

LEMBATA, SOLOR AND SUMBA TEXTILES & HANDCRAFTS TOUR

28 JUNE - 11 JULY 2026

retreat|recreate is delighted to offer this very exciting
14 day, 13 night women's tour exploring the
fascinating textiles, handcrafts and culture of
East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia.

A major highlight of this itinerary is our village visits. We'll **experience** welcome ceremonies and warm, local hospitality, **engage** directly with talented local artisans and craftspeople, **observe** artisans as they demonstrate intricate handcraft techniques, **learn about** traditional designs and motifs, **marvel** at the quality and range of superb handcrafts and textiles on offer and **gain an insight** into local traditions, culture and daily life.

Watch a range of demonstrations and participate in hands-on handcraft activities and workshops: cotton ginning, spinning cotton with a drop spindle, basic ikat knot tying, simple weaving, pahikung (supplementary warp) weaving, weaving with palm and pandan leaves, dyeing with cactus flower, indigo, reo bark, mango bark, bean leaf, turmeric, morinda and mud.

Enjoy traditional welcomes, dancing and music as we arrive at villages, **take part** in a festival opening and annual traditional village ceremony, **be in awe** of breathtaking land and sea-scapes, clan-house architecture, royal villages and ancient megalithic tombs. **Experience** fascinating traditions and culture, **savour** simple but delicious local cuisine and **be humbled** by the gentle, generous hospitality for which the islands of East Nusa Tenggara are known.

This exciting and immersive foray into the textiles, handcrafts and culture of East Nusa Tenggara is not to be missed.

We do hope you'll join us!

www.retreatrecreate.com

ITINERARY

as at January 2026



Day 1

Sunday 28 June

DENPASAR - KUPANG

Seleamat datang! Welcome to Indonesia!

To kick off our very exciting journey together, meet your local guide and retreat|recreate host at 8.00AM (TBC) at Bali's Denpasar Airport (DPS), before checking in as a group for our flight to Kupang (~1hr, 50 mins), located on the south western tip of the island of Timor. Once check-in formalities have been completed, we'll gather for a briefing meeting, run through the program, introduce ourselves and begin to get to know each other.

Upon arrival in Kupang, we'll collect our luggage, check in to our hotel and enjoy our first lunch together.

Kupang is the capital of Indonesia's Nusa Tenggara province. A visit to the NTT Museum will provide an overview and introduction to the textiles, handcrafts, cultural traditions, and history of East Nusa Tenggara.

In the late afternoon, we'll visit a small **weaving village**, known for its traditional textiles – our first village welcome and a taste of the wondrous textiles to come.

Meals: Lunch, Dinner



Day 2

Monday 29 June

KUPANG - LARANTUKA

An early flight (65 minutes) will take us from Kupang to Larantuka, East Flores.

Spending time in villages is certainly one of the many highlights of this trip. We'll head to a village known for its **ikat weaving** where we'll be treated to a demonstration of the preparation of threads and the process of ikat weaving.

We'll also see a demonstration of corn smashing! Corn kernels are dried and roasted over a fire then 'smashed' between a large flat stone and a smaller rock to make flakes. The sound of the smashing is referred to as 'singing rocks' – it's part of the daily sound-track for village life. Resembling rolled oats, the smashed corn is known locally as 'jagung titi' and is a traditional snack in this region.

Afterwards, we'll head to our hotel to relax and have dinner.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 3 **Tuesday 30 June**

LARANTUKA - SOLOR - LEWOLEBA

After breakfast, we'll check out of our hotel and take a fast boat to the island of **Solor**.

One particular village on the island specialises in **using the fruit of a locally grown cactus to create a pink dye**. **We'll enjoy a hands-on dyeing activity** and see some the woven pieces incorporating the pink threads.

After lunch in the village, we'll take another fast boat to Lewoleba, the main city and capital of Lemata Regency.

We'll check into our hotel and have a few hours to rest, relax and perhaps take a dip in the hotel's pool.

For dinner, we'll head to the nearby night market.



Day 4

LEWOLEBA

Today's adventure takes us into the mountains to a village with a nearby **geothermal 'kitchen'** (~2 hour drive). Our lunch will be cooked slowly for several hours, in a pit 'oven', covered with layers of plant matter and rocks.

After a traditional village welcome, we'll participate in a **natural dyeing demonstration**. In this ridge-top village where the landscape is harsh and rainfall is low, **'bean leaf' is used to dye yarn a green colour**. Each different environment dictates what the weavers can collect and grow locally and this is in turn reflected in the variety of colours and shades used in their weaving.

After lunch, we're fortunate to witness and enjoy **traditional dancing, singing and games** with this delightful community.

In the late afternoon, we'll return to our hotel for dinner and relaxation.

* Refer also to 'things to note' on page 4 of this document regarding the recently constructed retreat/recreate community weaving house and water tanks fully sponsored by our retreat/recreate July 2025 Indonesia tour group.



Day 5

COASTAL BAMBOO LODGE

After breakfast and checking out of our hotel, we'll drive to a coastal village known for its beautiful **hand-spun cotton and remarkable ikat weaving**.

Following a welcome ceremony, we'll try our hand at traditional methods for **ginning (cleaning) and preparing cotton fibre and hand-spinning the fibre into yarn using a drop spindle under the guidance of the village women**. Our lunch in the village will consist of rice, seafood and locally grown vegetables and greens.

In the afternoon we'll head to our accommodation, located on the shore of beautiful Wena beach. We'll be welcomed by the local villagers before checking in. There's the option to swim, snorkel over the coral reef (only a short distance from the shore), walk, collect shells or simply relax before dinner.

Our accommodation is in simple but spacious bamboo huts on stilts in an idyllic location. You'll be soothed to sleep by the sound of the waves.

Note: the single supplement does not apply to days 5 & 6. Refer also to the 'Things to Note' section on page 4 of this document and the Trip Notes.



Day 6

COASTAL BAMBOO LODGE

We'll enjoy a beach-side breakfast from the open-air bamboo deck. Lucky us!

A short walk will take us to visit the local **weaver's group** where we'll spend the day **learning about dyeing with turmeric, fresh indigo, 'reo' tree bark (a local species) and mango tree bark**. We'll also learn to tie a simple pattern of ikat resist knots in a skein of cotton – a basic introduction to this intricate step in the ikat process.

We'll enjoy lunch in the village and afterwards continue with our dyeing activity.

Later in the afternoon there's the option to take a boat to the other side of the bay where there's another opportunity to swim and snorkel or simply relax.

We'll return to our lodge for dinner and the rest of the evening.



Day 7

LEWOLEBA

We'll drive (~1 hour) to the very special 'living culture' village where 460 steps lead to 77 clan houses. Only a handful of the houses are permanently occupied. Most of the community now live on the coast and return for festivals and ceremonies.

We're privileged to be introduced to the head of the clan, **visit a clan house**, and experience the **Utan Wuun Lolon ceremony** and a **ceremonial mass dance**. This special event is a form of reconciliation between humans with God, nature, the ancestors and each other. It promises to be a very special and memorable experience.

At another village, we'll meet some of the women who continue to process salt using traditional methods. Salt is an important part of daily life and a means of seasoning and preserving food. We'll **learn to weave lontar palm and make baskets used for collecting and storing salt**.

We'll also join the villagers in planting mangroves - a practice that helps to maintain the valuable eco-system and breeding habitat for the fish that are their main source of food. We'll head to our Lewoleba hotel for the evening.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 8 Sunday 5 July

LEWOLEBA

Today's adventure takes us to another small village known for their weaving of superb **single and double ikat**.

We'll meet one of the few male weavers who continues to practice and preserve these textile traditions. The skill and technique required for tying, dyeing and weaving **double ikat** is mind-blowing! You're sure to be impressed.

After lunch, we'll stop at a beach where we'll have time to relax and swim.

Before returning to our hotel for our last evening on Lembata, we'll watch the sun set over the islands from a prominent lookout point and then visit a hillside chapel where we'll join the nuns for dinner.



Day 9

WAINGAPU

Today we leave Lembata and travel to the island of Sumba!

After an early breakfast we'll take a fast boat to Larantuka airport (East Flores) where we'll check in for our flight to Kupang.

We'll have lunch at Kupang airport before boarding our onward flight to Waingapu.

Upon arrival in Waingapu, we'll check in to our lovely hotel for the next three nights.

As per current airline schedules, our two flights will take up most of the day. To help pass the time at airports and on flights, we suggest you bring a small portable handcraft project, a book, a travel journal/sketch book or be prepared with e-books, podcasts, music etc already downloaded to your phone.



Day 10

WAINGAPU

Today we'll meet a group of students studying hospitality and tourism. This is an opportunity for the students to practice their English conversation skills and for us to hear how the next generation are hoping to make their mark.

We'll continue to a village to learn about the traditional method for making **indigo 'paste'**. The ancient craft of dyeing with indigo is a ritual and act of devotion that connects people to their land, gods and ancestors. Many beliefs and superstitions are linked to working with indigo, which is strictly restricted to women.

We'll also explore the use of **mud dyeing**. Mud with a high tannin and iron content is used to dye threads black or to overdyed indigo and achieve a deep, blue-black colour. **During our workshop, we'll work with indigo and mud to dye skeins of cotton yarn.**

At another village, we'll learn about **pahikung weaving** and the motifs and designs created using a complicated and time consuming **supplementary warp weaving technique**.



Day 11

WAINGAPU

After a relaxed start, we'll explore a **market featuring local textiles**. You're sure to see plenty of exquisite pieces that are bound to impress, whether you choose to purchase them or not.

After lunch, we'll explore Prailiu village - a village of kings. The very fine **ikat textiles** here have been passed down from generation to generation. The men in this village also weave.

In the same village, **pandan leaves are used to craft handwoven mats, baskets and bags**. **We'll try our hand at weaving with pandan fibre. Together with the village women and other members of our group, we'll work on weaving a section of one of the beautiful, large floor mats found in every local home.**

In the late afternoon, we'll visit a family compound to learn about **simple ikats and dyeing** before returning to our hotel for the evening.



Day 12

WAIKABUBAK

After checking out of our hotel, we'll head towards Waikabubak in West Sumba.

On the way, we'll stop at Wairinding Hill where we'll enjoy beautiful views over the savanna grassland. If we're lucky, we'll see some of the wild horses which carry Arabian and Mongolian bloodlines and for which West Sumba is known.

After lunch we'll continue on to Prailing **traditional village**, famous for its impressive steep thatched-roof buildings and remarkable, intricately carved, ancient, megalithic tombs. The textiles here are as stunning as any you've encountered during our travels. We're likely to see **weavers at work** on the terraces outside their homes.

Before checking into our beautiful resort for the last two nights of our adventure together, we'll enjoy views over picturesque rice terraces and a stunning waterfall.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 13 Friday 10 July

WAIKABUBAK

We'll visit **Rumah Budaya Museum**, a cultural centre founded by a Catholic priest, to preserve and feature **Sumbanese culture**. **Ikat weaving, stone and wood carving, traditional jewellery** and everyday artefacts are displayed in buildings built in traditional Sumbanese style.

This afternoon, there'll be time to swim in the crystal clear waters of **Waekuri Lagoon** or relax on the rocks, under the surrounding shade trees.

Our **final group dinner** this evening will be an opportunity to reflect upon our travels, share favourite memories of the trip and pack up our textile souvenirs before we say our fond farewells to each other.

Day 14 Saturday 11 July

WAIKABUBAK - DENPASAR

After checking out of our hotel this morning, we'll visit **Tambolaka market**. Amongst other handcrafted goods, we can expect to see kodi textiles for which this region is known. **Kodi textiles** often feature a reticulated pattern which imitates the skin of the local species of python. In Kodi mythology, snakes are associated with the ancestors and the after-life and also symbolize rebirth, on account of the snake's ability to rejuvenate by shedding their skin.

After lunch we'll head to Waikabukbuk's Tambolaka Airport (TMC) to check in for our group flight to Denpasar (DPS), Bali. It's time to say farewell to our local tour leader and this very special part of Indonesia.

Our tour comes to an end upon arrival at Denpasar Airport (DPS). Sadly, it's time to head our separate ways.

We strongly recommend that you stay at least one night in Bali to minimise the risk of missing your onward flight due to possible delays or rescheduling of our flight from Sumba.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Meals: Breakfast

PRICE:

Twin share: A\$6500 per person

Single supplement: A\$750 (does not apply to accommodation on day 5 & 6)

INCLUSIONS

- 14 days/13 nights accommodation
- 13 breakfasts, 13 lunches, 13 dinners
- Drinking water
- Internal flights: Bali-Kupang, Kupang-Larantuka, Larantuka-Kupang-Sumba, Sumba-Bali as per the itinerary
- Transport in comfortable, private, air-con vehicles, inter-island ferries
- Handcraft workshops and activities (indicated in red)
- Entrance to museums, galleries, villages and excursion venues as per the itinerary
- Services of a local English-speaking tour leader and retreat|recreate host

EXCLUSIONS:

- International flights to/from Bali
- Travel insurance
- Visas (refer to the Trip Notes for details)
- Early check in or late check out
- Personal spending (souvenirs, phone, laundry, excess luggage etc)
- Meals and drinks not specified in the itinerary. Drinks with included meals.
- Activities marked as optional
- Expenses incurred as a result of delayed or cancelled flights
- Tips

THINGS TO NOTE:

- A deposit of A\$2000 is required to secure your booking.
- The tour balance will be due no later than 17 April 2026.
- Bookings made after 17 April 2026 must be paid in full at the time of booking
- Please refer to the **Trip Notes** and **Booking Conditions** for more details
- The hands-on handcraft activities included in this itinerary are not formal classes with trained teachers. They're more about genuine person to person interactions, cultural exchange and learning directly from authentic, traditional artisans in their village, home or workplace in their own style.
- Our accommodation on days 5 & 6 is basic but comfortable. Rooms are shared within our group (single supp doesn't apply). Beds comprise a mattress with mosquito net, pillow and sheets. Each room has an open-air bathroom with western toilet and cold (tepid not freezing;-) shower. Bath towels are provided.
- A very good level of fitness and mobility is required to fully participate in this itinerary. While this is not necessarily an adventure tour, a good 'sense of adventure' is certainly required. Refer to the **Trip Notes** for details.
- retreat|recreate strives to offer culturally, environmentally and economically sustainable tours. To this end, we: engage local guides; partner with a tour operator whose values align with ours; patronise organisations and co-operatives that return all profits directly to their local community; support fair trade and non-government organisations providing vocational training, experience and rehabilitation to marginalised and disadvantaged groups and communities, particularly those that empower women and girls to earn an income through the production of traditional crafts.
- Our July 2025 Indonesia tour group provided full funding for the materials and construction of the community weaving house (plus tanks for rainwater collection) at the village we visit on day 5. The open-air, bamboo building now provides a place for the women to display their textiles and weave together, a gathering place for the community and also a small library for the children.
- As this itinerary was developed many months prior to departure, minor amendments may occur. We will always keep you fully informed regarding any changes to this itinerary.
- Any questions? Please email Susan K at retreatrecreate@gmail.com