

Attractions near Bandung - Curug Cibareubeuy Waterfall and Pasar Mingon

When visiting Bandung there many attractions and nature reserves to explore in the surrounding mountains. Included amongst these are waterfalls, lush tropical rainforests and street markets, some of which you may not know about.

Curug Cibareubeuy

Curug Cibareubeuy (Curug means waterfall in Indonesian) was once a popular weekend destination for tourists and local adventurers. Now sadly the walking trail and facilities are overgrown and the main gateway abandoned – see below.



Whilst a bit off the beaten track, Curug Cibareubeuy is only an hour's drive from Bandung near Ciater, where after turning right off the main road follow a narrow road past hot springs resorts for about 10-15 minutes to the village of Cibeusi. These days the start of the track is quite hard to find, but if you ask the local people in Cibeusi, they will assist with directions. The entrance is simply a dirt track that starts steeply on the right hand side of the road. As you wind your way up the hill there is a broken and partly overgrown concrete path that takes you past vegetable gardens on the left and to a resting area with a couple of huts. Further on is the main gateway where you have an option of turning sharp right and climbing briefly up onto a mountain track that follows the ridge. This is a good trail, although watch out for the occasional low branch. Alternatively you can proceed straight ahead, following a broken concrete path that runs alongside a water channel. This is fairly damp in parts, particularly in places where the embankment is broken.

Overall the walk from the road to the waterfall is about 5km, taking you through thick vegetation that is kept lush and green by an average rainfall 2000 mm per year. From the valley far below you can hear the muffled chatter of farmers' voices tending the rice paddies and the sound of the fast flowing river that is fed by waterfall up stream. If you choose the track on the high side of the ridge, you will need to turn left when it ends and then veer to the right following the river to a bamboo bridge that is entry to a small village retreat with thatched huts scattered amongst the rocks and gardens. This is an enchanting place and a welcoming rest spot for visitors.



Only a few hundred metres further on the waterfall suddenly appears and at the same time the roar of the waterfall drowns out the ever present noise of the birds and insects. The final challenge to reach the rock pool at the bottom of the waterfall is to clamber across the rocks and climb to a vantage point beside the water's edge. Depending on the weather, the spray can be refreshing or unpleasantly cold, but despite this the temptation to strip off and jump into the pool and shower under the waterfall is hard to resist. Moreover on a hot day the experience is thoroughly invigorating and an unforgettable experience, well worth the effort.



The journey back is relatively straight forward, but caution needs to be taken on the narrow track where the embankment is broken away in places and near the road where the last downhill path is very slippery after rain.

Returning to Bandung, you may want to stop for lunch at the Ciater hot springs. If so the Gracia Spa Resort is highly recommended. Its entrance can be found a few kilometres back on the left hand side of the road to Bandung.

Pasar Mingon

If you like street markets there is one in particular one I would recommend which is not well known to visitors from outside Bandung. It's called "Pasar Mingon" which means a market that is only open on Sundays. Located on one of the ridges that run down from Lembang to Ciumbuleuit, this particular area is also called Punclut.



The most popular entry to the market is at the top of Jln Ciumbuleuit where if you turn left at the roundabout, it is 200m up the road on the right. From the start you will be amazed how busy this narrow street market is as it climbs and winds its way up the ridge for several kilometres. This is a totally fascinating experience that stimulates all the senses with a cacophony of market sounds, vivid colours and endless variety of aromas from Padang and Sudanese restaurants and food stalls.

The crowd is a mixture of those getting there Sunday morning exercise, bargain hunters, sightseers and thousands of folk enjoying their makan pagi on a grand scale. Apart from the market, the other main attraction is the view overlooking Bandung from dozens of eating houses offering local and coastal foods steamed, barbecued, fried, you name it, - seafood, offal, beef rendang, sop buntut, corn fritters, croquettes, tofu, tempe, spicy chicken, snails, exotic fruits and vegetables etc. To cater for all these people there must be many tons of food brought to the market overnight to service this feeding frenzy.



Apart from the endless food stalls that line the road, there's clothing of all types, footwear, hats, sarongs, gadgetry and potions, The key here is to resist being carried along by the crowd and being able to stop, take your time and look for many treasures to be found.

The other way to see the street markets is to take a vehicle up to the top of Jalan Dago and turn left toward the Stanford International School. Go past the school to the end of the street and turn right following the road up to the top of the ridge. From here it's all downhill past many food stalls and restaurants, most on the left hand side with wonderful views over Bandung. If you have a driver, ask him to drop you off and meet you at the roundabout at the top of Jln Ciumbuleuit. Depending on how fast you walk and often you stop for food, or to buy various nick-nacks, then it should take between one and two hours. If not the shopping type, don't let this put you off this fabulous walk. It's just a fantastic experience sharing the morning air with thousands of others getting their weekly exercise.

If you like outdoor markets, this one is a real Buzz.

For further information about either of the above, contact hlInd_bb@yahoo.com.au