

## NEWSLETTER No.5

### Revisiting West Sumatra and West Pasaman February 2019 – No. 5, December, 2018

Dear all,

Thanks to the efforts of Pak Speidel and Jochen Vorfelder, the ADP Revisited site has now the chapter “West Sumatra 2019”. The website offers downloading “[Itinerary v4 West Sumatra Feb 2019](#)”. We tried to offer various trips to West Pasaman’s places of interest. With regards to Tuesday, 19.2., the two trips to Air Bangis, one proceeding to the new harbor, the other one to the North Sumatra border, might be too long for some participants. We could offer that one car will return earlier to Simpang Empat, if requested. This shall also demonstrate the flexibility that the planning offers every day.

#### Planning flights

Meanwhile, some participants reported that they have already booked their flight. For those of you who have not yet booked the flight (including me!), I have prepared some information. Some travel agents are clever to find inexpensive flights that sometimes are not offered in the popular flight scanners. Booking with the airline may(!) be less expensive than booking with expedia, opodo, bravofly etc. or offer inexpensive rescheduling options. You may also think about an insurance for not catching the flight. Inexpensive flights are offered by Oman Airlines or some Chinese carriers. You may pay less and get more hours on your flight clock! Sometimes you may have also more time to enjoy the dutyfree shop during transit, much more than you actually want and need.

We got confirmation from Singapore that there is indeed no direct flight from Singapore to Padang - neither with Singapore Airlines’ low cost carriers Scoot/Tiger nor with Garuda or Singapore Airlines. That is indeed very remarkable! A backward step? Especially in view of so many flights from/to Padang nowadays! Fact is: Airline fares attract former ship and bus travelers, in particular those on the route Jakarta - Padang. Time is money.




There are two prominent and popular choices to reach Padang.

#### Choice 1: Arrival from Kuala Lumpur

Google proposed for flights from Frankfurt to KL on Febr. 14 and returning Febr. 26 the following:

Best departing flights ⓘ


Total price includes taxes + fees for 1 adult. [Additional bag fees](#) and other fees may apply. Sort by: ↑↓




	<b>10:45 AM – 10:00 AM*<sup>1</sup></b> Etihad	<b>16h 15m</b> FRA–KUL	<b>1 stop</b> 2h 30m AUH	<b>€484</b> round trip	▼
	<b>9:40 AM – 8:30 AM*<sup>1</sup></b> Emirates · Malaysia Airlines	<b>15h 50m</b> FRA–KUL	<b>1 stop</b> 2h 35m DXB	<b>€551</b> round trip	▼
	<b>11:15 AM – 6:35 AM*<sup>1</sup></b> Condor	<b>12h 20m</b> FRA–KUL	<b>Nonstop</b>	<b>€581</b> round trip	▼

As far as I know, the Etihad or Emirates Tickets include the train to Frankfurt. Condor is not flying daily, but it is apparently the only airline that flies this route without stop. The stop in KL offers the opportunity to visit this city (again). If you have missed it until now: Take the opportunity! The Petronas towers are worth going there with the . As EU citizen you are granted visa-free entry for 90 days. The *KLIA Ekspres* is a non-stop high-speed *train* service that connects *KL International Airport(s)* and the *Kuala Lumpur* city center in less than 30 minutes and costs 100 RM or about 21 € for the return trip. Enjoy a 10% discount when you buy your KLIA Transit tickets from the self-service kiosk. <https://www.kliaekspres.com/plan-buy/fares-passes/>. Less expensive: Express bus - about 1 hour by road at RM10-12 per person.

From KL to Padang, Google presented three flights to/from Padang daily.

Departing flights

Total price includes taxes + fees for 1 adult. [Additional bag fees](#) and other fees may apply. Sort by: 

	<b>7:20 AM – 7:35 AM</b> AirAsia	1h 15m KUL–PDG	Nonstop	<b>€30</b> round trip	▼
	<b>11:10 AM – 11:25 AM</b> AirAsia	1h 15m KUL–PDG	Nonstop	<b>€30</b> round trip	▼
	<b>Departure • Wed, Feb 13</b>		<a href="#">Select flight</a>	<b>€30</b> round trip	▲
<p>○ 3:30 PM · Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KUL)</p> <p>Travel time: 1h 15m</p> <p>○ 3:45 PM · Minangkabau International Airport (PDG)</p> <p>AirAsia · Economy · AK 405</p> <p>Often delayed by 30+ min</p>					

[Ads](#) | [lastminute.com](#) | [eDreams](#) | [Opodo](#) | [Expedia](#)

In reality, it is not as cheap as announced. The suitcase up to 20 kg costs about 13 € (one way), more expensive than the flight bare of tax and airport fees itself. Maybe there is an additional fee for the mode of payment and choice of seat. The total will be around 60 to 80 € for the round trip, depending on which flight, when, and where you are booking.

Luggage could not be checked through, when I used this flight three years ago. I would plan to have at least four hours between arrival and departure.



Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA): You will probably arrive at KLIA 1, Air Asia to Padang departs from KLIA 2. Check for changes.

## Choice 2: Arrival from Jakarta

Google offers the following

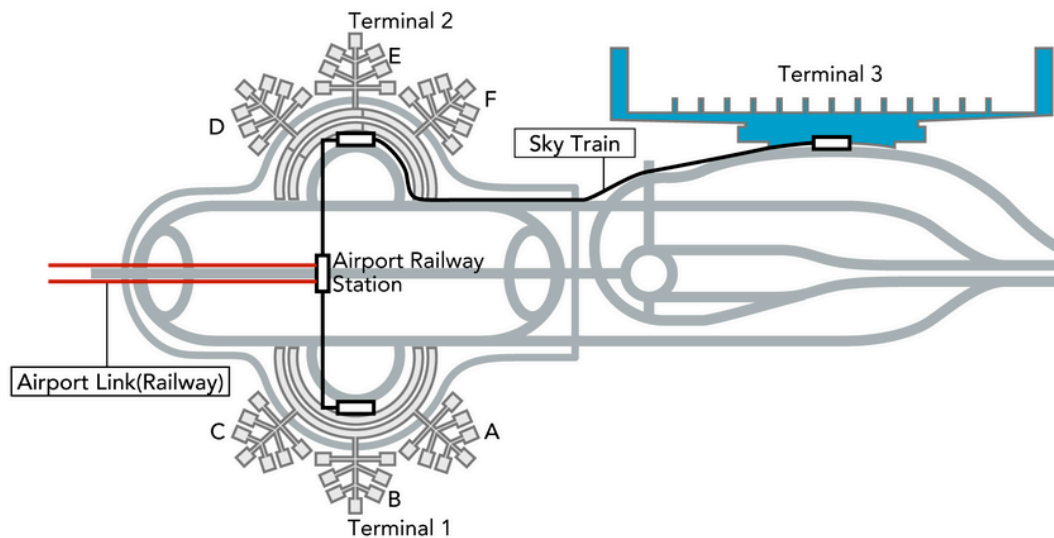
**Flights from Frankfurt (FRA) to Jakarta, Indonesia (all airports)** Sponsored ⓘ  
[www.google.com/flights](http://www.google.com/flights)

From	To	Class	Price
Frankfurt (FRA)	Jakarta, Indonesia (all airports)	Connecting	from €569
Wed, 13 February	Tue, 26 February		
Qatar Airways	17h 10m+	Connecting	from €569
Etihad	19h 30m+	Connecting	from €580
Emirates	19h 15m+	Connecting	from €600
KLM	18h 20m+	Connecting	from €652
Other airlines	14h 45m+	Connecting	from €753

The prices vary considerably according to date. If you want to proceed the same day directly to Padang, you should arrive latest 16 hrs.

A tip: get an A (window) seat. Mostly, planes arrive from East and you can see Jakarta's skyline. Opposite windows (K): you see Thousand Island.

Most of you will probably arrive in Jakarta Soekarno-Hatta or Cengkareng Airport, which is about 30 km West of Jakarta. International flights arrive at Terminal 2 (D, E, F). From here, Garuda flights depart to Padang.



### Change Money

You will pass by several money changers when leaving the luggage pick-up area. Ask them for some Rp 5,000 and Rp 10,000 notes for tips. There are also ATMs that accept your credit card. Get some cash, for instance Rp 2,000,000 (about 120 €). Three years ago we tested that even the ATM in Air Bangis, a fishermen village far away in West Pasaman, accepted the credit card.

### Jakarta – Padang

From Soekarno-Hatta Airport (Cengkareng) to Padang you have the choice: Sriwijaya Air, Citilink (Garuda's low cost line), Lion Air, Batik Air and Garuda Indonesia. Have at least three hours time when you proceed with Garuda, four hours when you proceed with another airline. Be prepared that in the afternoon non-Garuda flights are delayed. Sometimes resulting from bad weather in Padang in the late afternoon.

Best view from F-Window seats for arrival in Padang; returning to Jakarta, my favourite is the A-seat.

Alternative a): The most relaxing way to get to Padang is booking Garuda from Amsterdam via Jakarta to Padang, with KLM for the feeder flight to/from Amsterdam. Upon arrival in Jakarta Terminal 2, it is a short way to Garuda's gates for domestic connections/transfers in the same Terminal 2. Your luggage will proceed to Padang. It seems unlikely that Padang's customs will check your luggage, when you arrive from Jakarta.

From Berlin the return fare is €898, published by google. I assume the price is similar for Frankfurt departures.

Best departing flights ⓘ

Total price includes taxes + fees for 1 adult. [Additional bag fees](#) and other fees may apply.

Sort by: ⚙

Departure • Wed, Feb 13

Select flight

€898  
round trip

6:00 AM • Berlin Tegel Airport (TXL)

Travel time: 1h 25m

7:25 AM • Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (AMS)

KLM • Economy • Boeing 737 • KL 1818

Ticket also sold by Garuda Indonesia

3h 40m layover • Amsterdam (AMS)

11:05 AM • Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (AMS)

Travel time: 13h 45m • **Overnight** ⚠

6:50 AM<sup>†</sup> • Soekarno–Hatta International Airport (CGK)

Garuda Indonesia • Economy • Boeing 777 • GA 89

4h 35m layover • Jakarta (CGK)

11:25 AM<sup>†</sup> • Soekarno–Hatta International Airport (CGK)

Travel time: 1h 50m

1:15 PM<sup>†</sup> • Minangkabau International Airport (PDG)

Garuda Indonesia • Economy • Boeing 737 • GA 162

Average legroom (76 cm)

Average legroom (81 cm)

Wi-Fi

In-seat power & USB outlets

On-demand video

Average legroom (79 cm)

On-demand video

Alternative b): You can save about €100 to €200 with a flight from Frankfurt with Emirates (A380), Turkish Airlines, or Qatar. Advantage when you fly with Emirates and Qatar: No flight is longer than nine hours. Tie: You will also have two stop-overs. Disadvantage: Interrupted sleep. And you may not be able to get your luggage checked through to Padang, it is highly unlikely or even impossible if your connecting flight to Padang is not with Garuda.

In Jakarta/Cengkareng you have two choices:

- b1) Fly with Garuda to Padang from the same Terminal 2 where you arrive (6:15, 7:45, 11:25, 14:00, 16:05, 20:00). The return trip costs about 169 € (depending also on the exchange rate, the flights are quoted in Rupiah). This is the most comfortable way to fly to Padang. Luggage and meal is included in this price.
- b2) Fly from Terminal 1B with Lion or 1C with Batik Air, for example. A Sky train connects Terminal 2 with Terminal 1 (see picture above). There are helping hands around for the luggage transport (about Rp 20,000 to 50,000, up to 3€). It is a bit annoying as you have to go outside the terminal and cross the roads to enter the Sky train station. Lion has 9 flights daily to Padang, the latest departing 20:20. The later it is, the higher are chances that flights are delayed. You may arrive at the hotel in Padang past midnight. Lion is popular because of low fares: about 100 € return. Sometimes there are promo prices below 40€ one way. I could not book Lion neither from Germany nor from Indonesia with my mastercard, it was not accepted. Maybe you have more luck. Batik Air is priced higher and may have some cm more space. I found it superior to Lion. Garuda is certainly the cleanest and best service. Check the luggage allowance with Lion! Extra kgs, could be those above 15 kgs(!) are not as expensive as with low cost carriers in Europe. If I remember right it is less than 2 € per kg. Sometimes it is unbureaucratic: you pay cash at the check-in counter. And for 5 kg only although your excess is 7 kg. ;- ) Nego seems possible.

You may also book a one-way flight to Padang and decide in Padang how to return or proceed. The discounts for return fares are small, or even do not exist.

## Open-jaw flight

You may also consider the following route:

- Departure location – Jakarta – Padang – KL – return to origin or
- Departure location – KL – Padang – Jakarta – return to origin

## Safety aspects

Some people insist on flying with Garuda only. Safety considerations when selecting an airline? None of the planes that you will use ever crashed and all crews whom you will meet survived.

## Transport from Padang Airport “Bandara Internasional Minangkabau” (BIM) to city

- a) The taxi from the airport to the city costs about Rp 120.000 (about 7 €). As Orang Bule you may find it hard to negotiate this price or even a lower price. Uber is less costly. Don't count on that a heavily discounted hotel price includes the airport transfer.

The screenshot shows the TAXI FARE FINDER website interface. At the top, there are navigation links: "UBER X - PADANG, INDONESIA, INDONESIA, INDONESIA", "TAXI FARE CALCULATOR", "FARE COMPARISON", "RATE CHART", and "NEWSROOM". The main section displays the "Estimated Fare" for a trip from "Gate-4 Bandara Internasional Minangkabau Padang, Terminal Keberangkatan, Padang Pariaman, Sumatera Barat 25586, Indonesia" to "Padang, Sumatera Barat, Indonesia". The estimated fare is "Rp74.643,99". Below this, there is a "Cost with Traffic" section showing a range from "Rp72.098,79" to "Rp100.095,99", with the current estimate at "Rp74.643,99". A map shows the route from the airport (marked A) to the city (marked B). The "Suggested routes" section shows "1 of 1" route with a cost of "(Rp74.643,99)". The "Trip Information" section states "Trip is 24.8 km, 42 mins". The "Notes" section lists various fare details and conditions.

Apparently, Uber taxi fares are lower. I do not have experience with Uber in West Sumatra.

- b) Bus: Some people do not prefer to be confronted with the attitude of some taxi drivers. And: You see more from the bus. Note that there are no specific signs around the terminal mentioning about the DAMRI airport bus service (Rp 23.500). The bus service may only be offered until 17:00 hrs. For more about the bus transfer see: <https://bustravelstation.com/2018/06/01/padang-minangkabau-international-airport-buses-damri-tranex-mandiri/>

The bus passes by the Axana Hotel that we will propose.

Most probably, Wolfram will be in Padang earlier and you can reach him with your WhatsApp using the airport's free internet access (WiFi): +4915775335732.

### **Stopover in Jakarta: Hints and suggestions**

After the long flight, you may want to stop over in Jakarta. There is a wide choice of hotels at prices up to €50 with breakfast and pool. [https://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotels-g294229-Jakarta\\_Java-Hotels.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotels-g294229-Jakarta_Java-Hotels.html) . Ok, some of them may need an overhaul. Since a couple of years, there are also a number of new hotels close to the airport – if you want to avoid the city.

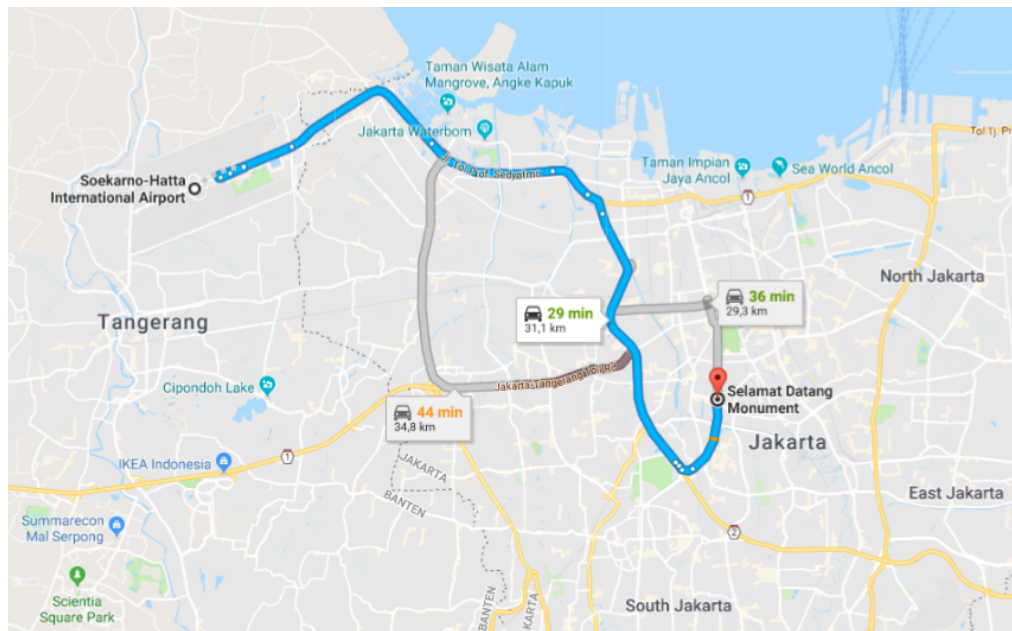
### **Want to visit Jakarta?**

Once you travel via Jakarta, it is a good idea to take one or two days for a stop-over. Before the city collapses or submerges due to high pressure on the ground and uncontrolled ground water pumping. Here are some previews on how Jakarta looks like today:

<https://www.airpano.com/360photo/Jakarta-Indonesia/>.

It will cost you about 10 € to 15 € (depending on traffic and the route the driver takes) for a taxi to the city centre. Taxi drivers prefer if you pay the toll separately. Have some cash ready (Rp 15,000?) Meanwhile there is an airport train. But it does not bring you to the hotel. The train's advantage: On the way to the airport you must not be afraid of traffic jam or impassable, flooded roads. Maneuver in the city with smart phone and Uber taxi! I think the number of official taxis (Bluebird etc., remember the yellow-red President Taxi?) has gone down quite remarkably. Travelling with the AC Bus (Transjakarta) from North to South on special lanes (Busway) outside peak hours is an inexpensive way to explore the city. Tariff Rp 5,000 (€ 0.30). You have to buy a reloadable cash card (Rp 20,000) that includes 4 trips.

During the weekend, the traffic is normally not too bad. (The Jakarta people crowd Puncak.) On workdays you may also take pleasure in sitting in the afternoon in a taxi in the traffic jam (especially when it is raining!), for example, to visit Blok M. Relax! And enjoy that you are not under time pressure. A very special experience. It does not cost a fortune, just time.



The Selamat Datang Memorial is also called Bundaran HI (Hotel Indonesia Roundabout), close to the German Embassy.

### Check airline and airport regulations

Airline regulations about whatever you want to carry on board and in your luggage need to be carefully studied. And there is no guarantee that you are allowed, for example, to take along a roll of parcel tape, which is helpful to fix so many things. I had three airports which did not allow me to take it along. Recently they took my 30,000 mAh powerbank/powerpack, which passed many controls in several countries and continents. But not Berlin Tegel a couple of weeks ago. Therefore this hint:

Below is a list of limitations on **power banks** capacity allowed (this Garuda regulation, may apply also for other airlines, Lufthansa has the same or quite similar, however, nobody could tell me from where to get the approval):

Maximum Allowable Quantity per Passenger	Watt-hour (Wh)	Miliampere-hour (mAh)	Remarks
20 pcs	0 – 100	0 – 20.000	-
2 pcs	101 – 160	20.001 – 32.000	With Garuda Indonesia approval
NOT ALLOWED	> 160	> 32.000	

### Christmas present wish

Get acquainted with WhatsApp! Due to strict regulations concerning the registration of SIM cards, it might be difficult to obtain a mobile phone number in Indonesia. But you can buy a SIM card for data.



You are afraid of getting lost? You want to stay in contact with family and friends at home and avoid horrendous roaming tariffs? Ask your kids or friends to load down WhatsApp (it is free) on your smart phone and for a tutorial on how to use it. (Remember: spending time together is perhaps the most valuable present!) In Indonesia, it might not anymore be easy to get a SIM card that you can immediately use for making phone calls. The registration process for foreign visitors might be a time-consuming procedure at the Telekom office you might not like to go through. Anti-terrorist regulations, I guess. Earlier this year, I got along with a SIM card registered for access to the internet. WhatsApp uses the internet. I paid some 5 € for the SIM card including a 3 GB data volume.

### **Visa**

Check the visa regulations! For many countries, including Germany, visa is free on arrival. If you intend to stay more than 30 days (date of entering and leaving count each one day), you can buy a 30 day visa at arrival (you have to insist) and prolong it at an immigration office for another 30 days. There are tariffs for overstaying. I paid Rp 200,000 per day a couple of years ago. But you cannot prolong a free visa. Option: Fly to KL in the morning and return in the afternoon. Or get a sixty-day visa from the consulate or embassy.

Anyway, please check, for example: <https://www.kemlu.go.id/berlin/lc/Pages/kurzbesuch-visum.aspx>. Attention, there is probably a translation glitch: free visa becomes "Visafrei"?

You may contact Wolfram, if you have problems in finding out what is relevant for you.

The next newsletter will provide more information about accommodation in West Sumatra. We hope to get the deluxe rooms with breakfast distinctly below 40 €. We are presently in contact with hotel The Axana. They have more than 100 rooms. The place is strategically located close to Pangerans City (below €30) and Mariani Hotel (less than 25€). You can walk to the Pasar and other places. Those who are on a shoestring budget will find accommodation at walking distance.

We are still looking for more information about accommodation in West Pasaman. For those who want to travel to Abai Siat, we assume that accommodation arrangements can be made perhaps with support from Pemda.

Furthermore, as an indication, we hope that we can organize the transport at less than 20€ per day per person with 5-7 seaters.

Please let us know your experience and tips to share. If you know that some of the information given here is not valid, please inform us immediately. Info is based on own experience some months ago and on (attention!) internet research.

For those living in Indonesia: What else should we know?

For the participants: What else do you want to know?

Kind regards and all the best

Wolfram