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## TREKKING

# Mount Batur – the 'Sleeping Beauty' of Bali Island in Indonesia

Watching the sunrise from top of Mount Batur, which is very much an active volcano, is truly a breathtaking experience

SUBHADIP MUKHERJEE | PUBLISHED 08.12.22, 02:26 PM



Mount Batur - Bali, Indonesia

Photos: Subhadip Mukherjee

One of the most beautiful yet dangerous wonders of Mother Earth is volcanoes. The view of molten lava spewing out of a mountain and forming red-hot rivers of molten rock is just beautiful to look at. Volcanoes are also deadly especially when it's within close proximity of a large population. We all know what a volcano can do to an entire town and Pompei in Italy is a witness to that where a volcano wiped out villages in a matter of minutes.

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Bali in Indonesia is just not about beaches and temples, it has another secret and for that, you need to divert from the beaches and head towards the mountains of the Kintamani region. Mount Batur is an active volcano and even though there have not been any eruptions in the recent past, the volcano is very much active. Bali sits on a region known as the Pacific Ring of Fire, which consists of a horseshoe-shaped belt covering the continents of Asia, North America, and South America. This region has numerous active or dormant volcanoes.



The highest peak of Mount Batur

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Mount Batur is part of UNESCO Global Geoparks, which signifies that this region is of international geological significance. Locally referred to as *Gunung Batur*, this dormant volcano has two calderas. Calderas are craters that are formed when after a volcanic eruption the top surface collapses creating a huge gigantic hole in the shape of a cauldron. At Mount Batur, the two calderas were formed from two different historical eruptions.

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Inaugural monument of Batur Geopark as a Global Geopark Network member

Do not be fooled by the tropical climate of Bali, where there is sun and a beach where you can wear summer clothes. If you are heading towards Mount Batur, then make sure to carry a light jacket. The temperatures up in the hills around Mount Batur can become cold especially in the evening once the sun is settling down towards the horizon.



The lava flow path of Mount Batur

Tourists usually stay around the beaches at Kuta and come to Mount Batur for a day trip. Numerous travel agencies arrange minivans and buses for a sunrise trek. Alternatively, you can also hire a taxi or a motorbike and go for a day trip to Mount Batur.

There are numerous hotels and resorts around there, so you can check in and then go for the trek. To see the sunrise tourists usually start the trek late at night post-midnight. It takes around two hours to trek to the summit so plan backward and start accordingly. Watching the sunrise from the top is truly a breathtaking experience.



Villages and resorts on the banks of Lake Batur

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Alternatively, you can also go for a day trip and spend a couple of hours around the lake where there are numerous restaurants, from where you can grab a bite along with a spectacular view of the sleeping volcano.

On the southeast side of the volcano is Lake Batur, which was formed by water filling up the volcanic crater (caldera). This also happens to be the largest lake on Bali Island located at an altitude of 1050 meters above sea level. The scenic beauty of the lake with the volcanic mountains in the background is an ideal spot for tourists. Numerous restaurants and resorts have sprung up around the lake. If you are planning to spend a couple of days in Batur, then this is the place to book your hotels or resorts.



Batur Volcano Museum

Tourists often miss checking the Museum Gunung Api Batur (Batur Volcano Museum) out here you can get details about the geological features of the Kintamani region. There are large models inside the museum for the visitors to understand the two volcanic calderas that this place has.



A model of Batur volcano inside the museum

Mount Batur is very much an active volcano and the last recorded eruption was in the year 2000. There are numerous villages all around the volcano and interestingly you will find emergency evacuation signages posted all along these villages indicating which direction the villagers need to evacuate in the event of an eruption. The villagers are also well aware of living next to an active volcano but they do not want to abandon their land and migrate to a different place. Each of these villages has an early warning system installed so that the residents can be warned if and when the next eruption takes place.



Lake Batur

The best time to visit Mount Batur is from May to October, after which the monsoon season starts and then trekking to the summit becomes difficult. However, even during monsoon, tourists can enjoy a different view of Mount Batur where the peak can be seen floating above the layers of rain clouds.

### Travel Information:

If you are planning to trek Mount Batur, then you can do it on your own without any guides. The locals might insist you to hire a guide but you can very much follow the well-marked trail to the top.

The trek is relatively easy and does not require a high fitness level. Carry drinking water and keep yourself hydrated.

For night treks, do carry battery-operated torches and trek carefully as there are steep drops on both sides of the walking trail.

*Working for more than a decade in the book retail & publishing industry, Subahdip Mukherjee is an IT professional who is into blogging for over 15 years. He is also a globetrotter, heritage lover and photography enthusiast.*



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LAST UPDATED ON 08.12.22, 02:26 PM

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