


FEATURE

METROPOLITAN JUNGLE

BY YOHANES SANDY & SIMON PITCHFORTH
PHOTOS BY JAN DEKKER





Life in Jakarta can be a thorny matter for sure. Lack of public services, poor sanitation, inefficient public transportation and a myriad of other problems are a constant bugbear for those who live in this crazy city. And yet, despite the tribulations outlined above, many will admit that they love Jakarta. It's a tough love sure but there's certainly never a dull moment! The 17th of this month will see Indonesia celebrating its Independence Day and Jakarta will once again turn into a riot of red and white. Why not join in the fun?

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Concrete jungle:
(This page) A bustling Jakarta street, Betawi sunset. (Opposite page) Senayan goes green, Monas at night.

Living in Jakarta is like exploring a labyrinth, stressful certainly, but also fun. Once you've worked out a path through the idiosyncrasies of the city's maze, you will have learnt not only how to survive but also how to love it. Jakarta's hidden treasures remain ready to be unearthed, buried beneath a ton of urban woes.

Formerly known as Sunda Kelapa, Jayakarta and Batavia, Jakarta was once a major trading port for the Kingdom of Sunda. The port of Sunda Kelapa is still in operation to this day and can be found on the northern coast of this 661.52 square kilometre city.

Jakarta, the capital and largest city in Indonesia, is one of the most populated metropolises on the face of the planet. Around 12 million people, a mix of the local Betawi people, Javanese migrants, ethnic groups from all over the archipelago and expatriates all rub along together in this teeming conurbation. Over the centuries, these groups have blended together to forge a truly diverse and pluralistic city.

As the nation's capital, Jakarta has become a magnet for Indonesians who wish to pursue their dreams. Thus, as with any other developing country, poverty and urbanisation have become serious problems here. Slums can be found everywhere in Jakarta, especially out in the city's suburban areas. Traffic is also a major concern in this, the twelfth-largest city in the world. 3 million cars and approximately 3.5 million motorcycles pack every inch of Jakarta's roads, often causing gridlocks and motorists' blood pressures to skyrocket.



Some effort has been made by the City administration to solve this stubborn problem but none of the measures so far implemented seem to be working very well. In 2004, the then Governor, Sutiyoso, built the TransJakarta busway system. This new public transportation solution hasn't really eased the traffic situation though because it only seems



“THE NATION'S CAPITAL, JAKARTA HAS BECOME A MAGNET FOR INDONESIANS WHO WISH TO PURSUE THEIR DREAMS.”



to have attracted former users of the old-messy public buses (the green Kopajas, orange Metrominis and their filthy ilk). TransJakarta has singularly failed to seduce the city's car users, possibly because this ill thought out new busway network is basically a park and ride scheme with the park bit missing.

In 2003, the city government also inaugurated a monorail project but the scheme barely got out of the starting blocks before the financial plug was pulled. All that remains of the monorail project is a plethora of ugly, unfinished support pillars which dot the streets of South Jakarta like obelisks left behind by some ancient civilisation.

JALAN JALAN JAKARTA!!

Even though Jakarta is far from being a beautiful city, there are many reasons to love Indonesia's capital. Living costs are generally low and delightful food is in abundance. For the casual tourist, Jakarta offers many city landmarks that stretch from the west of town through to the north.

The **Kota Tua** area (old town) of North Jakarta used to be Jakarta's city centre five centuries ago. The area was integrated with the important mercantile centre of the Sunda Kelapa harbour which was a veritable hive of shipping activity back in the city's colonial days. This fascinating area spans

1.3 square kilometres of both North and West Jakarta and features some gorgeous colonial era architecture. Kota is currently slated for renovation and a heritage makeover.

Back in the 16th century, old Jakarta was dubbed The Jewel of Asia

as well as The Queen of the East by European sailors. Old Jakarta, alternatively known as Batavia, was once considered an important commercial hub for the whole continent due to its strategic location and abundant resources. The area now plays host to various museums, hotels and cafes and the iconic Fatahillah Square is well worth a look if you're after some colonial vibes. Even though the cracking plaster of the old buildings indicates a lack of interest in Jakarta's heritage by the city government, the area offers many interesting attractions and plenty of great photo opportunities. The Jakarta History (Fatahillah) Museum, the Puppets Museum and the Fine Art and Ceramics Museum are all located in the area.

Jakarta's National Monument (Monas), along with Bundaran Hotel Indonesia (the Hotel Indonesia roundabout) are the city's most famous landmarks. Monas is a 137 metre tall stone monument in Central Jakarta which symbolises the fight for Indonesia's independence. Built between 1961 and 1975, the construction of this monument was the brainchild of Indonesia's first president, Soekarno. The obelisk-shape tower is topped



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by a 14.5 ton bronze flame which is plated in 35kg of gold. The tower features a high speed elevator to whisk visitors and tourists to the viewing gallery at the top. Moreover, the well maintained and large (by local standards) surrounding park has always been a favourite picnic destination for city residents and people flock here at weekends.

Across the street from Monas, the National Museum proudly welcomes the curious and the historically minded. This, the most famous museum in Jakarta, symbolises and reflects Jakarta and Indonesia's rich cultural heritage. The National Museum story began on April 24th 1778 when the Governor General of the Netherlands East-Indies Council, Reiner de Klerk, gave his permission for the establishment of The Batavian Society of Arts and Science. This was the beginning of the National Museum and members of the



society started to donate books, musical instruments, statues and other curios to the foundation. In 1779, Jacobus Radermacher, one of the foundation's first members and benefactors, kindly donated his house in Kali Baru as a place in which the museum's exhibits could be housed. Nowadays, the National Museum reflects all eras of Indonesian history and culture through its extensive collection of artifacts and relics that date back as far as the Stone Age. The museum houses one of the most comprehensive collections of Chinese ceramics in the world, dating back to the Han, Tang and Ming Dynasties, as well as bronze and gold collections from the Indonesian classical period.

Just down the road from the National Monument and the National Museum, lies the infamous **Bundaran Hotel Indonesia** roundabout, also known as Bundaran HI. A huge fountain sits in the middle of the roundabout which was named after the adjacent, and now newly renovated, Hotel Indonesia, the first five-star hotel to open not only in Indonesia but in the whole of Southeast Asia. Bundaran HI is, by turns, a popular demonstration spot for political dissenters and a brilliant photo opportunity for photographers and tourists visiting town.

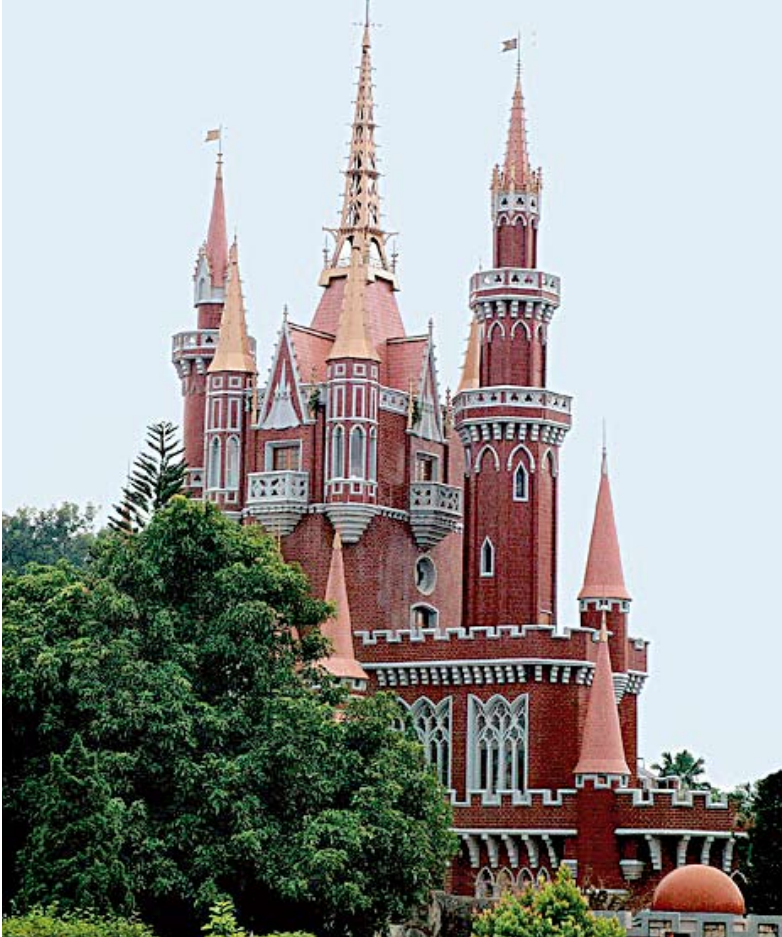
A few kilometres down the road from the HI Roundabout, directly behind the Sultan Hotel (formerly the Jakarta Hilton), you'll find **Gelora Senayan**. This stadium and park complex is another of the city's iconic sites and, like Monas, houses green park areas that offer respite from Jakarta's endless pollution and traffic. People come here to jog, play various sports or just to walk their dogs. Gelora (Gelanggang Olahraga) Senayan also houses six enormous buildings: two soccer stadiums, an athletics stadium, an Olympic-size swimming pool, a tennis stadium and a golf driving range. Widely known as Jakarta's main sports area, Gelora Senayan also hosts concerts and exhibitions. These are usually

“BUNDARAN HI IS, BY TURNS, A POPULAR DEMONSTRATION SPOT FOR POLITICAL DISSENTERS AND A BRILLIANT PHOTO OPPORTUNITY FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS AND TOURISTS VISITING TOWN.”

Views around town:

(Opposite page) An artist beaver away in his workshop at Ancol, , photo opportunities at Fatahillah Museum, the National Museum.

(This page) Fantasy castle at TMII, colonial architecture in Kota.



held at the Jakarta International Convention Centre (JCC) building which is located within the complex.

Heading back up north to the coast, you'll eventually run into Ancol Jakarta Bay City. This seaside entertainment complex features amusement parks, hotels, restaurants, golf courses and beachside venues galore. Ancol was founded in the 17th Century by the Dutch colonial administration and was intended to be the city's prime tourist destination. Ancol remains a popular draw to this day and offers a variety of fun and entertaining activities. From water sports to the amazing Sea World, from the awesome Dunia Fantasi (World Fantasy) theme park to the unique art market, Ancol is a one stop shop for holidaying urbanites. Ancol is also popular for its famous beachside seafood restaurant, Bandar Jakarta, and its chilled alfresco restaurant-bar, Segarra.

Hop over to the suburbs of East Jakarta and you'll find Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII). This educational Indonesia-in-mini park features traditional housing and cultural artifacts from all over the archipelago and the many provinces of Indonesia. The park details the traditions of each region in the country including their clothing, architecture, food and dances. The park also features a huge recreation

of the Indonesian archipelago made out of grass covered islets, a cable car and an IMAX theatre. Taman Mini was constructed in the 1970's and was initially the idea of former Indonesian first lady, Ibu Tien Soeharto. The resulting educational park offers insight into Indonesia's beautiful culture and landscape and makes for a fascinating day out. The park divides the country into six main thematic areas: Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Maluku and Papua.

Ragunan Zoo is another Jakarta attraction that remains a popular draw for locals and tourists alike. Located way down in the leafier environs of South Jakarta, the spacious zoo was first established way back in 1864. This, the biggest and oldest zoo in Indonesia, covers an area of 13-hectares and houses hundreds of animals. In 2002, the government opened the Schmutzer Primate Centre in the zoo's park complex. The Primate Centre, the brain child of Mrs. Pauline Antoinette Adeline Schmutzer Versteegh and her Gibbon Foundation, aims to conserve primate species whilst at the same time both educating and entertaining visitors. 190 primates from 21 species, both indigenous to Indonesia and of foreign origin, live in the green and attractive Primate Centre.

Last but not least, one of Jakarta's lesser known landmarks is the Setu Babakan Betawi Neighbourhood. Setu Babakan is located in southern Jakarta and is a 165-hectare area housing members of Jakarta's original ethnic group, the Betawi. More than 3000 indigenous *orang Betawi* live here in time honoured fashion: fishing, making handicrafts and farming for a living. The area's points of interest include traditional houses and the original spoken language of the Betawi as well as ethnic Betawi food and traditions. The Betawi have lived happily in this area for over 30 years now. Jakarta's in their blood!

“LOCATED WAY DOWN IN THE LEAFIER ENVIRONS OF SOUTH JAKARTA, THE SPACIOUS ZOO WAS FIRST ESTABLISHED WAY BACK IN 1864.”





First things first, just how many expatriates call Jakarta home exactly? Well, data from the Department of Manpower currently shows 85,453 registered foreign workers in Indonesia however this figure excludes those workers' families and dependents. In fact, it's been estimated that around 300,000 non-Indonesians are resident in Jakarta and that's a fair amount of people who are going to be in need of a beer or two and a nice meal that reminds them of home every now and then. So, narrowing things down to the city's English-speaking community (this magazine is printed in English if you hadn't noticed), let's have a look at where these out comers like to congregate?

KEMANG

Whilst Kemang has long been known as a Westerners' playground and residential area, well-to-do Indonesians are also fond of a good session of the happy hedonism to be found down at Kemang's many bars and classy restaurants. Located in the south of Jakarta, not far from the central and perennially popular shopping district of Blok M, Kemang was originally a purely residential area that gradually metamorphosed into a commercial behemoth.

In 1998, Jakarta's then Governor, Sutiyoso, decreed that Kemang's status be changed from that of a residential area into a commercial area. Many new businesses opened as a result and joined the restaurants and bars that were already well established there.

Alas new developments in Kemang, such as the under construction Kemang Village, look set to dwarf Kemang's once mellow leafy streets. Moreover, thousand of new residents moving to the area will hugely exacerbate an already frustrating traffic situation down on the main Kemang strip. As of now though, the locale remains a great place in which to spend a top evening out on the tiles and to indulge in a bit of left-field shopping. Many

expatriates still choose to live in this area and Kemang also hosts the campuses of several international schools.

If you're looking for a friendly drink and the opportunity to meet a few compatriots, Eastern Promise, Fez Lounge, Star Deli and the Stanford Arms (in the Hotel Grand Kemang) are Kemang's main paleface bars and serve up a heady mix of beer, top quality pub grub, pool tables and leagues, live sports broadcasts and live music. All of these watering holes can be found on the main Jl. Kemang Raya strip.

In terms of shopping, Indonesia's ubiquitous Hero chain of supermarkets is well-known throughout the country. However Kemang's is by far the best and stocks a whole load of imported products for homesick expatriates who are missing their Marmite / Vegemite (delete as applicable).

Other bar and restaurant highlights on the main strip include, Toscana (Italian), the new and very pleasant Elbow Room and Vin + (both wine bars), Anatolia (fantastic Turkish food), Kinara (top quality Indian and Pakistani fare) and Payon (Indonesian food served in a beautiful courtyard). This is just a brief taste though and there are many more bars and eateries worth spending your hard earned rice vouchers at.

Aside from this veritable cornucopia of restaurants and bars, other highlights in the area include Aksara bookshop, which is well stocked



Expat action:

(This page)
Kemang's crowded main strip
(Opposite page) La Codefin - Kemang's new hangout.

with weighty tomes, pulp fiction and English language magazines alike. Kemang also has some fine furniture and handicraft stores (particularly on Jl. Kemang Timur) as well as a wealth of fashion boutiques. Booze hounds are also well catered for in Kemang and you can stock up on wine at Kemang Duty-Free and Vin + (both on Jl. Kemang Raya) as well as at the new Ram Duty-Free just south of the main strip on Jl. Ampera

Raya. Once a year, the Kemang Fair also comes to town and makes for a fun day out for all the family.

KEBON SIRIH/MENTENG/THAMRIN

In the Kebon Sirih area that opens out behind Jl.Thamrin you'll find a riot of a expatriate colour, a veritable rainbow spectrum of ethnicities refracting through Jakarta's urban prism (prison surely!).

On Jalan Sabang an absolute crush of humanity crowds the pavements outside the street's many stores. The restaurants here are well worth checking out and include ethnic Indonesian treats that you don't find everywhere, such as tasty Batak fare. A heady mix of spices and pork that really hits the spot, if you've been missing your swine in this, the largest Muslim country in the world, Batak food is a good bet. Jl. Sabang is also famous for its satay which crowds of hungry Jakartans flock up here to chow down on every evening.

Around this area you'll find the centre of African Jakarta. The bars in the Dyna Pub complex on Jl. Wahid Hasyim and the Ambassade (it's French for 'Embassy') over on Jl. Gereja Theresia No.1 behind the Sarinah building are full of expatriates of a very different kind from the ones that you'll find in Kemang. Many are African textile traders and have set up shop around the centre of the Jakarta rag trade in

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Tanah Abang. Some are footballers adding some much-needed flair and sparkle to the local Indonesian league teams whilst others are frankly more shady characters. Ambassade is a friendly place however and the Guinness flows freely whilst infectious African pop music resonates around the empty bottles. An unusual but not unpleasant evening is guaranteed.

Just down the road on Jl. Wahid Hasyim, tucked in among the street's many fine restaurants, you'll find Melly's Bar. Melly's is a sweet little semi-alfresco drinkery sporting comfortable cushioned lounge areas, free WiFi, cheap beer and budget cocktails that really sting those optic nerves. Currently a hugely popular melting pot of young Indonesians and Westerners, Melly's offers an easy-going antidote to some of the more toffee nosed and overpriced yuppie watering holes around town.

Next to Melly's lies the infamous Jl. Jaksa. This grand old dame is Jakarta's main backpacker street, although it's considerably more sedate than its Bangkok equivalent, the positively heaving Khao San Road. Jaksa is packed with cheap bars, hotels, restaurants, dentally challenged smiling faces, bestubbled transvestites and overly optimistic blowpipe salesman. Whilst the street is undoubtedly the cheapest place to drink in town, it's not just a repository for the city's Bintang marinated low life. Jaksa remains a not unpleasant place in which to make new acquaintances from literally all over the world and is a good-natured street on which to blow the froth off a few ales.



Foreign fun:

(From right to left, clockwise) Eastern Promise - a popular expat hangout in Kemang, expatriates gather with friends in a Jl. Jaksa bar.

Picks of the Jaksa bunch would have to be the (relatively) swanky Cocktail and Friends, the new KL Village, which serves great Malay street food and is currently a popular hangout, and the time honoured quality European grub of the legendary Ya Udah Bistro, which has actually now relocated around the corner to Jl. Johar.

Just south of Jl. Jaksa you'll find the upmarket boltholes of Menteng. Down on Jl. Cokroaminoto, just behind Plaza Menteng sits the not hugely upmarket BB's. BB's is a popular bar with young expats and locals of a more alternative bent and hosts regular live blues, rock and reggae music evenings.

Another popular Western style watering hole that positively overflows with expatriate bonhomie and live music of an evening is that old favourite the Jaya Pub, which still resides over in Gedung Jaya on Jl. Thamrin. Downstairs from the Jaya Pub lurks the rather outré modern art decadence of Raden Poeas, a hilariously enjoyable little bar boasting a quirky interior decor and a mixed bohemian clientele.

Expatriates feeling a little homesick may wish to contact the following organisations for a bit of friendly support:

The American Women's Association (AWA)
Tel: 718 1877, www.awajakarta.org

The Australian and New Zealand Association (ANZA)
Tel: 7179 3042, www.anzajakarta.net

The Jakarta International Community Centre (JICC)
Tel: 7179 3035, www.jicconline.com

or browse to: www.expat.or.id



CULTURAL CENTRES

Jakarta is certainly one big international melting pot these days. Thankfully then, the city also hosts a wealth of foreign cultural centres that regularly put on events, exhibitions and concerts. Why not pop along to one the centres listed below and educate yourself? It sure makes a nice change from shopping!



GOETHE INSTITUTE

Jl. Sam Ratulangi No. 9-15, Menteng, Tel: 2355 0208

The Goethe Institute is Germany's cultural ground zero in Jakarta. As with other cultural institutions in town, its main purpose is to introduce German culture to the public and to help those who want to learn about Germany specifically.

Located near the posh Menteng area of town, this house of culture regularly holds exhibitions and movie screenings, as well as the occasional concert, in its newly renovated auditorium. The Goethe auditorium's brand new sound system and projector make it a great place for both film screenings and acoustic recitals alike. Recently, the institute has concentrated on films, photography and contemporary dance and art shows.

The Goethe Institute also has an extensive book collection in its library as an aid to scholars interested in all things German. Available titles range widely through literature, culture, history and many other subjects. The institute aims to help Indonesians through its efforts and also hopes to develop and encourage a reading culture in the country.

ISTITUTO ITALIANO DI CULTURA

Jl. H.O.S. Cokroaminoto No. 117, Menteng, Tel: 392 7531.

Tucked into a street corner near the Kuningan area, Istituto Italiano di Cultura aims to promote Italian culture and language. It provides language courses and information about Italian culture through its movie, book and magazine library.

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In addition, the Istituto is continuously involved in the organisation of a variety of artistic and cultural events such as painting and photo exhibitions, classical and jazz concerts, symposiums, book readings and plenty more besides.

In order to reflect Indonesian culture and habits, the Istituto also aims to foster cooperation between Indonesia and

Italy. This can be seen in the institute's programmes, which often involve Indonesian artists and renowned cultural figures.

CENTRE CULTURAL FRANCAIS

Jl. Salemba Raya No. 25, Tel: 390 8585.

Centre Cultural Francais (CCF) is widely recognised as the most active foreign cultural centre in Indonesia. Large events, including the French Film Festival and the French Cultural Festival, are held annually by the centre and CCF Jakarta is actually one of the biggest French cultural institutions in the world.

CCF often puts on events that fuse French and Indonesian artists. Dance collaborations are common, as are musical recitals that join Indonesian and French musicians together in melody. CCF events and programmes are usually a roaring success and garner positive responses from Jakarta's culture vultures and artistically minded public.

As well as dance shows and musical recitals, CCF events also include art exhibitions and even circuses! The centre's annual French Film Festival would have to be its most popular event however.

French language learning courses are also available here and are usually in very high demand. Every year more than 5000 students join these courses which cover all levels of French proficiency.

ERASMUS HUIS

Jl. H.R. Rasuna Said Kav. S-3, Kuningan, Tel: 524 1069.

Erasmus Huis is another of Jakarta's foreign culture zones and is both very well known and highly active in its programmes. Mind you, maybe

you would expect the place to be popular, what with it being the cultural centre of Indonesia's former colonial rulers, the Dutch. Various events, from concerts to exhibitions, are frequently held at Erasmus Huis and the centre has built a reputation for itself as a vibrant and easily accessible place. Besides hosting many jazz and classical performances, film screenings and lectures are also held on a regular basis in the building's large and modern auditorium.

However, Erasmus Huis does not only showcase Dutch culture but also provides a home for Indonesian art and culture. Scores of Indonesian musicians and artists perform in the auditorium each year to sell out crowds. Moreover, Erasmus Huis also hosts regular activities organised by other foreign cultural organisations.

Working in co-operation with Dutch and Indonesian museums and galleries, approximately ten exhibitions are held each year at Erasmus Huis. In addition, about ten concerts featuring Dutch musicians are organised and usually combined with workshops and tuition for Indonesian musicians and students. Celebrated Dutch feature films and documentaries are also shown on a regular basis, whilst workshops and special screenings are regular events and are organised in co-operation with the Jakarta Film Festival and the Film & Television Academy of the Jakarta Arts Institute (IKJ).

JAPAN FOUNDATION

Summitmas Tower 1, level 2-3

Jl. Jendral Sudirman Kav. 61-62, Tel: 520 1266

Japan remains one of Asia's main economic powerhouses of course, however its truly unique culture also fascinates and influences people from all over the world. The Japan Foundation, located in Summitmas Tower, is Japan's cultural centre in Indonesia.

The Japan Foundation often holds workshops which are open to Indonesian students looking to learn more about Japanese culture. The centre also hosts photo exhibitions, runs various courses and even puts on sporting events as a part of its attempts to promote Japanese culture. Responses to the centre's efforts so far have been surprisingly and overwhelmingly positive.





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SHOPPING TEMPTATION!

BY YOHANES SANDY PHOTOS BY JAN DEKKER

"Shopping is better than sex. If you're not satisfied after shopping you can make an exchange for something you really like."

- Andrienne Gusoff -

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any of my friends who are self proclaimed shopaholics would no doubt agree with the above quotation from Adrienne Gusoff. This wouldn't surprise me as they can seemingly spend an entire day traipsing from mall to mall and even round traditional markets. It never ceases to amaze me where they get their energy from. Their limitless ability to bargain and to carry heavy bags filled with the latest purchases usually sees me surrendering and waiting for them at the nearest Starbucks. The shopping habit gets ingrained at a young age I guess. We all grew up in Jakarta, a city which offers so many shopping options, and we have been well trained in the fine art of shopping.

Based on data collated in 2008 by the city administration, more than 90 malls exist in this metropolis, a number which has been rising year after year. Owing to its huge amount of shopping Meccas, Jakarta is often jokingly referred to as the "City of Malls". And who doesn't love malls? In a city where a decent park is difficult to find, malls have become everybody's favourite free time excursion. Whether you end up chowing down in the food court or simply enjoy window shopping, modern malls have it all!

Decades ago, before malls existed in Jakarta, the city's residents had to make an effort to tick off the various items on their shopping lists. Our parents had to trek down to Pasar Cikini to buy jewellery and then move on to Pasar Baru in order to buy clothes or Pasar Senen for electronic goods. The history of one stop shopping and entertainment began in 1965 when Indonesia's first president, Soekarno, ordered the city government to build a self contained all-in-one department store in Jakarta. The aim was to modernise Indonesia and to bring it in line with international consumption habits. Voila! Sarinah Department store was built to sate Mr. President's demands and the city hasn't looked back since. Constructed on a 21,000 square metre site, Sarinah quickly became a city icon as people eagerly flocked to the ritzy new store/plaza.

During the 1980's, the era of massive mall construction began in earnest and Indonesian businessmen invested in plazas such as Duta Merlin, Aldiron Plaza, Pasaraya Young & Trendy and, the largest at the time, Gajah Mada Plaza (38,000 square metres). The city's retail explosion continued when Indonesia's former President, Suharto, invited foreign investors to construct more malls in Indonesia complete with cinemas, cafés, lounges and other entertaining diversions. Plaza Indonesia was the result of this vision and become the first high end shopping centre in the country. Nowadays of course, malls can be found looming in every nook and cranny of Jakarta.



MALLS GALORE

GRAND INDONESIA SHOPPING MALL

Grand Indonesia (GI) is a fine place from which to start a city mall tour. GI is simply gargantuan in size and, with a total floor area of some 640,000 square metres, is the biggest shopping mall in Indonesia. The complex consists of the new BCA Tower (the highest office block in town), Hotel Indonesia Kempinski, the Kempinski Residences and Grand Indonesia Shopping Town. GI Shopping Town itself has been subdivided into two buildings: the West Mall and the East Mall. The West Mall is the home of the Japanese department store Seibu and houses many middle end boutiques from Topman to Zara and from Guess to GAP. On the third floor nests Alun-Alun Indonesia, a high end department store stocked with locally made Indonesian products from textiles to furniture.

The West Mall is also famous for the themed Crossroads of the World district, which can be found on its third, fourth and fifth floors. This part of the Grand Indonesia experience is the first in South East Asia and only the second in Asia (after The Venetian Macau) to introduce special lighting effects usually employed in the film industry into a shopping centre. Crossroads of the World is divided into garden, market, fashion and entertainment subdistricts and adopts an outdoor interior design similar to those found in many Las Vegas shopping malls. This part of GI is packed with many fine restaurants.

The East Mall on the other hand is more of a precinct for lovers of high end boutiques ranging from Gucci to Armani. In this wing of the plaza you'll also find the country's first branch of the UK's most renowned popular department store, Harvey Nichols. (Jl. MH.Thamrin No.1, Jakarta. Tel: 2358 7000).



PASARAYA GRANDE

PLAZA INDONESIA

Never reluctant to innovate, Plaza Indonesia (PI) has now had to up its game in order to compete with Grand Indonesia Shopping Town. Indonesia's first high end mall slash department store now hosts various world famous brands such as Louis Vuitton and Jean Paul-Gaultier and has successfully maintained its luxury shopping trademark image. Whether you're looking for a pair of attractive Christian Louboutin shoes for your loved one or some Calvin Klein underwear, PI has it all. Plaza Indonesia has also undergone recent renovations and has enlarged in size. The new Plaza Indonesia extension sits snugly behind the largest Louis Vuitton boutique in the archipelago (also brand new). In order to attract the city's itinerant shopaholics, PI is also currently hosting a Midnight Shopping programme every fourth weekend of the month. All of the plaza's stores are open until well past midnight, including the Marks & Spencers Mega Store. Awesome! (Jl. MH Thamrin No. 28 -30, Tel: 310 7272).

PLAZA SENAYAN AND SENAYAN CITY

Built opposite each other on Jl. Asia Afrika, Plaza Senayan (PS) and Senayan City (SenCi) taken together are a magnet for shopaholics from all over town. PS houses two well-known department stores, Sogo and Metro, whereas the newer SenCi houses

Debenhams, a middle end department store from the UK. Gucci has stores in both malls whilst famed Italian designer, Roberto Cavalli, chose PS as the destination for his haute couture boutique and SenCi as the home for his ready to wear collection. Just Cavalli. In terms of local flavour, SenCi also contains the Fashion First boutique which sells creations by young and talented local designers such as Ichwan Toha, Priyo Oktaviano and Barli Asmara. (Jl. Asia Afrika

No. 8, Tel: 572 5555 and Jl. Asia Afrika Lot 19, Tel: 723 7979).

PACIFIC PLACE MALL

Usually abbreviated as PP, Pacific Place Mall is one of Jakarta's newest. Located in the Sudirman Central Business District (SCBD) area, PP is another absolutely huge consumer wonderland and positively futuristic inside. The first three levels of PP are a shopping nirvana for Jakarta's well to do. Bvlgari, Hermes, Ermenegildo Zegna, Hugo Boss,

Louis Vuitton and Tiffany & Co. are all present and correct...and that's just the ground floor! The department store, M Pacific Place (Metro's flagship premium brand) is also on hand to meet your imported fashion needs as well as stocking a wealth of the latest electronic gizmos. The old Kemang import supermarket favourite, Kem-Chicks, has moved onto Pacific Place's lower ground floor and should be able to satisfy any grocery request that you throw at it. (Kawasan SCBD, Jl. Jend Sudirman Kav.52-53, Tel: 515 2299).

PASARAYA GRANDE

One of Jakarta's most prestigious malls back in the 80's, Pasaraya's popularity has waned in recent years, what with the new mega-malls that have come to town. Pasaraya remains well liked by the city's expatriates however. During 2008, this mall/department store complex underwent major renovations in a bid to win back some of its former status. Still lacking lavish high end, branded boutiques, Pasaraya nevertheless consistently provides high quality products and is rightly famed for its Indonesian handicrafts. These range in style from antique to minimalist modernism and are all created by artisans using traditional Indonesian craft techniques as well as local materials. An expansive range of traditional silks, fabrics and clothing is also available in Pasaraya. (Jl. Iskandarsyah II No.2, Blok M, Tel: 726 0170).



SENAYAN CITY

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PONDOK INDAH MALL



MALL KELAPA GADING

PONDOK INDAH MALL

This huge shopping centre simply has to be included on any run down of the city's malls. Pondok Indah Mall (PIM) is one of the most famous and prestigious malls in South Jakarta and was built in 1991 in the leafy Pondok Indah area of town. In 2005, a second mall, now known as Pondok Indah Mall 2, was built directly opposite the original mall and is connected to it by a footbridge. PIM contains two department stores, Sogo and Metro, which often hold sales at various times of the year. PIM also hosts various top brand name boutiques ranging from Zara to Hugo Boss to Gianfranco Ferre. Like Cilindak Town Square,

both malls contain a wealth of restaurants and cafes and are thus favourite hangout destinations for South Jakarta suburbanites at weekends. (*Jl. Metro Pondok Indah Block 3B, Pondok Indah, Tel: 750 6750*).

MALL KELAPA GADING

Long considered one of the largest malls in Jakarta, Mall Kelapa Gading (MKG) covers an area of 130,000 square metres. MKG houses more than 600 tenants, ranging from the worlds of fashion to entertainment, all under one very large roof. 32 renowned local designers have also recently opened boutiques in the mall's Catwalk area, which

offers shopaholics an exclusive fashion-centric shopping zone. Moreover MKG also houses international brands such as Zara and Guess. (*Sentra Kelapa Gading, Jl. Boulevard Raya Gading Block-M, Tel: 453 1101*).

TERRIFIC TRADE CENTRES

It's not all malls, malls, malls though. The city's more adventurous shoppers also enjoy a good browse around Jakarta's slightly more down-market and traditional retail spots.

Jakarta now houses a number of International Trade Centres (ITC) for example. ITCs provide everything from groceries to clothes to electronic equipment and mobile phones to glasses and have grown hugely in popularity over the past few years.

The most well known ITCs in Jakarta are probably ITC Kuningan in the centre of town and ITC Mangga Dua in North Jakarta. Long before ITC Mangga Dua existed, the area on which it now stands in Kota was a huge traditional market. This was eventually dismantled to make way for the ITC which has subsequently become well known as a haven for the city's shopaholics. ITC Mangga Dua offers a wealth of products and is particularly good for budget clothes and fashion. Moreover, you can find a lot of knock-off



ITC MANGGA DUA

branded fashion items here, especially bags. ITC is always crowded, but especially so at weekends.

Moving further downtown towards South Jakarta, ITC Kuningan can be found adjacent to Ambassador Mall. Often referred as ITC Ambassador, this place is pretty much the Mangga Dua of South Jakarta. Located on the bustling busy boulevards of Jl. Prof. Dr. Suryo, the mall is a superb destination for shopping, so long as you don't mind crowds. Many of my friends claim that anything you want can be found in this mall, however this is not a particularly well kept secret as the place is usually rammed with people. It's often joked that it's possible to meet all kinds of people, from celebrities to maids, in ITC Kuningan. Like ITC Mangga Dua, ITC Kuningan houses a lot of budget clothing outlets and electronics stores. On the ground floor, you'll find a huge branch of the French supermarket chain Carrefour which, like the rest of the mall, is always packed. Stores in ITC Kuningan open from 10am to 8.30pm. Remember to bargain hard down here!

VIVA PASAR!!

Traditional markets, or *pasar* in Indonesian, still have the power to attract both bargain hunters and curious tourists alike. Many traditional markets are now struggling to compete with the city's palatial new malls

but these grubby but friendly places have their big fans.

PASAR TANAH ABANG

Since the 1970's, Pasar Tanah Abang has been famed the country over as Jakarta's fashion and textile centre. Originally a cattle, poultry and pet market some 300 years ago, Pasar Tanah Abang gradually transformed into one of the best traditional markets in town and was recently completely rebuilt from scratch. The market is well known for its textiles, from fabrics to ready to wear clothes, as well as for its carpets, kitchenware and fruit. The market accommodates both retail and wholesale purchasing of textile products so it will work out a lot cheaper for you if you buy in bulk! Bargaining is also a must down at Tanah Abang if you're hoping to get a good deal. It's sometimes possible bargain a trader down to half of their original offer! (*Jl. Pasar Tanah Abang, Tel: 319 0813. Open daily from 8am to 7pm*).

PASAR BARU

Pasar Baru (Passer Baroe) is one of the oldest markets in Jakarta. Established in the 18th Century, Pasar Baru is rightly famous and its traffic-less, paved, open precinct makes for a nice change. Originally, Pasar Baru was built as a grocery and clothes one stop shop for the Dutch colonialists. These days though, the market is enjoyed by everyone in Jakarta. Like



Tanah Abang, Pasar Baru is highly regarded for its textiles and also houses seemingly hundreds of shoe shops. One of the best deals here are the second hand clothes, imported from Japan, that can be found on the top floor of the market building proper. If you're willing to dig your way through tons of second hand clothes, it's possible to find branded items priced at only Rp.25,000! (*Jl. Pasar Baru No. 41-43, Tel: 345 8326*).

FLEA MARKETS

The flea market along Jl. Surabaya in the Menteng area of town is one of Jakarta's best known tourist destinations. The various small shaks here offer great deals on a wide range of antiques (only some of which are mass produced!) from statues to handicrafts to other collectable items. You'll need all of your bargaining skills down here though as the sellers are quite tricky to budge on prices. You should also, as hinted above, check for fakes. The stalls on Jl. Surabaya are also great places to hunt for old records and cameras. The market opens from 9am until 8pm.

