

## WAISYA` DAY IN BOROBUDUR

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The Following May 20 2008 One of the most beautiful and holiest Buddhist events anyone can witness happens once a year, during the full moon of May or June. This year, the Day of Waisak falls on May 20 2008. The Buddhists announce the date a year in advance, as they are able to calculate the date with precision, using the lunar calendar. Interestingly, however, Waisak is not celebrated the same date across Asia.

Day of Waisak (Vesak), or Day of Enlightenment, is the annual Buddhist ceremony commemorating Buddha's birth, death and the day he attained enlightenment. Waisak is an official public holiday in Indonesia. On that day, you'll see lines of hundreds of Indonesian Buddhist monks, as well as a great many Buddhists from abroad, in particular, the sect Theravada from Sri Lanka. This is a truly amazing event to witness because of its sheer magnitude and location!

On June 1, around 02:00 am, the procession will begin at Candi Mendut\*, a smaller temple, and will pass the Pawon Temple\*. The length of the journey is approximately 1.5 miles, ending at Borobudur temple. The barefoot male monks dress in saffron robes and the women wear white saris and will walk in a single-file procession, carrying lighted candles. The monks move in a very slow, solemn manner, while chanting and praying, the sounds of which will surely transport you to another galaxy! This is a rich audio/visual experience!

The climax comes at about 04:00 am when the worshippers converge on the monument. At this point, several hundred monks will circle the temple clockwise toward the central stupa at the very top, where they'll wait for the moon to appear on the horizon, the time indicating the birth of Buddha. The highlight of the ceremony is the welcoming of the audience, and calling Buddha with a song. With a bit of luck, this year, the morning sky will be clear, and the worshippers and visitors alike will be rewarded with a spectacular sunrise! Have nice trip to Borobudur