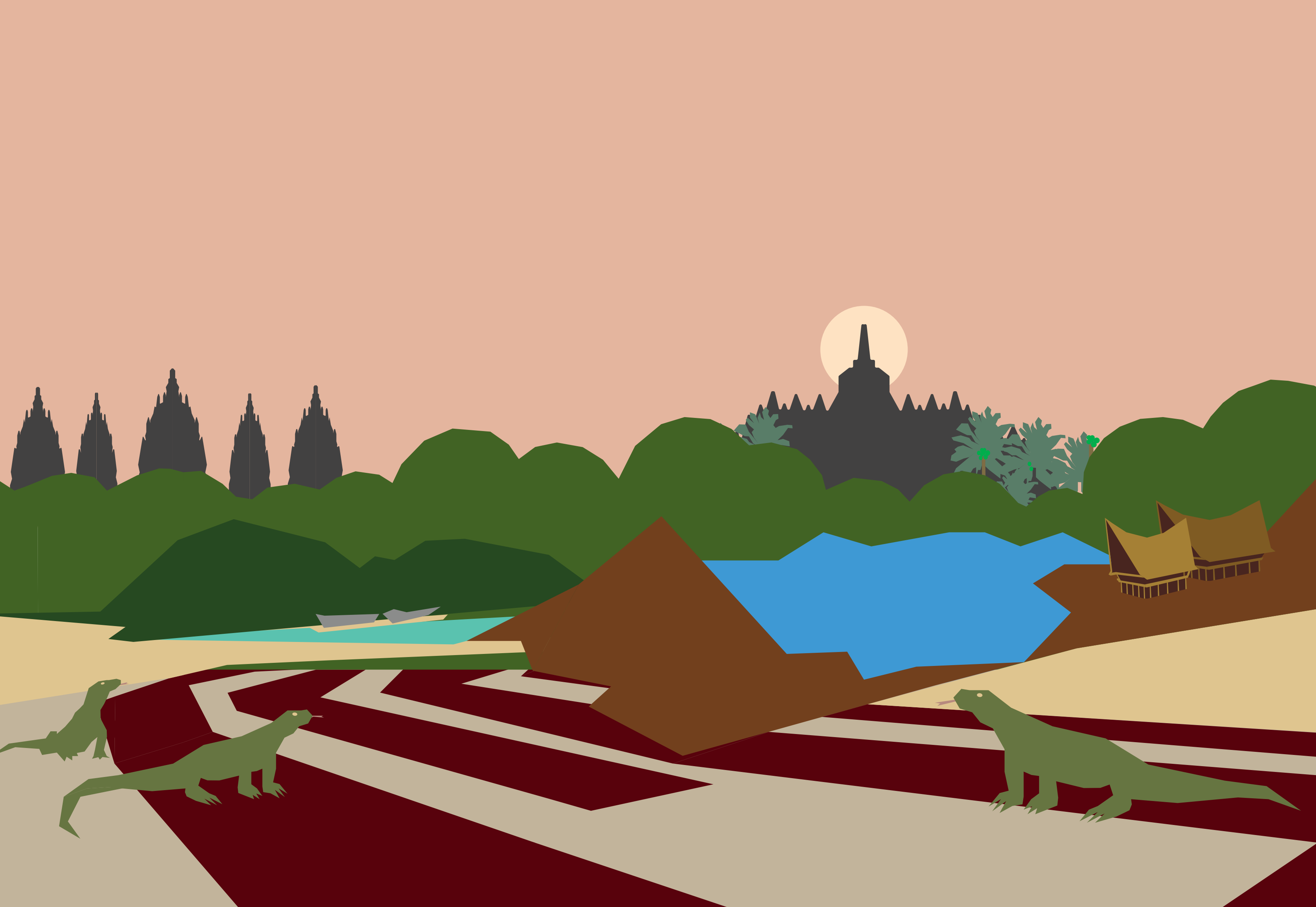






Locals and foreign visitors alike end their day by gathering to enjoy the sunset on the sea-side Boulevard in Manado.





Acknowledgments

The New Jewels of Indonesia originated from my meeting with Odo Manuhutu, Deputy Coordinating Minister for Tourism and Creative Economy at the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime and Investment Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, while waiting for Indonesian President Joko Widodo to inaugurate the new ferry port at Ajibata on Lake Toba on February 2, 2022.

Odo was aware that I am a photographer, and our discussion led to a commission to create a book of photographic essays showcasing the five Super Priority Tourism Destinations: Lake Toba, Borobudur, Labuan Bajo, Mandalika, and Likupang that the government is promoting to spread the economic benefits of tourism to more regions of the country. Then Endra S. Atmawidjaja, Expert Assistant to the Minister of Public Works and Housing [PUPR] for Technology, Industry, and Environment, joined the conversation and indicated that PUPR would be willing to support the production of book as the ministry is responsible for building the infrastructure required to accommodate large numbers of international visitors.

So, I give my heartfelt gratitude to Odo and Endra, as well as to Yudhie and his staff Albana and Burhanudin from PUPR for taking on the daunting task of organizing the photo shoots. At each destination, I was supported by scores of people, so I'd like to thank:

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I respect and thank the residents who I immortalize formally and candidly in the Five Super Priority Tourism Destinations.

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Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge the immense support from my wife, Vera Easterlena Hutauruk, and our two children, Timothy Halomoan Siahaan and Natasha Sonia Siahaan.

Edward Tigor Siahaan

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Born in 1964 in Tarutung, North Sumatra Edward Tigor Siahaan started his professional photography career in 1985. In 1993, he took advanced studies in photography at Central Saint Martin College of Art and Design, London. Returning to Indonesia, he contributed to SWA business magazine, founded Tigor Multimedia Solution (TIMES) Communications, and opened Jurnal Seni, a photo school. Tigor assisted many major corporations to produce annual reports, company profiles, coffee-table books, calendars, and print advertising.

Travel photography, capturing nature, people and culture, is one of Tigor's passions. Published works include *Dairi The Hidden View* (1999), *North Tapanuli New Life in Hills and Valleys* (1999), *Toba Samosir Oh Tao!* (2004), *Medan Melting Pot* (2004), *The Light of Wisdom* (2008), and



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Batak Inspigraph (2012). In 1999, his portraits were included in a *People* magazine article *The Environment Photography* published by RotoVision, Switzerland.

Tigor introduced “Pre-Wedding Photography” in a March 2003 FOTOMEDIA article. He also contributed for *National Geographic Indonesia* and *National Geographic Traveler* with his photographs of *Exploring Celebes in Manado* (2008) and *Toraja Rock Art in Toraja* (2009). He was also the exclusive photographer for the Batak cultural magazine *TATAP* (2007–2008).

Tigor participated in the Fine Art Photography Collection #1 at the Cahya Photo Gallery, Jakarta (2001), North Tapanuli Cultural Night at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah, Jakarta (2003), Europe (European Union) and Democracy: Indonesian Perspective at Goethe Haus and Taman Ismail Marzuki, Jakarta (2004), Portfolio, with APPI members at Plaza Senayan, Jakarta (2004), Travel Photo, with members of the Jakarta Photographer Society at Plaza Semanggi, Jakarta (2005).

He solo exhibited at the 30th Anniversary of Indocement Tunggal Prakarsa at the Ritz Carlton, Jakarta (2005) and the 40th Anniversary of Inco at the Duta Fine Arts Foundation, Jakarta (2008).

Tigor likes to share his experiences by teaching at Jurnal Seni, the London School of Public Relations-Jakarta, Darwis Triadi School of Photography, DataScript (Canon Indonesia), Fotografer.net, and several university campuses in Indonesia.

Often asked to judge photo contests together with the Editor in Chief of *National Geographic Indonesia*, Tanyo Bangun, and the (late) Kompas Daily photojournalist Julian Sihombing, Tigor also juried for NatGeo's 2009 International Photography Contest.

Today, Edward Tigor Siahaan and his family live in Siborongborong, North Sumatra. In this cool highland town, he opened the Piltik Coffee shop. Tigor calls him a “Photocoffee Artisan” as he roasts and brews coffee as well as being a photographer.

The New Jewels of Indonesia

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The New Jewels of Indonesia showcases five regions of the archipelago poised to join Bali as internationally renowned travel destinations—hidden gems now polished and presented to discerning visitors.

