

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 an 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!

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ITINERARY

as at 25 MAY 2026



Day 1

Sunday 28 June

BALI - KUPANG

Neo Hotel

Selamat 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, 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

LARANTUKA

Asa Hotel

An early flight 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 Lewohala village, known for its **ikat weaving** where we'll be treated to a demonstration of the preparation of threads and the weaving process.

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**

LEWOLEBA Palm Indah
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 dyeing demonstration and a hands-on dyeing activity as well as the chance to see some woven pieces into which the pink threads have been incorporated.

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

In the evening, we'll explore the nearby night market and enjoy a local dinner.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 4 **Wednesday 1 July**

LEWOLEBA Palm Indah
This morning we'll visit Mawa village. Under the guidance of the village women, **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**.

Our lunch in the village will consist of rice, seafood and locally grown vegetables and greens.

After a rest at our hotel, we're privileged to have the opportunity to experience the 'Grand Opening' of the **Lamahalot festival**. The festival is a celebration of the rich culture, textiles and handcrafts of the Lamahalot indigenous communities across East Flores, Adonara, Solor, Lembata, and Alor.

In the afternoon, we'll visit a coastal village known for its beautiful **hand-spun cotton and remarkable ikat weaving**.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 5 **Thursday 2 July**

LEWOLEBA Palm Indah
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.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 6 **Friday 3 July**

Nuha Nera Bamboo Lodge
After checking out of our hotel, we'll head to Muruona village where 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 valuable means of preserving food. **We'll learn to weave with lontar palm and make the 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 drive to the very special **'living culture' village** of Watun Lewopito where 460 steps lead to 77 clan houses. Today, only a handful of the houses are permanently occupied. Most of the community now live on the coast and only return to the village for festivals and ceremonies. We're privileged to **visit a clan house**, experience the **Utan Wuun Lolon ceremony** and **ceremonial mass dance**. This special event is an act of thanksgiving and reconciliation between humans with God, nature, the ancestors and each other. It promises to be a very special and memorable experience.

Upon arrival at our accommodation, we'll be welcomed by the local villagers.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 7 **Saturday 4 July**

Nuha Nera Bamboo Lodge
After enjoying a beach-side breakfast from the open-air bamboo deck, we'll take a short walk to Lamawolo village. We'll spend time with the local **weaver's group** and **learn 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. After returning to our bamboo lodge accommodation, there's the option to take a boat to the other side of Waienga Bay - another opportunity to swim and snorkel or just enjoy the boat ride.

Note: Our simple but spacious bamboo hut accommodation (on days 6 & 7) is idyllically located on the shore of beautiful Wena beach. 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. You'll be soothed to sleep by the sound of the waves. The single supplement does not apply to days 6 & 7. Refer to 'Things to Note' on page 4 of this document and the Trip Notes.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 8 **Sunday 5 July** **Day 9** **Monday 6 July** **Day 10** **Tuesday 7 July** **Day 11** **Wednesday 8 July** **Day 12** **Thursday 9 July**

LEWOLEBA **Palm Indah** **LEWOLEBA** **Palm Indah** **WAINGAPU** **Kambaniru** **WAINGAPU** **Kambaniru** **WAINGAPU** **Kambaniru**

Today's adventure takes us to the small village of Tapobali, known for its superb **single and double ikat weaving**.

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.

We'll return to our Lewoleba hotel for the evening.

Today we'll visit Lamalera, one of the few remaining villages where whale hunting is still permitted and practiced. For this tradition to continue, the wooden boats may only be propelled by wind and oars. The boat sails are hand-woven from pandan (pandanus) leaves which are a readily available resource.

Whales are harpooned manually, by a whaler who must leap from the prow of the boat onto the back of the targeted whale with a bamboo spear. It's an ancient and dangerous occupation! At the chapel on the beach, prayers of hope and thanks for safety and a productive voyage are offered.

Boat building, sail weaving, rope-making and forging harpoon heads are all heritage crafts which are integral to life in Lamalera. The village is also acclaimed for its **naturally dyed, hand spun, cotton ikat textiles**, which often feature distinctive **whale and manta ray motifs**. We'll see demonstrations of some of these crafts during our time here.

Leaving Lembata, we'll travel via Kupang to the island of Sumba!

After an early breakfast, we'll head to the airport and check in for our first flight.

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

In the late afternoon, we'll check in to our lovely Waingapu hotel - our home 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.

Today we'll meet a group of students who are studying hospitality and tourism. Our visit 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 Patawang 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. There are many beliefs and superstitions linked to working with indigo, a practice 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 overdy 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.

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, regardless of whether you choose to purchase them or not.

After lunch, we'll explore Prailiu village, a village of kings known for its megalithic burial stones and beautiful **warp ikat textiles**. The village has its own weavers collective and the men in this village also weave.

In the same village, **pandan leaves are used to craft handwoven mats, baskets and bags**. **We'll briefly 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.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 13 Friday 10 July

WAIKABUBAK Sima Hotel

Today we'll travel overland towards Waikabubak in West Sumba, stopping 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 Prailjing **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 night of our adventure together, we'll enjoy views over picturesque rice terraces and a stunning waterfall.

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.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 14 Saturday 11 July

DENPASAR

After checking out of our hotel this morning, we'll visit **Rumah Budaya Museum**. This cultural centre was founded by a Catholic priest with the aim 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.

At **Tambolaka market** 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 Waikabubak'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.

Meals: Breakfast



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 a 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:

- 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 at Nuha Nera Bamboo Lodge on days 6 & 7 is basic but comfortable. Rooms are shared within our group (single supplement doesn't apply to these two nights). Beds comprise a single 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.
- At our accommodation on day 13, all rooms are single occupancy.
- 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 handcrafts.
- *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.
- We strongly recommend that you stay at least one night in Bali both before and after the tour to minimise the risk of missing subsequent flights due to possible flight delays or rescheduling.
- Any questions? Please email Susan K at retreatrecreate@gmail.com