

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR TIMOR-LESTE



TOURISM IN TIMOR-LESTE

Tourism is a nascent industry in Timor-Leste with significant potential for growth and revenue generation. Our unspoilt beaches, rich history and spectacular interior landscapes have already begun to draw small numbers of adventurous travellers. Divers and deep-sea fishermen are discovering our coastal waters. Additional visitors are trickling in en route to the oil platforms on the Timor Sea.

Our country has a unique opportunity to build a tourism sector that avoids both the social and environmental negatives of tourism, and maximizes its contributions. Careful management is key: our strategy involves a focused and incremental approach to development with an emphasis on sustainability and community participation.

Timor-Leste cannot and should not try to offer all things to all people. A solid foundation for growth in this sector will best be achieved by concentrating efforts and resources on key propositions: those attractions most likely to bring about high satisfaction levels among a targeted category of travellers. This exercise provides a blueprint for initial development, and generates a clear story about our country for use in marketing initiatives.



Fataluku house at Lospalos

SCOPE AND STATUS QUO

- In 1999, 10 years after their entry into the tourism industry, Laos and Cambodia each hosted some 300,000 tourists; average receipts per tourist were US\$350-500; the average length of stay was 4 nights.
- Although Vietnam's tourism industry grew much more quickly than its neighbours, reaching a total of 2 million visitors in 1999, average receipts per tourist were far lower, at US\$60. This may reflect the larger portion of backpacking travellers, whose typically cash payments for food and accommodation are not accurately recorded.

- From 1963 to 1979, Timor-Leste received a trickle of international tourists, largely of the backpacking variety. Peak volume of around 5000 visitors was achieved in 1974. Australian and Japanese tourism-related projects were scuttled by the 1979 Indonesian invasion.
- The presence of some 15,000 well-paid foreign aid workers in Timor-Leste since 1999 has established a foundation for tourism development in many different ways. For example, in 2001 Dili boasted 164 hotel beds, sufficient capacity for 15,000 tourists per annum based on the Cambodia/Laos visitor patterns. A number of tourism-related businesses are providing services such as guided tours and scuba excursions.
- Efforts are being made by these businesses to attract leisure travellers to Timor-Leste, with some success. The volume of traffic, however, is not sufficient to compensate for the gradual departure of the foreign aid community: already in 2002 the occupancy rate of Dili's hotels declined to an average of 50%.

Children on Atauro Island

LESSONS FROM THE NGO 'BUBBLE'

The population of foreign aid workers in Timor-Leste since 1999 has created an artificial tourism industry - but it has laid solid foundation blocks for ongoing sector development

POSITIVE IMPACT: FOUNDATION-BUILDING

- An invaluable contribution to the development of the industry:
 - a number of hospitality and tourist service providers (eg. dive shops, tour operators, restaurants) have had 3 years to gather important experience, product/site knowledge and to train employees.
 - visitor demand has stimulated local crafts industries, and habituated rural residents across the country to the presence and needs of foreign visitors.
 - the experiences and destination preferences of the aid workers provide excellent material for use in development strategies.

NEGATIVE IMPACT: SHORT TERM

- The relatively high spending power of the aid community has led to price inflation in certain goods and services, particularly in Dili (hotel costs, taxi fares, imported/luxury foods, crafts).
- The restricted mobility of the aid community created a captive market and a false impression that tourist volume is achievable with little or no effort.
- The decrease in demand stemming from the evaporation of this captive market will discourage many of the small businesses that have benefited from it.
 - there is a risk that expatriate-owned operations choose to migrate elsewhere, particularly if little or no loss of capital is involved, in view of the fact that Timor-Leste does not to offer the tax incentives extended to tourism-related businesses by other countries in the region.

→ It is crucial that highly visible initiatives be launched rapidly to support existing tourist service providers and preserve/expand the knowledge and experience gained during these 'bubble' years.

A FOCUSED INCREMENTAL APPROACH

We recommend a focused, incremental approach to the development of this sector, with a strong emphasis on community participation, given that...

- Beyond our post-conflict experience with a disproportionately affluent, semi-resident tourist market, we have no history of tourism upon which to base projections and strategies
 - We lack accommodation facilities meeting 'international' standards outside Dili and Baucau, as well as the capital needed to develop them
 - We lack basic infrastructure (quality roads, water supply, waste disposal, power, communications) and cannot service a large influx of visitors
 - Although certain areas have been designated as 'protected wild zones', a national park system has yet to be established
 - Areas of cultural and/or architectural significance have not been documented or accorded special status, without which they risk being damaged or even destroyed
 - Hasty, 'build-it-and-they-will-come' strategies in developing nations have all too frequently resulted in architectural eyesores, wastage of capital and disappointment through unfulfilled expectations
 - While many of the businesses that cater to tourists will evolve organically, others will benefit from training and monitoring programs which have yet to be developed
 - Community participation is not only integral to our country's vision for development, it is crucial to achieving sustainable satisfaction levels among both our people and our visitors.
- Building on the existing foundation, a focused and phased development strategy will enable us to assess and address the environmental and social impacts of each tourism initiative as we proceed, and to absorb and apply lessons learned in one region to the next.

BUILDING A FOUNDATION

While certain aspects of the tourism industry will develop under their own momentum, others would benefit through training, investment and monitoring.

- Residents of the rural areas frequented by aid workers over the past 3 years have gained some experience of tourism and awareness of its benefits. Small retail businesses selling crafts and drinks have sprouted up, and fishermen have become accustomed to the occasional foreign passenger in their boats. Word-of-mouth alone will draw more Timorese to participate in these types of activities if it proves economically viable.
- A very limited number of private homes are providing accommodation and, often with the assistance of NGOs, a few restaurants are offering meals. These are both areas in which teaching and monitoring of service and hygiene standards would be extremely helpful.
- Guide training, including not only service and safety topics but also local/national historical and cultural information, would be beneficial at many levels.
- Business training and access to banking and credit services are needed for more sophisticated operations, such as vehicle and technical equipment rentals.
- Sites, structures and zones of cultural importance to Timorese, or of architectural value, must be identified, respected and preserved by means of published codes and management systems.
- Sites, structures and traditional practises of interest to tourists may not seem significant to Timorese and risk being destroyed, dismantled or discontinued if the benefits of preserving these 'tourism assets' are not conveyed. These benefits will often have to be explained in material terms: if a farmer is being asked to forego cutting a beautiful stand of mature trees for firewood, he has to be able to recognize an alternative means of obtaining the wood he needs.
- Indonesia's 'Seven Charms Program', which emphasizes safety, cleanliness, orderliness, comfort, beauty, hospitality and enchanting memories, is applicable example of standards-setting for the tourism sector.

Totem at Liquiça



AUXILIARY BENEFITS

Tourism development initiatives can and should provide lasting social and economic benefits beyond the confines of the sector itself.

- Fostering and marketing tradition: Timor-Leste has artistic traditions which reflect and confirm the unique cultural identities of its many communities within a national context. Craft and story traditions also have a marketable value, whether in the form of the objects themselves or as memorabilia. The marketing of quality crafts products abroad has the additional benefit of raising awareness of Timor-Leste to potential visitors.
- Basic business programs to support small enterprises, such as those offered internationally on a non-profit basis by Junior Achievement, could be incorporated into school curricula.
- A means of encouraging foreign tour operators to hire and train local helpers and guides should be considered.
- Various inducements for travellers to make donations to Timor-Leste are also a possibility, such as
 - change boxes at the airports
 - focused initiatives, designed to encourage 'purchases' of key needs (eg. teak or sandalwood trees, weaving looms, potters' wheels, desalination equipment, school books)
 - donations of equipment or portions of trip fees, particularly if tax-deductible status is obtainable.
- There are many tour companies which organize 'community project' holidays for students and adults, during which participants perform helpful work such as erecting simple buildings or digging wells.



By the road at Manatuto

ATTRactions in Timor-Leste

Development and marketing should focus on the unique propositions that set Timor-Leste apart from its neighbours.

■ WILDERNESS

- Timor-Leste is one of the few remaining wilderness areas in Southeast Asia; a range of spectacular landscapes host a number of different ecosystems
- A variety of endangered species, both marine and terrestrial, inhabit the country; parks and reserves are being created to protect them
- Opportunities for active tourism, from trekking to horseback-riding (on the legendary Timor ponies) and scuba

■ MULTI-LAYERED HISTORY AND CULTURE

- Painted caves dated to the migrations between Asia and Australia
- Traditional cultures of 30 different groups
- Portuguese influence and architecture
- The Fight for Independence/Resistance

■ A NEW COUNTRY: BE AMONG THE FIRST

- The scent of **SPICE**: cinnamon, vanilla, cloves, coffee
- A happy palate: Portuguese-influenced **CUISINE** and wines
- Safe, **FRIENDLY** and laid back
- Direct flights from Darwin and Bali, either of which could be included in a very interesting eco/adventure tour itinerary.

AN APPROPRIATE TARGET MARKET

Initial marketing efforts focus on the ecotourism and adventure tour market segments, in which greater importance is given to discovery and exploration than to creature comforts.

- Ecotourism is defined as travel that is more or less focused on nature or traditional cultures, with a strong learning element. Direct contact with local residents is a key attraction to this group. Ecotourists include backpackers as well as organized groups.
- Although backpackers were historically viewed as undesirable, low-budget visitors, this opinion is changing rapidly. Not only do backpackers typically blaze the trails for volume tourism, but overall their generally longer stays provide a greater net financial (and, arguably, educational) contribution to the communities they visit.
- Adventure tourism combines a natural, often exotic setting with one or more physically challenging activities (eg. trekking, scuba diving) and a note of controlled risk. These are typically higher-income travellers, more frequently part of an organized group, with a strong preference for 'off the beaten track' travel.
- These are the two categories of travellers who will derive the greatest level of satisfaction from the attractions that Timor-Leste has to offer, and for whom the facilities currently available are adequate. Consequently, capital requirements for start-up are minimal.
- Revenues generated by eco/adventure tourism tend to be widely distributed geographically as travellers are not limited to towns with accommodations meeting 'international' standards.

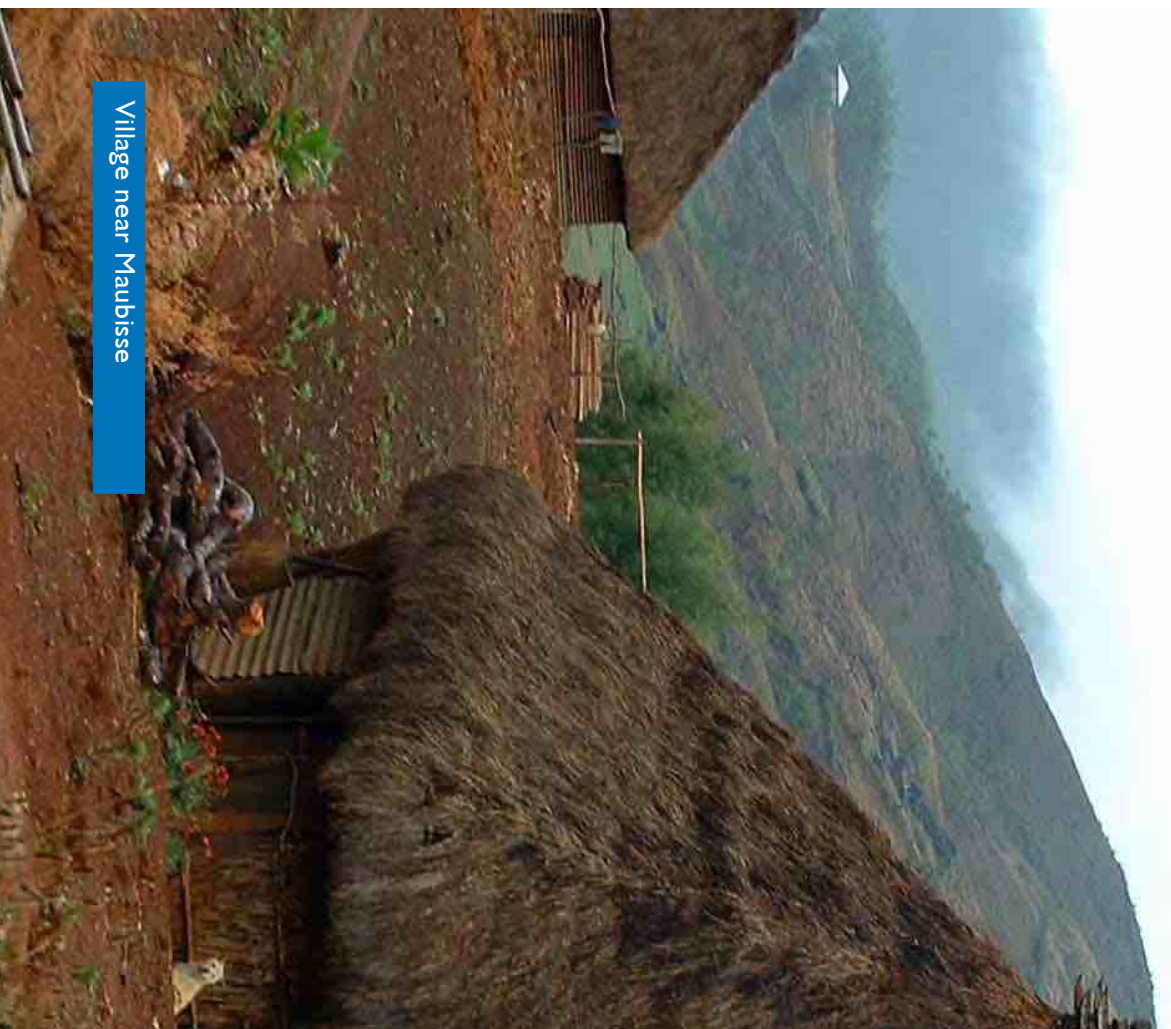
Ripening bananas



WHO ARE THE ECOTOURISTS ?

An ecotour is defined as travel that is more or less focused on nature or traditional cultures, with a strong learning element.

- Ecotourism can involve stays in or visits to entirely natural settings, as well as to organized sites such as zoos, botanical gardens or re-created traditional villages.
- Ecotourists include backpackers as well as organized groups.
- Backpackers, notably students, tend to be in the vanguard in visiting new places and are thus often the catalysts for development.
- Backpacking ecotourists in Queensland, Australia, spent an average of US\$77.39 per day, of which US\$60 on food, drink and accommodation, and the balance on shopping. These expenditures are primarily in cash and paid directly to the community. Backpacker stays averaged 27-30 days for a total expenditure of US\$2205.62.
- Independent ecotourists' sources for travel information are Lonely Planet/Rough Guide, the internet and travel agencies (the latter primarily for US travellers).
- The traditional markets for ecotourism in Asia are Australasia (Australia, Japan), northern Europe (UK) and North America. Queensland recognizes India, China and the Middle East as emerging markets with potential for growth.



Village near Maubisse

WHO ARE THE ADVENTURE TOURISTS ?

Adventure tourism combines a natural, often exotic setting with one or more physically challenging activities, a note of controlled risk and a preference for 'off the beaten track' travel.

- Adventure tourists expect luxury accommodations at the beginning and end of their trips, but are prepared to sleep in tents - rather than home-stay accommodations or inferior hotels - during the balance.
- Adventure tour operators generally employ a local 'ground operator' to oversee bookings and logistics. Trip costs are paid to the local operator who negotiates payments to individual suppliers.
- A prominent US adventure tour operator charges customers an average of US\$287 per day of travel (not including taxes or air travel), of which 55-65% (\$158-\$186) is paid to a local ground operator. The ground operator in turn will expect a profit margin of at least 40%, thereby paying a maximum of US\$94-112 daily to local suppliers.
- The typical length of an adventure tour is 15 days. However, long-haul journeys will often combine two or even three destination countries within a region, reducing the average stay in each to 5 days.
- Adventure tourists tend to offset the danger inherent in the destination and/or the activity/ies by relying on the trustworthiness of the tour operator. They are far more likely to trust an operator from their own country than any other.
- Thus adventure tourists' sources for travel information are primarily tour operators, whose information is substantiated by the internet and guide books)
- The traditional markets for adventure tourism in Asia are Australia, northern Europe (UK) and North America.



Diving at Atauro Island

MATCHING SITES WITH ACTIVITIES

Timor-Leste can currently offer many of the activities that interest to eco/adventure travellers. The exercise of matching preferred activities with key sites provides a short-list of priority areas.

The following constitutes an inventory of activities potentially available to visitors at the present time in Timor-Leste. While a few of these, such as scuba diving, are already being provided by companies, others are offered on an informal basis or require development.

- Trekking and mountain climbing
- Light walking
- Wildlife observation (land)
- Dolphin and whale-watching
- Snorkelling and scuba diving
- Fishing: traditional and deep sea
- Touring: traditional houses and craft demonstrations
 colonial buildings
 resistance sites
 urban areas/hubs
- Beach
- Horseback riding.
- Exotic flora and crops
- The traditional experience (traditional village stay)
- Mountain biking and motorbike tours
- Off-road driving



SELECTING PRIORITY SITES

Priority sites are those most likely to achieve high satisfaction levels among visitors, and as such should be the focus of both marketing and tourism development initiatives.

CRITERIA FOR SITE SELECTION

- Accessibility from major airports (initially Dili, eventually Baucau) and by road
- Appeal in terms of physical beauty, cultural richness or historical significance
- Appeal in terms of key activities (eg. scuba, mountain climbing, horse-back riding)
- Availability/quality of accommodations
- Enthusiasm of local population, and willingness to participate in development programs.

THE TOP TEN LIST

This high priority category includes those sites, or defined areas, which offer each of the above benefits.

RESEARCH AND EVOLUTION

While sites with traditional and/or colonial attractions have been fairly thoroughly documented, research relating to nature-based attractions is ongoing. Anticipated wildlife preserves are listed among the priority sites but specific information regarding the incidence of animal and botanical species in each is as yet incomplete. Additionally, many cultural centres and craft workshops are in the planning or early set-up stages, and will certainly be of interest to visitors when operational.

Chapel at Santana



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES I

ACTIVITIES	SITES AND SIGHTS
Discovery and Exploration	Everywhere
Light Walking	<p>1. Muro to Com, Lautem District</p> <p>A gentle, one-and-a-half-hour walk from the beautiful old town of Muro along the loveliest stretch of coastline in Timor-Leste. The trail passes through a palm forest and scrub inhabited by cuscus, macaques and many varieties of birds. A number of sacred sights lie along the way, notably Muro's lovely banyan alley and the 'Sacred Boat', a heap of stones thought to resemble the boat which carried Timor-Leste's first inhabitants. Com is a coastal town with beautiful houses descending the hillside to a picture-perfect beach.</p> <p>2. Mehara to Lake Ila Lalaro, Lautem District</p> <p>Gentle slopes from Mehara's Dong Son houses and resistance history to Lake Ila Lalaro, a salt water lake with crocodiles and excellent bird-watching. Beautiful semi-evergreen forests.</p> <p>3. Walu Beach/Tutuala to Lena Hara or O Hi Cave Sites, Lautem District</p> <p>Choice of several routes from coast to caves decorated by the earlier inhabitants of Timor. Overgrown meso-phyll vine forest with orchids, ferns and stunning canopy trees.</p> <p>4. Venilale area, Mundo Perdido Range, Viqueque/Baucau District</p> <p>A loop around Venilale takes in hot springs, a Portuguese village, caves in which archeological digs are yielding pottery dated to 3000BC in styles still produced locally, as well as caves used during WW2 by Japanese as arsenals and hideouts. Stunning rice paddies dotted with traditional shrines for rain-making and harvest rituals.</p> <p>5. Soibada and Laclubar area, Manatuto District</p> <p>Hills and valleys, glorious scenery of hills rolling into the distance. 19th century school in Soibada for visits and/or accommodation. Custard apple (<i>ayata</i>), pineapple, avocado, lime and orange plantations.</p>



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 2

ACTIVITIES

Light Walking, continued

SITES AND SIGHTS

6. Dare to Hera, Dili District

Beginning in the hills south of Dili, a leisurely downhill walk to the sea. Beginning in a market town with a Hindu temple, the track passes through a variety of different ecosystems including cool-weather coffee plantations, coconut groves, a eucalyptus forest and mangroves.

7. Maubisse to Hatu Bullico, Ainaro District

Hills and deep valleys, stunning alpine scenery with traditional Mambai houses and farms. Lovely walk along a gravel road from Hatu Bullico to a mimosa forest (blooms in October). The drive from Dili to Maubisse is spectacular, through rugged mountains with ribbons of rice paddies along their valleys.

8. Letefoho area, Ermera District

A loop in the foothills of Mount Rameclau. Traditional Mambai houses, Portuguese architecture, an unusual hilltop church and sacred sites with trees, springs and totems where rain rituals take place in October. Forests of eucalyptus and mimosa.

9. Ermera to Mirtutu, Ermera District

Gentle slopes from Ermera, a prosperous coffee-producing centre in Portuguese times as evidenced by lovely old buildings, notably a hilltop church. Beautiful views of coast and Atauro from Petilete, a sacred site where monthly 'Meeting the Sun' rituals take place at sunrise with singing and drumming. Forest of fruit trees (mangostine, pineapple, plums). Conis Santana's house (headquarters of the resistance movement) with secret meeting rooms and escape tunnels. A flowering, terraced rise nearby is important in traditional worship.

10. Basartete area, Liquiça District

A walk along a narrow, unused track passes through vanilla and coffee plantations, as well as forests of hibiscus and poinsettia. Great views throughout over mountains and sea.



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 3

ACTIVITIES

Trekking and Mountain Climbing

2-5 hour summit climbs or hikes over rough terrain, Can be done as day trips from key hotels/guest houses or over several days based at local facilities or campsites.

SITES AND SIGHTS

1. Viqueque to Ossu, Mundo Perdido Range, Viqueque District

The trek from Viqueque to Ossu takes about 8 hours and follows a rough track through sandalwood and teak forests crossed by rapid creeks and beautiful cataract falls. Along the way is the sacred spring of the Macassae people, believed to be guarded by a python from which they are descended. Once a mountain retreat for wealthy Portuguese, Ossu boasts a fortress with views from mountains to sea and a busy daily market.

2. Venilale to Ossu, Mundo Perdido Range, Viqueque/Baucau District

A challenging one-and-a-half hour trek through the Mundo Perdido ('Lost World') mountain range. The trek begins amid the hot springs and artistically terraced rice paddies of Venilale, climbs to high altitude with cool temperatures and barren terrain, winds up at Ossu, a former Portuguese mountain retreat overlooking the sea.

3. Mount Ramelau from Letefoho, Ermera District

From Letefoho it takes 4 hours to reach the summit of Mount Ramelau (2963m/9630 feet), and the descent can be either a return to Letefoho or a loop around to Hatu Builico. Typically climbed at dawn for a sensational sunrise view over the mountainous interior of Timor-Leste. Letefoho boasts traditional Mambai houses, Portuguese architecture, an unusual hilltop church, and a number of sacred sites with trees, springs and totems where rain rituals take place in the month of October. The track passes through forests of eucalyptus and mimosa.

4. Mount Ramelau from Hato-Builico, Ainaro District

A 2-hour strenuous, non-technical walk to the summit of Mount Ramelau (2963m/9630 feet) from the mountain village of Hatu Builico - a great base for other walks amid Mambai houses and along beautiful valleys. Typically climbed at dawn for a sensational sunrise view over the mountainous interior of Timor-Leste.



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 4

ACTIVITIES

Trekking and Mountain Climbing

continued

SITES AND SIGHTS

5. Mount Lollico, near Maliana, Bobonaro District

A 6-hour loop along the shoulders of Mount Lollico which begins in the town of Bobonaro and passes through Murobu to wind up at - and in - Maliana's hot springs. The track runs through forested and cleared areas, the latter retaining its springy humus soil. On the way, visit the famous hilltop Resistance 'post-box', and the unique cone-shaped mud-brick and thatch houses of the Tetun people.

6. Mount Cablaque, near Same, Manufahi District

A beautiful 2-hour trek from Same, a lovely mountain village, to the summit. The trail runs through lush forest and along deep valleys, passing many traditional dwellings.

7. Mount Matebian, Baucau District

This is the most difficult established trek, involving 8 hours over rough terrain (of which 4 hours to the summit). Mount Matebian is known as the 'Land of Souls' to many Timorese, who believe it to be the final destination of the souls of the dead. There is an annual pilgrimage to the summit in the month of October.

8. Basertete to Asumano, Liquiça District

A challenging 2-hour hike over steep terrain through vanilla and coffee plantations,, with gorgeous views of mountains and the coastline.



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 5

ACTIVITIES

Wildlife observation (land)

SITES AND SIGHTS

1. Lake Ila Lalaro, Lautem District

A saltwater lake with crocodiles and a huge variety of birds (over non-migratory 200 species). Semi-evergreen to montaine rainforests as well as pasture land for herds of water buffalo and horses.

2. Tutuala and To-Tina (Jaco Island), Lautem District

Birds, turtles (green, hawksbill, leatherback, olive and loggerhead sighted), long-tailed macaques and cuscus.

3. Sungai and Clere Reserves, near Betano, Manufahi District

Wetlands and estuaries with mangroves provide a habitat for fish, crocodiles and shrimp which local residents catch by hand or in weirs

4. Laga, Baucau District

Long-tailed macaque and cuscus

5. Metinaro area, Dili District

Birds, crocodiles and shellfish in protected mangroves

6. Maubara Lake, Liquiça District

A saltwater lake with pelicans, black and white herons and a variety of predatory birds.

Horseback trekking

A great way to travel for experienced riders

7. Lake Ila Lalaro, Lautem District

8. Badugade to Suai area, Bobonaro and Suai Districts



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 6

ACTIVITIES	SITES AND SIGHTS
Whale and dolphin-watching Several companies operating with good watercraft	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Atauro Island, Dili District (by boat)2. Coastal road between Dili and Manatuto, Dili and Manatuto Districts (from land)3. Carambola, Liquiça District (from land)4. Oecussi, Oecussi District (by boat)
Snorkelling Fantastic reefs teeming with sealife close to shore Several PAD/NAUI-certified companies operating offering all equipment available for rental and good watercraft	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Tutuala and To-Tina (Jaco Island), Lautem District Shallow corals, huge fish and endangered sea turtles just offshore. At Walu Beach the reef is exposed at low tide, with fish and other sea creatures caught between the corals.6. Com area, Lautem District Corals and a fabulous array of tropical fish.7. Coastal beaches between Dili and Manatuto, Dili and Manatuto Districts Many options, all from lovely quiet beaches a short distance from the coastal road. Three favourites: 'The Wall', where snorkellers see through transparent water to the top of a stunning coral wall; 'Bubble Beach' owes its name to the submarine volcanic activity which sends bubbles to the water's surface; K41 reef wall and gentle slopes with massive corals and sponges.8. Atauro Island, Dili District 1 hour by boat from Dili. Snorkel off deserted beaches or near island villages.



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 7

ACTIVITIES		SITES AND SIGHTS	
Scuba Diving Pristine coral reefs and fabulously rich and varied sealife, including pelagics and bottom dwellers. New species being discovered and many sites yet to be explored.	Fishing: in traditional canoes Join villagers to fish in dugout outrigger canoes	1. Tutuala and To-Tina (Jaco Island), Lautem District	
		2. Coastal beaches between Dili and Manatuto, Dili and Manatuto Districts Walk-in dive sites or access by boat. Manates in areas of sea grass.	
Best Beaches		3. Between Dili and Atauro Island, Dili District Underwater rock formation ('Dili Rock') encrusted with hard and soft corals. Turtles, manta rays and lionfish sighted regularly. Terrific night diving	
		4. Atauro Island, Dili District Fabulous reef walls and a good chance to swim with dolphins and pilot whales. Manta rays.	
		5. Tutuala and To-Tina (Jaco Island), Lautem District	
		6. Manatuto, Manatuto District	
		7. Tutuala and To-Tina (Jaco Island), Lautem District	
		8. Com, Lautem District	
		9. Cristo Rei, Dili District, and east to Manatuto, Manatuto District	



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 8

ACTIVITIES

Major towns

SITES AND SIGHTS

Dili, Dili District

Timor-Leste's largest town, population 150,000, is fronted by a long beach where residents meet to socialize, shop for fresh fish and graze their goats and pigs. Beautiful views across to Atauro Island and along to the imposing statue of Christ on a promontory. Many restored Portuguese buildings among ruins dating from the 1999 conflicts and a variety of shops and sites reflecting the town's cultural mix. Excellent restaurants: Portuguese, Chinese, Indian and Continental (very acceptable *café lattes* available in several places); Dili Cultural Centre (May 2003) in Dili's oldest building with National Museum and Art Gallery; Xanana Reading Room (focusing on Resistance artifacts); large *tais* market and several interesting food markets; Hindu and Confucian temples; Mosque; Morael Church (with two captive crocodiles); Santa Cruz Cemetery; Dare mountain village

Baucau, Baucau District

The second-largest town in Timor-Leste is set high on a plateau overlooking the sea. The main part of town derives a decidedly Portuguese flavour from the Bishop's residence and a beautiful old market square with restored colonial buildings. The beachfront is a short drive or 30 minutes' walk downhill through a residential area of thatched houses set among coconut groves, rice paddies and the occasional sandalwood tree.

Portuguese fortress at the waterfront with a ruined church, a watchtower, a storehouse and an arsenal, as well as WW2 vintage Japanese bunkers. The beach is unique: freshwater springs make pools amid the white sand and run into the sea. An ancient banyan tree with a huge canopy stands at the end of the beach shading a beautiful fresh spring.

INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 9

ACTIVITIES

SITES AND SIGHTS

Traditional sites

1. Laga, Baucau District

Laga, located 20 minutes' drive east of Baucau, is notable for the traditional Macassae fishermen's houses strung along the beach with gardens that bloom virtually all year round. Rice paddies surround the village and, unusually, extend right to the edge of the sand. An old Portuguese garrison lies just outside the village, which is protected by an old Dutch fortress on a mountainside nearby.

2. Mehara, Lautem District

Site of a number of unusual and highly decorated houses built in the Dong Son style, which originated in northern Vietnam.

3. Muro, Lautem District

UNESCO is funding the restoration of two traditional sacred houses which shelter the *lulik*, holy treasures, of the region's clan, the Fataluku, in Muro. The *lulik* in these houses can be visited by appointment and include talismans made from the feathers of rare birds, centuries old gold and silver pieces still used at weddings, antique woven cloths and guns. An easy uphill walk passes a number of sacred springs encircled by huge ban-yan trees, from the branches of which hang offerings such as the skins and skulls of animals (birds, buffalo and deer). Water and trees are seen to be the sources of life, while the sun provides warmth and clarity; hence a place where all three meet so closely is a holy as can be.

4. Turuala hinterland and Walu Beach, Lautem District

Proof of early Timorese arrivals lies in several caves in this area, decorated with paintings believed to be between 5000 and 30,000 years old (testing under way). Totems mark the 'actual' landing spot of the first settlers. All sites accessible only on foot.



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 10

ACTIVITIES

SITES AND SIGHTS

Portuguese colonial sites

1. Maliana area, Bobonaro District

Barugade and its fortress marked the frontier between Portuguese and Dutch territories, and now straddles the border between West Timor and Timor-Leste. A winding road leads from the town into the mountains, passing several houses which combine Portuguese architecture with typically Timorese building materials. This is horse country, a legacy of the Portuguese cavalry which bred and trained its mounts here. Bolibo's sad heritage includes the deaths in October 1975 of five members of the Australian media, who were killed while monitoring the invading Indonesian military. It is nonetheless a pretty town with a decidedly Portuguese flavour. From here the road crosses the Lois River, a gravelly bed during the dry season but a torrent during the monsoons. Rice paddies and fruit orchards lead the way into Maliana. Although badly damaged during the 1999 conflicts, Maliana has retained its charm with walled Portuguese houses climbing a steep slope.

2. Muro, Lautem District

A Portuguese beach resort, Muro is an artistically deteriorating town set on a magnificent white sand beach. Everything here is within walking distance. A row of faded, honey-toned 19th century townhouses faces the beach which stretches all the way from Lautem to Com.

World War II sites

3. Australian War Memorial, Dare, Dili District

This building and adjacent swimming pool, now fallen into disrepair and disuse, occupies the site of the original Australian Mission. In 1945, the building was converted into a war memorial in thanks to the Timorese for their support of the Australian 'Sparrow Force' that held out against the Japanese during WW2.

4. Venilale, Baucau District

Caves used and expanded by Japanese troops as arsenals and hideouts.



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES II

ACTIVITIES

Resistance Sites

SITES AND SIGHTS

1. Santa Cruz Cemetery, Dili

On November 12, 1991, Indonesian militia opened fire on a rally staged in this cemetery to commemorate the death of a Resistance fighter two weeks earlier. The event received worldwide media attention and is credited in Timorese history as marking the inevitable end of Indonesian control.

2. Mehara, Lautem District

Xanana, then a Resistance leader and now President of Timor-Leste, hid in the traditional Faraluku houses in Mehara in the early 1980s.

3. Aileu, Aileu District

Training camp and headquarters of the Resistance forces

4. Ermera Village area, Ermera District

Home of Nino Conis Santana, a Resistance leader. Under the house are meeting rooms and escape tunnels.

5. Mount Loliao, near Maliana, Bobonaro District

Within an area noted for the cone-shaped, mud-brick and thatch houses of the Tetun people, high on the flanks of Mount Loliao, lies a cave used for many years as a post-box for the Resistance fighters.



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 12

ACTIVITIES

Exotic flora and crops

SITES AND SIGHTS

1. Ermera, Ermera District

Timor-Leste's most extensive coffee plantations. The unique *arabica-robusta* hybrid grown here is a shade-loving plant which flourishes large-canopied *albizia* trees. The high quality beans produced are shipped, unroasted, all over the world, although a fairly substantial portion remains on the island as Timorese are avid coffee-drinkers. After the harvest the villagers spread the beans along the roadsides, using the hot tarmac and the sun to do the drying.

2. Dare and Balibar, Dili District

A lovely road winds through virgin rain forest, where the branches of huge trees carry a wide variety of ferns, including staghorn. Coffee plantations are found nearby at slightly lower altitude, and pineapple and jackfruit trees abound, as do clove and cinnamon plants.

3. Aileu, Aileu District

This area is said to resemble Nepal by virtue of the ribbon of rice paddies which lies at the base of steep mountainsides.

4. Venilale, Baucau District

Beautifully terraced rice paddies, as well as a reek forest with occasional sandalwood trees.



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 12

ACTIVITIES

Miscellaneous

SITES AND SIGHTS

1. Maliana-Murobu, Bobonaro District

Thermal baths

2. Venilale, Baucau District

Thermal baths

3. Atauro Island, Dili District

Hot springs on the north side of the island

4. Between Letefoho and Atsabe

Bandeira waterfall

5. Cape Fatucama, Dili District

The majestic Cristo Rei statue, reached via 460 steps and bas-reliefs of the 14 stations of the cross, offers sensational views along the coast from its position atop a rocky headland. The statue was built by the Indonesians and is exactly 27m/87.75 feet high to reflect East Timor's status at the time of building as Indonesia's 27th province. There are lovely beaches between Dili and the statue, notably Areia Branca ('white sand' in Portuguese).

6. On the Dili-Liquiça Road

Residents extract salt from mud by filtering it through tall wooden structures containing screens and palm leaves.



INVENTORY OF KEY SITES 13

ACTIVITIES

Traditional Crafts

SITES AND SIGHTS

1. Dili, Dili District

Woven textiles (ikat and sungket) from all areas of Timor-Leste and certain other types of handwork are available at the Tais Market in the Colmera section of Dili

2. Baucau, Baucau District

Pottery

3. Manatuto, Manatuto District

Pottery

4. Tutuala, Lautem District

Pottery

5. Liquiça, Liquiça District

Basketry

6. Viqueque, Viqueque District

Weaving, using locally-harvested kapok fibres, organic dyes and traditional looms.



THE TOP TEN LIST

These sites have it all: natural beauty, cultural richness and a range of possibilities for activities. These are Timor-Leste's 'must-see' spots for marketing purposes.

TUTUALA & TO-TINA (JACO ISLAND)

- Pristine white sand beaches and transparent waters teeming with underwater life
 - terrific snorkelling; coral reefs with trapped sea life accessible on foot at low tide
 - villagers will take visitors fishing by day or night in dugout canoes
 - five species of endangered sea turtles
- Key Timorese cultural/historical importance as landing site of early settlers
 - cave and shelter paintings have been dated to southward migrations from Asia
- Natural mesophyll vine forest (rainforest) thick with orchids and ferns, as well as monsoon forest with banyan, rosewood and fig trees
 - resident wildlife includes the now rare *Russo Timores* deer, cuscus and over 200 species of birds
 - lake inhabited by salt-water crocodiles
- Craft traditions, including pottery, weaving and carving, which date back over 1000 years
 - numerous pottery workshops producing work identical to pieces recently unearthed by archeologists in the area
 - local ikat weaving patterns bearing animist symbols
- Traditional houses and sacred sites
 - banyan-encircled springs at Muro
 - Dong Son style houses at Mehara
- Portuguese colonial architecture
 - notably at Muro

THE TOP TEN LIST 2

BAUCAU AREA, BAUCAU/MIQUEQUE DISTRICTS

- **Baucau:** overlooks the sea from a high plateau with lovely Portuguese colonial buildings and an attractive residential area of traditional houses
 - the Pousada de Baucau, a Portuguese-style inn, combines charm and sea views with international standards
 - excellent base for explorations to the south and east
 - thatched houses surrounded by coconut groves and rice paddies and overlooking the sea occupy the slope below town
 - beautiful beach with fresh water springs
- **Laga:** noted for its lush rice paddies, often partially submerged in the sea, and for its flowering cottage gardens.
- **Venilale:** favoured by Portuguese colonials for cool summer temperatures and natural hot springs.
 - beautiful terraced rice paddies.
 - cave systems used as hideouts and arsenals by WW2 Japanese troops where recent archeological digs have yielded a wealth of prehistoric artifacts
- **Ossu:** boasts traditional houses, Portuguese fortifications, a lively daily market and a dramatic sacred waterfall.
- **Viqueque:** surrounded by rice paddies and famed for its weavers
 - textiles made from locally-harvested kapok and dyed with plants and berries produced on traditional looms in virtually every household
 - a unique culinary tradition with pumpkin flowers and other unusual aromatics
- **Mount Marebian:** in local lore the final resting place of departed Timorese, and a challenging climb.
- **Mundo Perdido** ('Lost World') Mountain Range: a protected wild zone and an excellent trekking area



The pousada at Baucau

THE TOP TEN LIST 3

MANATUTO DISTRICT

- Spans Timor-Leste from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean covering an extraordinary range of landscapes and ecosystems.
 - one of the country's least populated regions, its beaches, villages and landscapes have remained virtually unchanged for millennia
 - a rough hiking trail leads the length of the district
- Manatuto: a pretty fishing village at the mouth of the Sumasse River.
 - fishing village with day or night expeditions in (motorized) dugout canoes available to visitors
 - catch can be prepared and served at a restaurant on the beach
- Excellent hiking between Laclubar and Soibada
 - plantations of custard apples, pineapples, avocados and citrus fruits
 - increasingly rugged hills (up to about 1300m.) and deep valleys cut by seasonal rivers; exposed veins of white marble
 - steep climbs rewarded by sensational views of peaks and crests fading into the distance, with an occasional glimpse of the ocean.
 - acacia, fig, banyan and rosewood, the latter playing host to a wide variety of orchids and ferns
 - a 19th century school at Soibada welcomes visits and offers rustic accommodation
- The Clere and Sungai river estuaries: protected wild zones
 - mangroves thrive in accumulated sand which traps fish and shrimp in pools, an event much appreciated by local residents who catch them by hand.

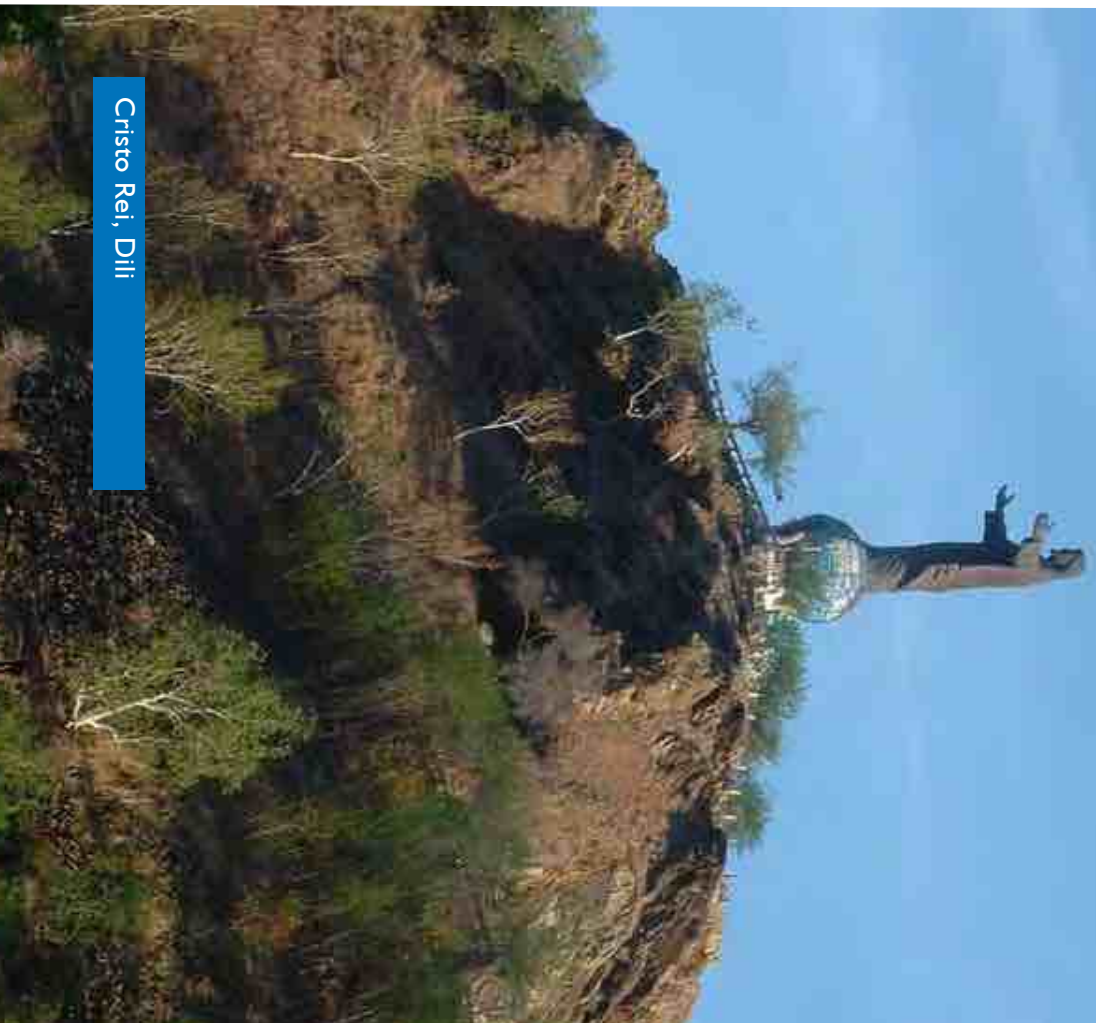


Rice paddies at Aileu

THE TOP TEN LIST 4

DILI AREA, DILI DISTRICT

- Dili's undeniable and infectious charm mirrors the spirit and optimism of this little country that refuses to give up
 - Capital and largest city of Timor-Leste with a population of 150,000
 - beautifully situated on a wide, beach-fringed bay at the base of steep hills; at one end of the bay a 100-foot statue of Christ, at the other a centuries-old lighthouse. Atauro Island opposite
 - waterfront dominated by Portuguese colonial buildings, notably the Presidential Palace (government offices), the Cultural Centre (formerly Portuguese military barracks) and a white church
 - promenade along the city beach shaded by massive banyan trees, favourite spot for swimming, socializing and shopping for fresh fish
 - majority of the city's buildings either rebuilt in 1999 following the conflicts or still in a half-ruined state; many now occupied by small shops
- Cultural diversity and a mixed approach to the 21st century
 - within steps of each other, a Chinese general store, an internet centre and a tin-roofed shack hung with pineapples and ribbons of candy
 - terrific food: fresh fish cooked in Portuguese or Timorese styles, as well as Indian, Chinese, American and European; first class cappuccinos available at several sidewalk cafés.
 - all forms of worship: a Portuguese-built Catholic church lies a short walk from a mosque, a Buddhist shrine and a Hindu temple
- Several in town touring options
 - Cultural Centre (historic/contemporary artifacts and art)
 - Xanana Reading Room (Resistance memorabilia)
 - Tais Market (woven textiles and other crafts)
 - three outdoor food markets with artistically displayed exotic produce
- Rainforest, coffee plantations, diving and dolphin-watching
 - The road up to neighbouring Dare passes through natural forest of banyan, fig and rosewood trees hung with ferns and orchids, and a small coffee plantation with clove, pepper and raminand plants
 - Atauro Island offers some of the best snorkelling/scuba sites, as well as a good chance of spotting dolphins and pilot whales.



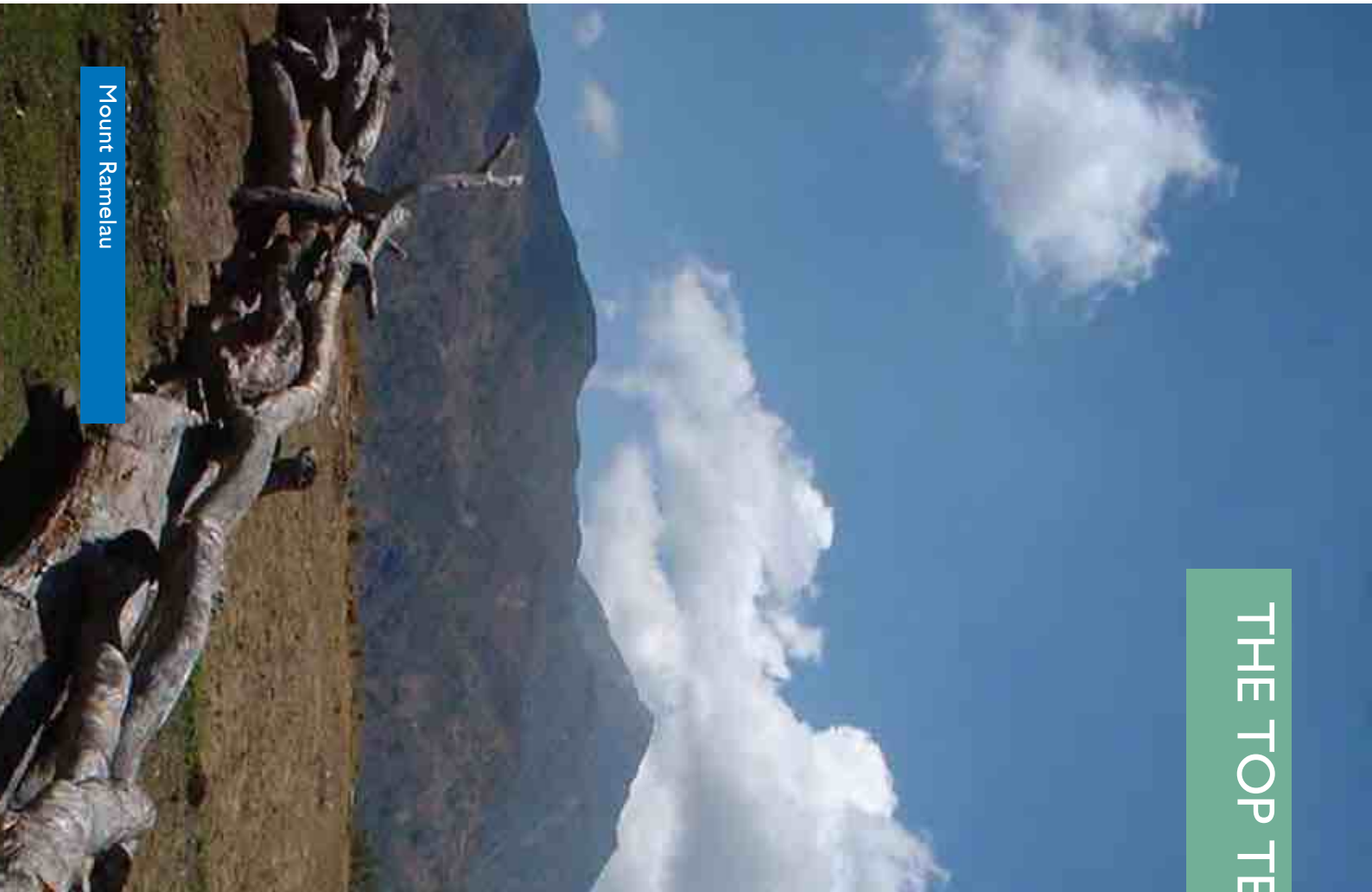
Cristo Rei, Dili

THE TOP TEN LIST 5

BOBONARO DISTRICT

- **Lois River:** largest river system with freshwater crocodiles surrounded by newly-established corn, peanut and soybean plantings
- **Badugade:** has marked the Dutch/Portuguese and later West Timor/Timor-Leste border for almost 500 years
 - Portuguese fortress
- **Balibo:** the site of the October 1975 murder of five foreign journalists who were attempting to monitor the invasion by Indonesian troops
- **Maliana:** lush southern floodplains of the Lois River
 - home to the Kemak people, whose stilted, rectangular houses stand among the rice paddies and who are known for their black *ikat* textiles
 - Maliana town offers spectacular views across the plains to the Atsabe, Loilaco and Lolotoi Mountains, and a charming hilltop *posada* run by Resistance widows.
 - bountiful source of fruit, including mangoes, and vegetables
- **Mount Loilaco:** spectacular mountain noted as location of the secret Resistance 'postbox'
- **Marubo:** hot spring pools near a ruined Portuguese hotel and cavalry post
 - a French anthropologist has spent a decade here cataloguing oral history and reviving weaving traditions
- **Lolotoi:** a community in the clouds and prime highlands coffee country, cool crisp weather.
 - Catholic mission of the Claretian Order hosts guests in a lovely house featuring spring-fed showers

Mount Ramelau



THE TOP TEN LIST 6

LETEFOHO (OR GLENO) DISTRICT

Stunning mountainous countryside lying to the northwest of Mount Ramelau.

- A very pretty town with traditional Mambai houses, some Portuguese buildings and a number of sacred sites composed of trees, totems and springs.
 - unusual church topped with a steeple in the shape of enormous praying hands
- Terrific walking through traditional villages strung along a high (1500-1600m) ridge with eagles flying overhead
 - imposing statue of Jesus Christ on hilltop, controversially built on the site of the burial place of local monarchs
 - breathtaking views across rolling grass fields to Mount Ramelau, or along a deep crevice valley towards Lolico and Mount Cablake.
 - walking trails through forests of mimosa and eucalyptus

FOHOREM DISTRICT

Time has stood still in this difficult-to-access area at the southwestern extreme of Timor-Leste

- Suai area: offers a coastal landscape reminiscent of Wales but with the added feature of black sand beaches
 - dramatic ruined Portuguese fortress.
 - accommodation among missionaries who travel by foot or on horseback
 - massive unfinished basilica in Suai, which housed many refugees during the conflicts.
 - the town of Suai sprawls across several Tetun villages, as well as a Balinese settlement and Hindu temple.
 - age-old salt extraction process in the mudflats, undertaken by women

THE TOP TEN LIST 7

- Tilomar: boasts an old governor's residence and views over the coast

ATAURO ISLAND

A rocky island set an hour by boat from the town of Dili, Atauro is particularly noted for the fabulous scuba and snorkelling opportunities along its coast.

- steep underwater walls are encrusted with enormous corals, which provide a habitat for countless fish
- pelagic marine species, such as tuna, are common
- sightings of dolphins and pilot whales are virtually guaranteed year round
- the island's shore is characterized by its many limestone shelves, indicating fairly recent geological activity

MOUNT RAMELAU

At 2963m/9630 feet, Timor-Leste's highest mountain offers a challenging climb and stunning views from the summit

- can be approached from one of two lovely valley villages, Haru Bulico or Maubisse
- the climb is traditionally undertaken by Timorese to bless major life changes, such as marriage or travel abroad. October 10 is the date of an annual pilgrimage to the summit marking both harvest rituals and Christian celebrations
- a wide area encompassing the flanks and summit of the mountain is an environmentally protected zone and will eventually be a national park



Family near Ermera

THE TOP TEN LIST 8

OECUSSI

Although physically isolated from the balance of Timor-Leste, this tiny enclave of 50,000 people bravely voted to secede from Indonesia in the 1999 referendum and throw in its lot with the newly independent nation.

- Dominican missionaries arrived at Lifau in 1540 and established Portugal's first settlement on the island of Timor. A garrison was later established on the site, and some of its walls still stand.
- Climb a stunning dormant volcano, camp in wild mountainous terrain.
- Glorious white sand beaches with excellent snorkelling and dolphin-watching opportunities.



Horses in Aileu District

LAND: PRIORITY SITE

Fataluku Land has been identified as the first priority site by virtue of its beautiful landscapes, varied wildlife and cultural wealth

MAJOR ATTRACTIONS

- fabulous white sand beaches
- superb snorkelling and diving at Tutuala and To-Tina (Jaco Island)
- boating and fishing opportunities in traditional canoes with villages
- traditional houses
- craft heritage
- prehistoric caves
- rich wildlife, including several endangered species of birds, reptiles and mammals

PLACES TO GO

Sacred Walu Beach and the **O Hi cave site** are the earliest known sites in Timor, believed to date back some 40,000 years. The **Ili Kerekere cave site** is thought to be the grave of the first man to have landed on Timor.

To-Tina (Jaco Island) Crystal waters, turtles and traditional fishing

Lene Hara cave site is a large and deep cave with paintings of celestial objects, fish and other sea creatures, fertility and life symbols (turtles), figures with important head-dresses and dancing figures (S-shapes).

Lake Ila Lalaro is a salt lake with crocodiles, lotus flowers, waterlilies, pelicans. Horseback trekking available

Mehara and **Muro** Many of the Dong Song style houses here are still inhabited.

Muro's lovely Portuguese architecture is worth a detour, as are the many sacred houses containing community talismans



Ili Kerekere cave site

FATALUKU LAND: PRIORITY SITE 2

Pots in Lospalos Perfectly spherical pots made without the use of a potting wheel or even a mold, a skill passed down over some 10,000 years.

Carvings Traditional sandalwood carvings are found here, and master craftsman, Faustino, sets the national standard.

Weaving in Tutuala Cloths woven by Tutuala women are known for their story-telling graphics. Watch for the crocodile, ancestor of all Timorese.

Turtle shell carving in Tutuala Only one man in Timor-Leste has permission to work with turtle shells. Lourenço has been recognized by UNESCO for his outstanding artistry.



Fisherman

PROGRAMS/SERVICES FOR TOP TEN SITES

In preparing ourselves to provide the best possible experience for our guests while optimizing community benefits, programs and services take the place of capital investment

- Basic accommodations or beautiful sites for camping exist at each of ten sites identified. There is therefore no urgent need to invest capital in constructing tourist facilities at this point: we will work with what we have:
 - Several beautifully-sited little inns (*pousadas*) were built by the Portuguese in the 1950s. These have been allowed to fall into neglect and could be upgraded at little cost
 - Community input will be sought at every step of the way, and participation encouraged.
 - Support programs as described under Homestay Facilities, Feedback and Record-Keeping, Camping and Fostering Tradition will go some way to ensuring equitable distribution of revenues.
- Support services: to the extent that this is possible, ensure that these sites receive priority treatment in
 - upgrading of infrastructure (power, water, telecommunications and sewerage)
 - emergency evacuation services
 - provision of medical services
 - banking facilities (eg MLET)



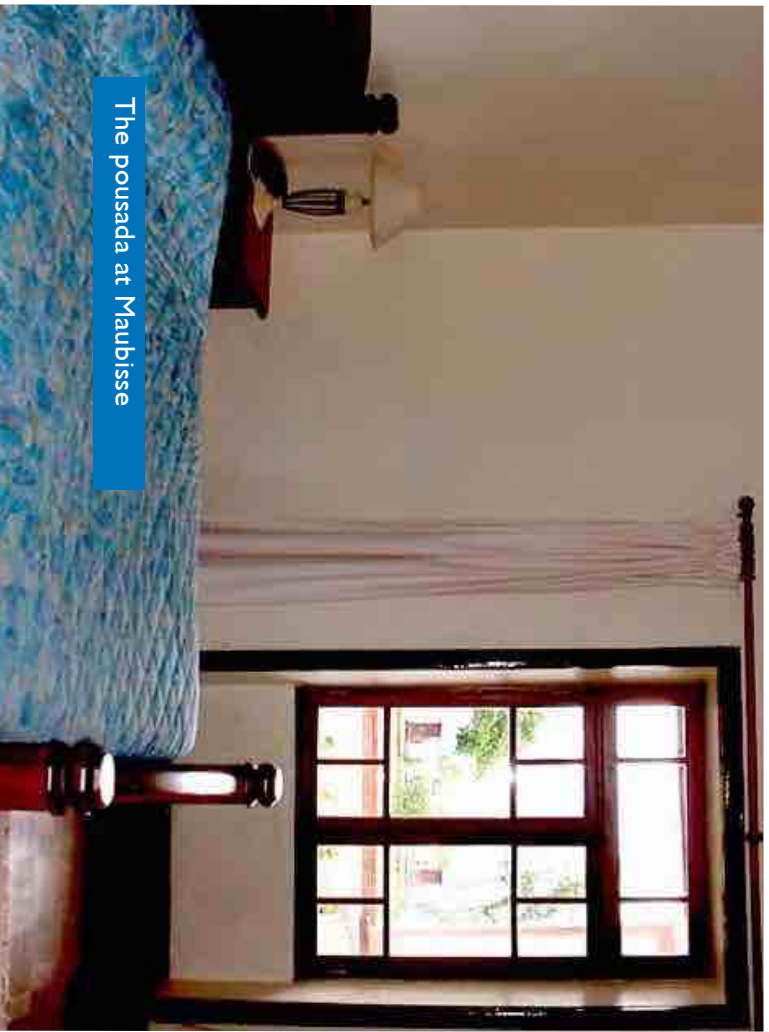
Dili scene



FORMAL ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES

Timor-Leste offers a limited number of near-luxury hotels in Dili and Baucau, and a range of inexpensive - and often unusual - options sprinkled around the countryside

- An inventory has been initiated of Timor-Leste's 'formal' accommodation facilities, which include
 - near luxury hotels in Dili and Baucau
 - refurbished pousadas, in various states of readiness
- There are as well less some formal options yet to be catalogued:
 - convents and monasteries in each district offer accommodations and food to a small number of travellers
 - Timorese households supplying simple accommodations to travellers



The pousada at Maubisse

INVENTORY OF ACCOMMODATIONS I

Rating: Near luxury, Very comfortable, Comfortable, Rustic, Adequate

NAME	LOCATION	NO. ROOMS	RATING	PRICE (US\$)	RESERVATIONS
Dili					
Hotel Timor	Downtown	40 double	Near luxury	120-200.00*	
Central Maritime	Downtown-dock	100 double	Near luxury	100-240.00	+670(390)311600 cmhdili@yahoo.com
Farol Hotel	Dili-Farol	7 single, 11 double	Near luxury	50-120.00	local cell 040 918 9987 xinguangsong@hotmail.com
Dom Aleixo	Downtown	21 double	Comfortable	45-55.00	+670(390)323888 domaleixo@yahoo.com
Hotel Lorosae/Resende	Downtown	47+ double	Range	40-420.00	local cell 418834195 Lorosacedili@hotmail.com
Sebastiao da Costa	Downtown	15 single, 10 double	Very comfortable	40-60.00**	+670(390) 321465 local cell 0438 903 016 enquiry@hotelesbastiao.com
Oceanview Beach	Dili-Bebonuk	2 single, 6 double	Comfortable	40-60.00	
Hotel Galaxi	Downtown	2 single, 21 double	Comfortable	40-50.00*	local cell 0407723287 +670 390 325083
Dili 2000	Dili-Catedral	33 double	Very comfortable	35-60.00*	+670(390)321667 dili2000@singnet.com.sg
Hotel Tropical	Downtown	17 single, 20 double	Comfortable	35-40.00*	local cell 0407723287 +670 390 325083
Timor Lodge	Airport	174 double (+villas)	Adequate	33-66.00	+670(390)324227
Audian Hotel	Edge of town	42 double	Comfortable	30-60.00*	670(390)323080 enquires@hotelaudian.com
Hotel Dili	Downtown	15 single, 24 double	Range	25-60.00*	
Dili 2001	Dili-Cristo Rei		Comfortable	25-60.00*	+670(390) 311237
Paximus Lodge	Downtown	85 double	Adequate	20-25.00	+670(390) 313272 dili@brice-eng.com.au

INVENTORY OF ACCOMMODATIONS 2

NAME	LOCATION	NO. ROOMS	RATING	PRICE (US\$)	RESERVATIONS
Wisma Cendana	Dili-Colmera	14 doubles	Comfortable	20-25.00	+61 417 793 519 wisma_cendana@yahoo.com
Carta Mansion	Downtown	20 double	Very comfortable	17-32.00*	+67 0 390 311237 fax +67 0 390 311 238
Hotel Turismo	Downtown	49 double	Very Comfortable	15-40.00*	fax +67 0(390)323180
Purple Cow	Dili-Crisro Rei	9 single, 1 double	Comfortable	14-20.00*	0011 61 438 411 748 jenny@nl.com.au
Furo	Dili-Comuro	23 double		10.00	
Hotel Plaza	Downtown		Comfortable		00161-418805966 fax +67 0 390 324646
Hotel Esplanada	Downtown		Very comfortable		
City Hotel	Downtown		Very comfortable		
Sakura Hotel	Downtown	24 apartments	Very comfortable		
Vasco de Gama	Downtown	10 double	Very comfortable		
Timor Aid Guest House***	Downtown	10 double	Comfortable		
Maliana District					
Solimea Guest House		7 double		5.00	
Maga Meran Guest House		11 double		5.00	
Riski Guest House		4 double		10-15.00	
Maubisse					
Maubisse Pousada				60.00	
Manatuto District					
Copa Losmen		5 double		Aus\$ 25.00	

* includes taxes and breakfast ** includes breakfast *** student hostel

INVENTORY OF ACCOMMODATIONS 3

NAME	LOCATION	NO. ROOMS	RATING	PRICE (US\$)	RESERVATIONS
Baucau District	Baucau Pousada				
	Loro Sae Hotel	8 double		10.00	
	Lospalos District				
Esperanca Guest House		2 double		8.00	
OMT Guest House		4 double		10.00	
27 Guest House		3 double		8.00	
Com Beach Resort		9 double		40-42.50	
Community Guest House		9 double			
Viqueque District					
Luminar Losmen		4 double		5.00	
Manufahi District					
Same Hotel		9 double			
Same Guest House		5 double			
Suai District					
Covalima Guest House		7 double			
Hotel Suai		7 double			
Timor Aid Guest House		2 double			
Oecussi District					
Oecussi Guest House					

CAMPING

Guidelines for camping, at least in the Top Ten sites, should be formalized in order to avoid both environmental and social problems

- Ideal campsites must be identified, marked, cleared and maintained
 - General ground rules for camping need to be established, particularly with regard to environmental issues such as waste disposal and user fees
 - These ground rules must be included in travel information. A summary might be made available in a prominent display at the airports for arriving visitors.
 - Campsites might be on government or privately/communally-owned land
 - if government-owned, an arrangement might be reached with a village to maintain the site in exchange for user fees paid directly by the campers
 - if privately/communally-owned, the proprietor/s have the right to charge and keep user fees
- (see Community Measures)



Horses in Aileu District

HOMESTAY FACILITIES

Villager initiatives to offer homestay accommodation or other tourist services provide direct income and should be encouraged. Consultations and training programs would support these activities in many ways

CONSULTATIONS

- Gauge villagers' enthusiasm and willingness to meet and host visitors
- Convey basic differences in behaviour, needs and preferences between Timorese and international guests
- Determine interest in providing services such as accommodations, meals, demonstrations (dance, crafts, fishing, etc.).
- Discuss fair market value for goods and services, and if/how earnings should be shared
- Discuss ground rules for both hosts and visitors

HOSPITALITY TRAINING

- Basic English
- Housekeeping, hygiene and meals
- Cultural knowledge for guides and hosts

REWARDING EXCELLENCE

Eventually a licensing requirement for homestay accommodations should be established in order to set standards for quality and service. In the early stages, however, a system of awards for excellence, with framed certificates for winners, might be considered.

FOSTERING TRADITION

Coldly put, tradition can be profitable. While fostering cultural traditions will do much to sustain the Timorese identity, it can also have a very positive effect on material standards of living

The strategy here is to identify the artistic/cultural traditions of each area, and provide as much support as possible to producers and potential producers.

'Traditions' are defined as

- Crafts, such as pottery, weaving, basketry and carving
- Dancing, singing
- Architecture
- Cooking

Timor-Leste has a number of unique artistic traditions. Efforts are being made to find markets abroad for the best of these, which would not only generate income and pride but would also function as tourism marketing tool.

- A number of uniquely Timorese artforms, such as pottery and house styles, could be applied on T-shirt, postcards and paper goods for sale as souvenir items.
- Although there are various indigenous forms of Timorese cuisine, these have not been catalogued. Many would consider a Timorese cookbook as a valuable cultural record - not to mention a marketable souvenir.

Chief and totem at Letefoho



FEEDBACK AND RECORD-KEEPING

Feedback is an essential component of community participation and measuring satisfaction from all participants.

FEEDBACK

Feedback from service providers/hosts and visitors should be obtained and applied to future planning.

- Visitors can be encouraged to post comments via the official website or using a form available at airport departure points
- Gathering feedback from villagers should be an integral part of the consultation process
 - what works for us and what doesn't
 - did the visitor/s seem satisfied: if yes, what made them happy; if no, what went wrong.
 - Comments and advice from participants could be circulated to others interested in providing tourism services

RECORD-KEEPING

- Hosts at accommodation facilities should be encouraged to maintain a guest log for statistical use (guests can complete entries), including
 - Number of guests and nationalities
 - Dates and duration of stay
 - Previous and next stops



Mountain children

MEASURING SUCCESS

The success of tourism development initiatives should be measured in both quantifiable terms and satisfaction levels

QUANTIFIABLE TERMS

- Volume of tourists (hotel and guest log records)
- Revenue from tourism
- Number of local providers of
 - traditional products (workshops and sales outlets)
 - food (restaurants and stalls)
 - accommodation facilities
 - guide services
- Level of foreign investment in the tourism sector

SATISFACTION LEVELS

- Feedback from villagers
- Visible improvements in standards of living
- Completed visitor feedback forms and comments posted on the official website
- Media reports



Freshly caught

TOURISM TASK LIST

TOURISM INITIATIVES

- Accumulate photolibrary for marketing purposes
- Develop maps for walkers and trekkers
- Obtain/develop inventories by location and tourist information for
 - wildlife species, marine and land
 - key prehistoric sites
 - key traditional houses
 - key colonial buildings
 - key resistance sites
 - best beaches
 - horseback riding.
 - exotic flora and crops
 - finalize and maintain hotel and inn inventory
- Identify possible sites for village homestays
- Develop guidelines for camping with Department of the Environment
- Identify priority campsites, develop signage
- Arrange camping permissions and site upkeep with landowners or nearest villagers
- Develop consultation and training programs for communities in priority sites
- Develop feedback materials for providers and guests, and system for collating them
- Develop awards program for host villagers

ISSUES

- Security and emergency evacuation system
- Healthcare for travellers

MARKETING MONIKERS

How does Timor-Leste want to be known for the purpose of attracting travellers ?

- Countries around the world use a short, sharp phrase to define themselves for tourism marketing purposes. Examples include:
 - Malaysia: Fascinating Destinations
 - Korea: The Nearest Country
 - Indonesia: Your Genuine Experience
 - Papua New Guinea: Your Journey to Paradise
 - Thailand: The Land of Smiles



Fish market in Dili

COOPERATIVE MARKETING

Cost-effective promotional opportunities can be achieved through joint marketing initiatives with gateway areas or regional travel associations.

- A 2002 report released by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) predicts that although tourist volumes will regain 2001 levels by 2003, “travel patterns are set to become much more short-haul and intra-regional with people travelling closer to home, reducing their advance booking periods and the number of days spent aboard.”

JOINT MARKETING INITIATIVES

- Currently, Timor-Leste is accessible by air through Denpasar, Bali and Darwin, Australia. Both these regions offer attractions complementary to Timor-Leste’s, and are well-established with their markets.
- There would be an inherent benefit of association with these destinations, which could be achieved by working with the respective tourist boards to develop and promote itineraries that include both regions.

REGIONAL TRAVEL ASSOCIATIONS

- PATA (Pacific Area Travel Association) and ASEANTA (Association of South East Asian Nations Tourism Organization) conduct regular joint promotion and marketing programs for members
- In 2002 ASEAN launched a strategy to develop tourist paths that trace ‘nature links and cultural corridors’ across several countries.

THE INTERNET AS A MARKETING VEHICLE

Initial marketing to the eco/adventure tour sector can be achieved in a cost-effective way, as most of the information can be disseminated at no cost over the internet and via email.

- The internet has become a prime source of information for all categories of traveller, but particularly for the eco/adventure category.
- The internet is also the quickest means of ensuring access to information: ready-to-use text and images can be circulated via email; the time required to post digital material is substantially shorter than for printed media.
- Use of this medium also addresses other audiences, such as investors, who turn to the internet as a reference tool. Timor-Leste, by virtue of its newness, is excluded from many general reference sites which provide information on all nations.
- There is also a need to encourage the use of Timor-Leste's new official name, as the country is still typically referred to as East Timor.
- At this time, the bulk of information available about Timor-Leste propagates a war-torn image that is less than appealing to potential visitors.
- Many websites targeted at tourism provide information about local businesses, such as hotels, tour operators and dive shops. Links can be added to local operators' websites as these come on line.



Betel leaves at the market

THE OFFICIAL TIMOR-LESTE WEBSITE

An official Timor-Leste government website is currently under development. This would be a natural vehicle for tourism information.

The material posted on the government website would be similar to that provided by the tourism ministries in other countries. This would include general information on and images of key sites, as well as sections on:

- Climate
- Required travel documentation
- Facilities and services available to tourists with contact information and, if available, links to websites*. This would include airlines servicing Timor-Leste as well as local businesses
- The People of Timor-Leste
- History
- Flora and fauna
- Useful advice
- Photo library
- Travel advisories and news: these sections should only be posted if they can be updated regularly
- Feedback: where travellers could post comments about their travels in Timor-Leste

** Typically a fee is charged to companies who wish to post links to their websites.*

Flamboyant tree

MAILING LISTS AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Mailing lists are being drawn up to include four categories of targets. Text and images are being prepared in appropriate formats for each.

TARGET CATEGORIES

- General reference sites, used as a broad research tool by the general public
- Eco/adventure tour sites. Many of these offer commissionable linkages to local operators: agreements to waive commissions for the period of one year are being sought.
- The top 10-15 eco/adventure tour operators in Australia, Europe and North America
- Key guidebook publishers and travel magazines in those areas.



Mountain farm

ITINERARIES: INTRODUCTION

The world's newest country, Timor-Leste, offers a wholly unique combination of magnificent landscapes, ancient cultures and a richly textured history. While coastal areas boast pristine beaches and deep blue waters teeming with sealife, the centre of the island features rugged mountains to 10,000 feet, dotted with hot springs and communities of thatched, stilted houses. Cave paintings date the inhabitants' arrival to the migrations between greater Asia and Australia, and the many styles of dwellings attest to the peoples' varied origins. The islands' sandalwood, honey and spices brought Chinese, Malay, Arab and Portuguese traders to its shores as early as the 15th century, the latter settling in for 400 years of colonial rule. The Portuguese left a legacy of gracious architecture, delicious cuisine and Catholicism, which the islanders have reinterpreted according to their own animist beliefs.

The years of violence and turmoil under the subsequent Indonesian rule are evidenced by ruined buildings and the tunnelled hideouts of the heroic Resistance fighters. Yet this tiny country - population 800,000 - has reemerged triumphantly after three years of peaceful democracy, with an infectious charm that mirrors the warmth and spirit of its people.

Join us to hike through remote hillside villages with eagles soaring overhead, fish by starlight from outrigger canoes, observe five different species of endangered sea turtles, explore forests of towering banyan and rosewood trees hung with ferns and orchids and learn the ancient lore of this reborn nation.



Elders

10-DAY ADVENTURE IN TIMOR-LESTE

Day One

Arrive in Dili, capital of Timor-Leste, in the early afternoon. Transfer to hotel. Mid-afternoon get-together and briefing at hotel. Transfer to White Sands Beach for snorkelling and barbecue. Brief welcome during dinner by government representative. Overnight in Dili.

Day Two

Option A: Guided visit of Dili, including the Cultural Centre, Xanana Reading Room, Tais Market. After lunch drive through rainforest to Dare (30 minutes), visit the Balinese temple and outdoor market, optional downhill walk through coffee plantations to meeting point (40 minutes).

Option B: Morning departure for full-day of scuba diving along the coral walls of Atauro Island, and spotting for pods of dolphins and pilot whales. Regroup in evening for dinner at a Portuguese restaurant with live music. Overnight in Dili.

Day Three

Early morning departure for a long drive eastwards along the beautiful northern coast to Com (5 hours), with a stop at the fishing village of Manatuto. Check into Com Guest House. Lunch near the beach and free time for relaxing and snorkelling. Afternoon walk from Com along the country's loveliest stretch of coastline to the old town of Muro (1.5 hours, fairly flat). The trail passes through a palm forest and scrub inhabited by cuscus, long-tailed macaques and many species of parrot and lorikeet.

Along the way is the 'Sacred Boat', a rough monument to the vessel that carried the first settlers to Timor. The walk concludes at another sacred site, in Muro, where massive banyan trees hung with offerings encircle freshwater springs. Muro was also much favoured by the Portuguese, whose elegant beach houses still line the shore. Return to Com for dinner and overnight.

Day Four

Morning departure for Tutuala (40 minutes) at the eastern tip of Timor-Leste. Hike from the beach through natural rainforests and monsoon forests to caves painted thousands of years ago by groups migrating from Asia across the Indo-Malayan Archipelago (3 hours, some uphill). Lunch on Walu Beach and time for snorkelling along a vast coral reef. Paddle in outrigger canoes to Jaco Island, sacred to Timorese as the landing site of the first settlers and an important nesting area for five species of endangered sea turtles. Drive to Mehara (15 minutes) for a look at traditional Fataluko houses, ornate stilted structures which indicate an ancient link with northern Vietnam. Hike from here to Lake Ila Lalaro (1 hour), an ancient wetlands area, to see saltwater crocodiles and spot for rare birds. Return to Com for dinner and overnight. Optional overnight fishing expedition in outrigger canoes, accompanying the local fishermen who catch tuna by hand.

Day Five

Morning to snorkel and enjoy the beach at Com, departing for Baucau after lunch. Stop at Laga to visit to the market and a walk along beautiful ocean-side rice paddies and flowering gardens. Continue to Baucau and check into the *Pousada de Baucau*, a very comfortable traditional Portuguese inn set at the edge of a high plateau overlooking the sea. Guided walk around town and down to the beautiful Osolata beach through a traditional residential area of thatched houses surrounded by rice paddies and coconut groves. Dinner and overnight in Baucau.

10-DAY ADVENTURE IN TIMOR-LESTE

continued

Day Six

Morning departure for Ossu, a former Portuguese retreat in the heart of the Mundo Perdido ('Lost World') Mountain Range. Explore centuries-old fortifications, the local daily market and a sacred waterfall before setting off on a challenging hike through the mountains to Venialé (2 hours). The last part of the hike descends through artistically terraced rice paddies dotted with traditional shrines. After relaxing in Venialé's natural hot springs, visit the cave systems used by Japanese troops during World War II as arsenals and hideouts, and a school and orphanage run by a very international group of nuns. Return to Baucau for dinner and overnight.

Day Seven

Early morning departure for Maubisse (4 hours), arriving at lunch time to check in to the *Maubisse Pousada*. Stop in Aileu along the way to walk through a beautiful ribbon of rice paddies running along the valleys between steep mountains. An extraordinarily peaceful setting today, in 1999 this was the headquarters and training centre of the Resistance forces. The views from the road are magnificent as it winds into the mountains past the traditional villages of the Mambai people with their round, thatched houses. After lunch enjoy a gentle walk (2 hours) through the stunning alpine landscape and a number of villages to the small town of Haro Builico. Overnight at Maubisse.

Day Eight

Optional pre-dawn departure for Mount Ramelau, Timor-Leste's highest mountain at 2,973m. The two-hour non-technical climb to the summit offers spectacular sunrise views over mountain ranges unfolding as far as the sea. Descent into Letefoho. Non-climbers drive to Letefoho to visit the town's Portuguese buildings and sacred sites, joining climbers for a picnic lunch near an unusual church topped by a giant pair of praying hands.

In the afternoon, drive to Maliana (1.5 hours), gradually descending into the fertile flood plains of the Lois River. A soak in Maliana's hot springs before dinner and overnight at the charming *Pousada de Maliana*, run by widows of the Resistance fighters.

Day Nine

Begin the day with a visit to Maliana's busy market, source of the fine ikat textiles woven by the local Kemak people. A short drive to Bobonaro brings us to the trail head for a beautiful hike (6 hours, varied) along the shoulders of Mount Loilaco. The trail passes through several Kemak villages comprised of unique cone-shaped houses made of thatch and mud brick. Enjoy a swim in a Portuguese-built pool fed by natural springs at Murobu. A local guide will lead us to the famed hilltop 'post-box' of the Resistance, where freedom fighters exchanged messages during the years of occupation. Return to Maliana for a soak in the hot springs before dinner and overnight.

Day Ten

Morning departure to the northern coast. Cross the Lois River to reach Boilbo, where a Portuguese-built fortress gazes over the border to Indonesian West Timor, formerly a Dutch colony. Another Portuguese fortress guards Battagade, a short distance away on the coast. Continue along the coast to Maubara with a stop to walk around an unusual saltwater lake populated by pelicans. Enjoy a traditional Timorese lunch by the water at Liquiça, followed by a visit to a coffee and vanilla plantation near the village of Baserete (total drive 3.5 hours). Early afternoon arrival in Dili. Final dinner by the beach.

Day Eleven

Board flights to Darwin or Denpasar.