Sulawesi
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MAP OF SULAWESI
WELCOME TO SULAWESI

For centuries the southern part of Sulawesi has been more influenced by Sumatra and Melaka. The Northern coastal area (Manado and Minahasa) has been more influenced by the Philippines and Maluku. The Trans Sulawesi road that connects both pars was only constructed by 1980.

SOUTH SULAWESI

Spanish and Portuguese galleons, followed by British and Dutch traders, sailed these seas in search of the spice trade, escorted by their Men of War to protect them from the daring raids of the Bugis and Makassar pirates. Famed for their seafaring culture, the Bugis are still the driving force behind this world.

From as early as the 14th century, this area was filled with famous kingdoms, most notably are Luwu, Gowa, Soppeng, Tallo and Bone. European influence started in the 16th century, when in 1538 Portuguese arrived in Makassar and sought audience with Gowa king. Bone and Gowa kingdoms had a major war in 1562, but later on managed to resolve their differences. After Dutch and Japan were driven away, South Sulawesi became a part of Indonesia and was made into a separate province in 1964. Makassarese and Bugis are Muslims and very strong minded. Bugis people are among the best sailors in the world. Seafarers of Bugis, Bajau, Butonese and Makassarese have traded with neighboring countries, most notably with the Australian Aborigines, for hundreds of years.
Makassar is the provincial capital of South Sulawesi; the population is approximately 1.5 million citizens. The Metropolis is full of honking, smelling, traffic which can be overwhelming. It still keeps its charm with the food stalls and the friendly people. In the evening the Losari Boulevard comes to live with push cars from where meals, drinks and snacks are prepared at the street side and in a nice atmosphere, while looking out over the sea, you can enjoy a meal or just strolling and looking at other people eat, chat and relax.

Places of Interest

- Paotere Harbor
  Wooden boats are lined up on the pier and watching the loading of the boat by man power is an amazing experience.

- Fish Market nearby Paotere Harbor
  Fish is brought in and sold in this Wet market- there is a lot going on and one must like the hustle and bustle of the people around to enjoy the colourful place and study the local economy.

- Fort Rotterdam
  The fort is one of the best-preserved examples of Dutch architecture in Indonesia, Fort Rotterdam continues to guard the harbor of Makassar. A Gowanese fort dating back to 1545 once stood here, but failed to keep out the Dutch. The original fort was rebuilt in Dutch style after the Treaty of Bungaya in 1667. Parts of the crumbling wall have been left untouched and provide a comparison with the restored buildings, but really the fort isn’t anything spectacular. Inside the fort are two museums, the better one being the Museum Negeri La Galigo to the right when you come through the gate. There’s an assortment of exhibits, including Tana Toraja rice bowls, kitchen tools, musical instruments and various costumes. It’s hardly riveting, but at this price who can complain? The museums seem to keep the same hours as the fort. One ticket covers both museums, so hold onto it.

- Benteng Sunguminasa – Museum Balla Lompoa
  It is 12 km south from the town center you find Benteng Sungguminasa, a fort that was once the seat of the Sultan of Gowa. The former royal residence, now known as Museum Balla Lompoa, houses a collection of artefacts, including gifts from the indigenous Australians of Elcho Island, who have a history of trade with the Bugis. Although the royal regalia can be seen only on request, the wooden Bugis-style palace itself is the real attraction.
MAROS

A nice half day (approximately 4 hours) excursion from Makassar is to Maros, which is surrounded by beautiful Karst Mountains. Located at approximately an hour's drive from Makassar, we stop at small jetty where a local boat brings us to the Rammang Rammang valley. The boat trip is a great experience and through semi-dense forest and Karst Mountains. The boat will stop at a village and from here you walk through the rice fields till you reach the cave which has ancient hand prints. If you go a little inside the cave you will find some stalactite. From here continue with the boat to enjoy a coffee with the local people before you head back again to the jetty.

Places of Interest

- **Bantimurung Waterfall**

  It is located at the valley of the step limestone hill with its fertile tropical vegetation. Bantimurung waterfall is a government protected natural reserve and there a cool waterfall and surrounding forests and covers 1000 ha. There are many other caves in these cliffs but apart from the scenery which makes this area an ideal habitat for the type of butterflies and bird infamous for their rarity. The naturalist Alfred Wallace collected specimens here in the mid 1800’s. Among the butterflies that he caught was the Papilo Androcles, one of the rarest and biggest, with a tail like a swallow. Today entomologists still come here to look at the butterflies and other insects. It is certainly a beautiful area, with white falls and bright butterflies make it an ideal place to relax.

- **Rammang-Rammang**

  Rammang-rammang is the name of the remote village in the middle of the second biggest karst area in the world. You will start with a walk through the rice fields to discover the village. The village has the beautiful landscape, there are the green rice fields surrounded by Karst Mountains, which keeps you busy if you love photography. You will also meet friendly local people who are working on their fields. By dugout canoe you will be canoed back to the main road while enjoying the landscape from the water.

- **Leang-Leang Prehistoric Cave**

  Leang-leang is part of hundreds prehistoric caves scattered in the hills rock. You'll find the signs of very old civilization stored in the cave. It is not ancient fossil, but the wall paintings and ancient tools inside the caves. Some archaeologists estimate, the paintings and tools were made about 5,000 years ago.

- **Dreaming Cave**

  The cave is located at about 15 m lower than Bantimurung waterfall. You have to go through a small path that takes us about 30 m of walk to the cross of the river in which dreaming cave is located. By using a torch as the source of light, you can enjoy the beauty of various forms of limestone that brings you to dream.
MALINO

Malino is a hill town 75 km East of Makassar at 1000 meter above sea level. It once was the favourite weekend retreat for the colonial Dutch. People called this town, Kota Bunga or Flower City. There are many kinds of flowers and pine trees that grow here. In this area you can make lovely hikes or bike trips and enjoy the very beautiful rice terraces and visit the waterfall Takapala.

Places of Interest

- Takapala Waterfall

It is a waterfall that is legendary because it was said that this waterfall can bring together people who are paired because near the waterfall Takapala waterfall is also found soul mate which are very close. The height is up to 109 meters, with a hefty water discharge, and on a very rainy season, downpours. The views in the area of the waterfall is also very beautiful, because there are many green trees, rocks, sometimes there is a thin fog, added with the roar of the waterfall.

BIRA

Bira is a small seaside town in the south of Sulawesi. The Beach is still quite nice with its white sand. There is also ship building at the beach near the village. Under the houses you hear the click clack from the weaving. Weaving is done by the women between their daily chores. The main destination in Bira is Liukang Island where we can reach the Island by boat for 30 minute sailing. On this Island most people do swimming or snorkelling, but walking around the village is also nice.

There is no motor vehicle on this Island, and most of local people are fisherman. From the harbour in Bira it takes 30 minutes to sail to Liukang Island. If the tide is low you cannot reach the beach and the boat will bring you to the pontoon, 200 meters from the beach where you can swim, snorkelling and swimming with the sea turtles in the pontoon. When the tide is high enough the boat will get to the beach. It has white sand and clear water. The village on the Island is clean and neat and it is a pleasure to walk around and meet the friendly local people.
SENGKANG

Sengkang is the small town located near Lake Tempe. The town is dominated by the big Mosque. 30 minutes’ drive from the town you find a silk waving village called Pa’ana Village. You can see the process of weaving as well as the production of Silk by caterpillars. The silk is made by spinning threads from the cocoons of the mulberry silkworm larvae.

Places of Interest

- Lake Tempe

The lake is filled with the floating “enceng gondok” plants. (Latin: Eichhornia crassipes) which can be recognized by the light purple flowers. The Lake is very huge and wide but during the dry seasons the water decrease and only mud left, and the boat trip cannot be done. On the lake you will see floating houses of fishermen and you can visit the local people on the floating house.

RANTEPAO

Rantepao is the town from where Toraja land can be explored. The area is very nice and green and at an altitude of 700 meters the climate is pleasant. Rantepao is the touristic center in Toraja area with a population of 41.000. The attractions are the daily market on the street with products of the area, a few souvenir shops, cattle market once a week.

Places of Interest

- Tana Toraja

Tator areal is about 3600 km². The area is fertile, and the Sa’dan river supplies the whole year enough water for the rice fields. Most of Toraja people are Christian mixed with their ancient believe called Aluk to Dolo. Many Toraja people live outside of Tana Toraja and keep the old traditions alive by financial support for the houses, the Tongkonan, or the traditional ceremonies. The Tongkonan houses, the ceremonies and the nature form the main attraction of a visit to Tator.
PALOPO

Palopo is one of the autonomous cities (municipalities) in South Sulawesi Province of Indonesia, and the third-largest city in the province. Until it acquired its autonomy, Palopo was the capital of Luwu Regency.

Places of Interest

- Toddopuli Temmalara Monument

It is a monument with a shape of a hands holding Badik. The name of the monument means the courage to fight for the truth, a philosophy of life which is actually a life philosophy Bugis society in general.

- Museum Batara Guru

This museum was inaugurated on 26 July 1971 by the Regent of Luwu then, Andi Achmad. He is one of the heirs of King Luwu. The purpose of establishing this museum is to preserve the cultural heritage of the Kingdom of Luwu to be passed on to the next generation. Guru museum building which was established in 1920 is a former Royal Palace Luwu. The museum has a collection of as many as 831 pieces consisting of a collection of prehistoric, heraldika, ceramics, ethnography, manuscripts, numismatic, and photos.

- Bambalu Waterfall

The waterfall is located in the village Battang 12 miles from downtown Palopo. You can use an ojek, (motorbike taxi) to go to this location. Bambalu go round waterfall cascading waterfall with clear water and fresh with large rocks.

NORTH SULAWESI

This area has existed for a long, long time. Due to its strategic location, North Sulawesi has gotten contacts with outside world since the dawn of time. Sangir-Talaud island group created a bridge to the neighboring country, Philippines. Therefore culture between this place and Philippines, including the people, are quite similar. Influenced heavily by the Dutch occupation in the past, the older generation can still speak Dutch and respect this country.

Some kingdoms existed in the past. Portuguese first arrived in 16th century, for trading and spreading Christianity. When the Portuguese went away, Spain came instead, bringing Catholicism with them. In the middle of 17th century, Dutch influence became prominent until Japan came and took over for a short while. Dissatisfied, after Japan lost in WW2, Dutch tried to colonize this place again. The locals opposed this, and in 1950 Sulawesi became a part of Indonesia. North Sulawesi became a separate province in 1964.
MANADO

The capital of the province, the former stronghold of the Dutch and the cultural center of the Minahasa people, for a long time Manado prospered through trade with the nearby Philippines and the spice trade with the rest of the world. Alas, the bombings of World War II and the suppression of a local insurgency in the 1950s flattened most of Manado’s older buildings. While by Indonesian standards still relatively prosperous, most visitors will be rather less impressed and head straight to the islands and reefs of nearby Bunaken. Unlike much of the rest of predominantly-Muslim Indonesia, Christianity is the dominant religion in Manado.

Places of Interest

- **Bunaken National Park**

This tiny, coral-fringed isles is North Sulawesi’s top tourist destination. Other than that, the island belongs to the islanders; these friendly folk have a seemingly endless reserve of authentically warm smiles. There are no hassles here, just laid-back beachy bliss. Most people come to Bunaken for the diving. The marine biodiversity is extraordinary, with more than 300 types of coral and 3000 species of fish, and abundant corals and sponges and phenomenally colourful life on vertical walls.

- **Ban Hin Kiong Temple**

The beautifully designed Ban Hin Kiong Temple in the heart of Manado’s China Town is 335 years old and is the oldest Chinese temple built here during the Qing Dynasty era in China (1644-1911). It is a house of worship for the Tridharma followers from Manado and the region.

- **Modoinding**

Upon 1,000 masl, Modoinding covers 10 pleasant villages with cool temperature in South Minahasa. The village serves you agro-tourism with fresh vegetables and fruits.

TOMOHON

Tomohon is an important town in Northern Sulawesi. It is young but holds an important role in tourism of the province. The panorama and nature of Tomohon are attractions for those who travel this far. It lies between two volcanoes, Mt. Mahawu and Mt. Lokon. The town is shaped like a starfish, with long tentacles visible from higher ground. Because of its position on the highland, Tomohon has a very mild climate, for which it is famous. The friendliness of its people is also well-known in the region.
Places of Interest

- **Buddhayana Monastery**

  *Vihara Buddhayana Tomohon* is a Buddhist place of worship located in the Kakaskasen 2, northern Tomohon. This Vihara has a very nice and unique architecture of monastery with a beautiful view of Mount Lokon. Although this place is a place of Buddhist worship, it is open for tourists as well.

- **Mount Mahawu**

  Mahawu is the northernmost of a string of "young" volcanoes along the spine of North Sulawesi. Less active than its neighbors, Mahawu is just a few minutes' drive from the center of Tomohon. A small road leads to a visitor's center about halfway up the side of the crater. From the small parking lot, you have to hike up to the rim. There is no paved path or stairs, just a rough cut trail through small brush and thickets of elephant grass that took me about 20 to 30 minutes. You reach the rim of the 180 meter wide crater on the south side. From the rim, it's a 140 meter drop almost straight down to the floor of the crater, where there are a couple of muddy lakes and a few smoking fumeroles. If you hike around the rim, through more thickets of elephant grass, to the north side, you will get a good view of Manado city and the Bunaken Marine Park islands, if the weather permits of course.

- **Lake Linow**

  Linow Lake is really a water-filled volcanic crater. It's a very pretty little lake, but with some interesting features. Several small vents line the wall of the crater, spewing hot gases and water. Bubbles in the lake indicate there are more vents below the water line. The changing mixture of chemicals in the gases cases the lake to change colors from time to time, from red to deep green to even blue. There's a rather nice little coffee shop on the short of the lake, making this a good place to stop for an afternoon drink when touring the highlands. If you explore one of the vent areas near the café, do take care of your footing. In places the ground looks quite solid, almost like old concrete, but is really very soft and in some cases is underpinned by the running water.

- **Lake Tondano**

  This huge lake lies along the eastern side of a massive ancient volcanic caldera. Young active volcanoes such as Mahawu lie along the rim of this caldera. The lake, though covering a large area, is reportedly relatively shallow. There seem to be a lot of small fish in the lake, and fish farms line the shore as well. Ornamental *koi* carp seem to be big business here.

- **Mount Lokon**

  Lokon is a twin volcano with the adjacent Empung and is located close to the pleasantly cool town of Tomohon, which is surrounded by agricultural land. All recent eruptions have originated from the Tompaluan crater which lies in the saddle between the two peaks – when most people say they climbed Lokon they mean they visited the crater and most guides will think you only want to go to the crater.

- **Tomohon Market**

  The large fresh market in Tomohon is a good stop on any tour of the North Sulawesi highlands. The market appears to sell just about everything for the daily needs of the local people - and I do mean everything. The "meat" section is not for the faint of heart. You'll most likely find beef, pork, chicken, snake, bat and *dog* on sale.
BITUNG

On the north eastern peninsula of the island of Sulawesi that forms the Province of North Sulawesi, lies the port of Bitung facing the Moluccas Strait. This is the harbour that has lately made rapid strides in development. The name Bitung refers to the lines of vegetation decorating its coastline but another source says that the name Bitung, in fact, is derived from the word Balisung, which means: the place for magical recovery. Together they spell a picturesque, peaceful and prosperous harbor. Located on the eastern side of the province, Bitung provides easy access to volcanoes, parks, and diving.

Places of Interest

- Lembeh Strait

The Lembeh Strait between Bitung and the large island of Pulau Lembeh is world famous for its diving and now has around a dozen scuba centres. There are also some reef dives, five wrecks for exploring, and fantastic night dives lit by phosphorescence. Lembeh tends to attract hardcore divers from all over the world, including many photographers and those who intent on ticking off long lists of the bizarre sea critters that live here in profound numbers.

- Tangkoko-Batuangus Dua Saudara Nature Reserve

With 8800 hectares of forest bordered by a sandy coastline and offshore coral gardens, Tangkoko is one of the most impressive and accessible nature reserves in Indonesia. The park is home to black macaques, cuscuses and tarsiers, maleo birds and endemic red-knobbed hornbills, among other fauna, and rare types of rainforest flora.