

Lombok

Words by Matt George

 40 minutes from Bali by air

➊ A 'legendary' wave exists on the island of Lombok. In the southwest corner of the island, in the shadow of the majestic Mt Rinjani, off a beach called Bangko Bangko, there is Desert Point.

It lists among the top-five most famous waves in the world and is, without question, one of the most sought out. To surf here is one of surfing's 'ultimates'. Tube rides of 20 seconds have been witnessed here, and its long, fast, machine-like precision are the stuff of surfers' collective dreams. Still considered isolated, it is a pilgrimage point for any surfer worth their salt.

Remarkably unchanged since its discovery, Desert Point is a long-walled and wildly hollow left-hander that breaks up to 300m long, growing in size and power from take-off to kick-out. Despite a hairy and hungry reef, it just might be the most prized catch in the sport. So precise are these waves that the local surfers have developed into some of the most talented tube-riders in the world. Stand-outs are Awan Hadi and Usman Trioko, who reflect the spirit of their home with elegant, heroic styles reminiscent of the ancient

Hawaiians. Full- or new-moon low tides, a southeast wind and a big swell are needed for that perfect wave, breaking most consistently from May to October here. However, it's not easy; Desert Point can go weeks upon weeks without waves, but just a single Desert Point beauty will make the wait worth it. This is for experienced surfers only. And don't forget to bring your booties!

Elsewhere on the island, other solid waves abound, and they can be of much less intensity, offering a perfect side-trip for intermediate surfers visiting Bali. Easy to get to by ferry or by air, with the new international airport seemingly designed just for a surfer's needs, Kuta Lombok Beach and the south coast of Lombok, at places like Gerupuk, offer good-quality surf spots, and to a surfer's glee, are often virtually deserted. You may want to hire a local boat to take you around more fun and adventure, and local guides are easy to find. In many ways Kuta Lombok is a surfers' paradise - the waves are excellent, and there are a lot of them: Mawi, Mawun, Point X, Don Don's and even a spot called Kid's - ironically named, it is actually the heaviest wave around and breaks on only big swells. That's the thing about Lombok for surfers: adventure is always just a bay away.

➋ Not far from the bustle of Bali, Lombok's slower pace is preferred by many visiting surfers.

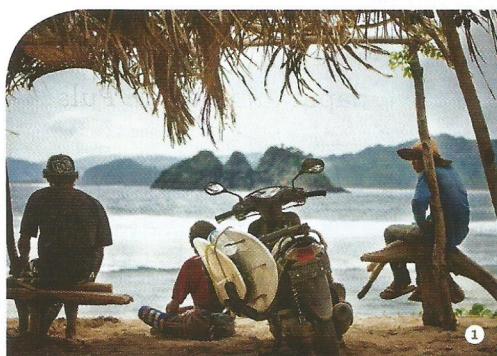
➌ Rental-scooter-friendly, Lombok literally buzzes with surfing energy, often allowing for more personal exploration. Preston Schultz leads the way on the island known as 'The Brother of Bali'.



5 Senses – Taste LOMBOK CUISINE

➍ Make sure to get burned. The food of the local Sasak people is fantastic, and many dishes don't go light on the chilli. For the non-fire-breathers, be sure to try the *satay rembiga*, named after Rembiga village and believed to be a recipe of the now-defunct royal family of Pejanganik. The satay has lovely caramel notes and a sweet-and-sour flavour created from shrimp paste and brown sugar. The hearty *bebalung* soup is another must-try: made with tamarind-braised beef ribs so tender flesh falls off the bone - absolutely mouthwatering.

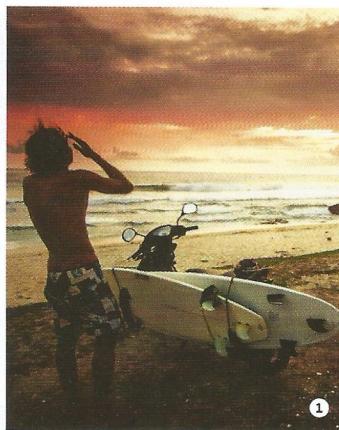
➎ Pastikan Anda merasa kepedasan. Masakan khas suku Sasak terbilang fantastis dan menggunakan banyak cabai. Bagi mereka yang tak suka pedas, bisa mencicipi *sate rembiga*, dinamakan sesuai nama Desa Rembiga dan merupakan resep warisan keluarga Kerajaan Pejanganik. Sate ini memiliki cita rasa karamel yang lezat serta rasa asam-manis dari bumbu terasi dan gula merah. Sup *bebalung* yang hangat harus Anda cicipi pula; iga sapi yang direbus bersama asam jawa hingga lunak—sungguh membangkitkan selera.



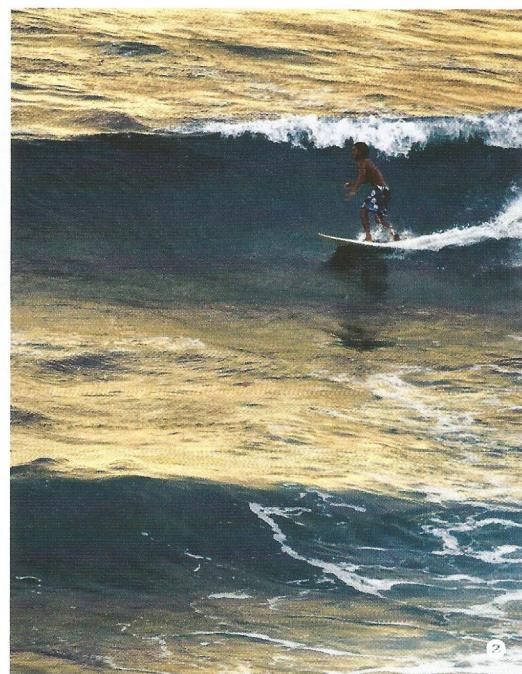


As on many Indonesian islands, there is a peak to climb. But not just any peak. This is the majestic Mt Rinjani, which at 3,626m is the second-highest volcano in Indonesia and one of the most famous after Mt Bromo and Mt Agung on Bali. Rinjani's beauty is a siren's call, but at a three-day trek, it is only for experienced hikers and the strong willed. A fit surfer's stay on Lombok would hardly be a visit at all without facing this challenge, both physically and spiritually. Lombok is a natural paradise and, for shutter-bugs, it makes a great photo op at literally every angle. Much less developed compared to Bali, the night-time view of the impressively starry sky is hard to beat, and you can spend endless evenings capturing long-exposure shots of the cosmos as seen from Mt Rinjani.

Sebagaimana lazimnya pulau-pulau di Indonesia, selalu ada gunung untuk didaki. Bukan sembarang gunung, Gunung Rinjani, dengan ketinggian 3.626 meter, merupakan salah satu gunung api tertinggi di Indonesia selain Gunung Bromo di Jawa Timur dan Gunung Agung di Bali. Kecantikan Rinjani sangat menggoda, namun tiga hari pendakian hanya cocok untuk pendaki berpengalaman dan bertekad kuat. Seorang peselancar belum bisa dikatakan sudah mengunjungi Lombok jika belum menghadapi tantangan yang satu ini. Lombok merupakan pulau surgawi yang masih alami, bagi pencinta fotografi, pulau ini memungkinkan Anda membuat jepretan indah dari segala sudut. Berhubung Lombok juga belum seberkembang Bali, pemandangan langit malamnya yang berhiaskan bintang tiada tandingannya, Anda pun dapat menghabiskan sepanjang malam mengabadikan panorama kosmos yang terlihat dari Gunung Rinjani.



With plenty of room to move, solo surfing is still possible on Lombok.



Ombak "legendaris" juga dapat dijumpai di Pulau Lombok. Di ujung barat daya, di bawah bayang-bayang megah **Gunung Rinjani**, di lepas pantai bernama **Bangko-Bangko**, terdapat ombak Desert Point.

Ombak ini termasuk salah satu dari 5 ombak terkemuka di dunia yang paling dicari. Berselancar di sini membutuhkan keterampilan tingkat mahir. *Tube ride*, atau berselancar di bawah ombak, selama 20 detik dapat dilakukan di sini. Adapun presisi ombak yang panjang, cepat, laiknya mesin menjadi bagian dari impian kolektif para peselancar. Walaupun terpencil, pantai ini bisa dibilang titik bagi para peselancar yang ingin membuktikan kemampuannya.

Nyaris tak berubah sama sekali sejak ditemukan pertama kali, Desert Point adalah jenis ombak kiri (*left-hander*) yang berdinding panjang dan berongga besar, memecah hingga sepanjang 300 meter, baik kekuatan maupun ukurannya terus meningkat sejak awal peselancar *take-off*, hingga akhir *kick-out*. Walaupun karang di sekitarnya berbahaya dan seolah meminta korban, ombak ini tetap diburu di dunia selancar. Ombak berpresisi tinggi di pantai ini telah melahirkan peselancar lokal yang beberapa di antaranya merupakan *tube rider* paling berbakat di dunia seperti Awan Hadi

dan Usman Trioko. Pada pasang bulan purnama, diperlukan tiupan angin tenggara dan gelombang besar untuk terciptanya ombak yang sempurna, yang mengalun secara konstan sejak Mei hingga Oktober. Walaupun menantikan Desert Point bisa memakan waktu berminggu-minggu, namun satu saja Desert Point akan membuat penantian Anda tidak sia-sia. Sayangnya ombak ini hanya sesuai untuk para peselancar berpengalaman. Jangan lupa, bawalah serta bot selancar Anda!

Di bagian lain pulau ini, banyak ombak tinggi ditemukan dengan kekuatan ombak yang tak terlalu besar, sehingga ideal bagi peselancar tingkat menengah. Mudah dicapai dengan feri atau pesawat, ditambah adanya bandara internasional baru yang seakan dirancang sesuai kebutuhan peselancar, **Pantai Kuta Lombok** dan pantai selatan Lombok, di tempat-tempat seperti **Gerupuk**, menawarkan titik-titik selancar berkualitas tinggi dan sering kali masih sepi. Anda dapat menyewa perahu setempat beserta pemandu wisata lokalnya untuk mengantar Anda ke tempat-tempat yang lebih menyenangkan dan seru. Kuta Lombok adalah surga para peselancar karena ombaknya luar biasa dan banyaknya titik selancarnya seperti **Mawi**, **Mawun**, **Point X**, **Don Don's**, bahkan suatu titik bernama **Kid's**—nama ini ironis karena sesungguhnya, ombaknya paling berat dari yang lain dan pecah hanya pada gelombang *swell* besar. Inilah arti Lombok bagi para peselancar: petualangan ada di setiap pantainya.