

Culture and Customs of Indonesia

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by

JILL FORSHEE

*Culture and Customs of Asia
Hawker Lin Series Editor*



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Indonesia comprises more than 17,000 islands stretching on either side of the equator for nearly 4,000 miles and hundreds of ethnic groups with almost 300 languages spoken. This book reveals the remarkable social, religious, and geographical differences that exist from island to island. Because of such variety, Indonesia defies simple categorisations. Whereas Europeans have produced most of the written histories of this region, "Culture and Customs of Indonesia" reveals local people's own ideas of their identities and pasts. Indonesian cultures covered include those of forest-dwelling hunters, rice growers, fisherfolk, village artisans, urban office and factory workers, intellectuals, artists, wealthy industrialists, street vendors, and homeless people. Readers will learn about the amazing range of belief systems, material culture, and arts that enliven Indonesia. The author describes the majestic temples, complex poetry and literature, lavish theatrical performances, and splendid visual arts and more that have distinguished Indonesia for centuries and continue into the present. Indonesians are shown to be constantly reinterpreting and refining their cultures in the modern world.

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