

For Fame and Fortune

A short history of Batavia

In the past, the hunt for precious and highly coveted spices was a catalyst for voyages of exploration and finally contributed to a fundamental transformation of the world.

This applies particularly to Southeast Asia, last but not least to Indonesia, the former East Indies, with the Moluccan islands as center of the spice trade.

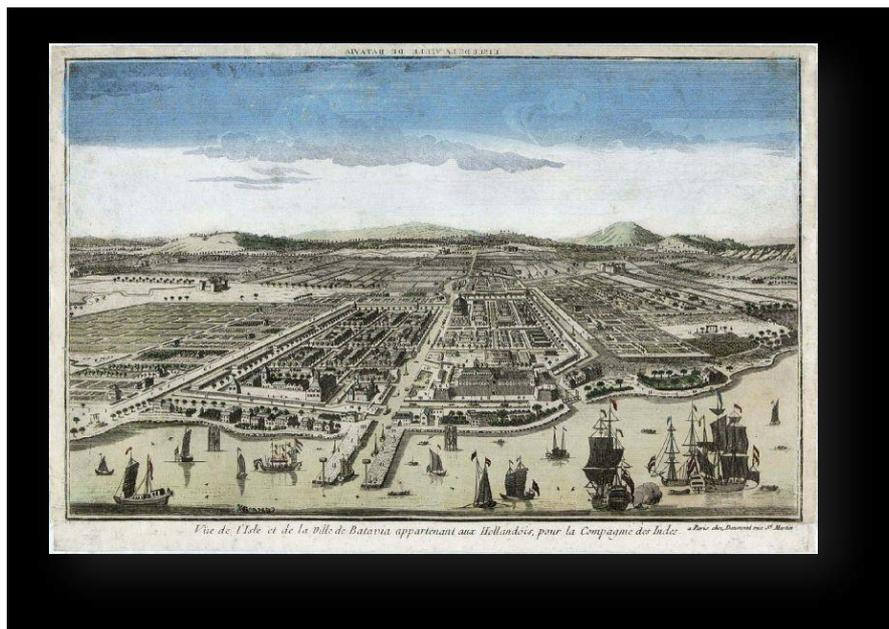
The history of Jakarta, formerly known as Batavia, can be traced back to the fourth century BC, to a Hindu settlement including a port. In the twelfth century, this settlement was called Sunda Kalapa, after the coconut palms on the beach: an important trade port for consecutive kingdoms, until it sank into insignificance by the rise of the port of Malacca.

In 1511, Malacca was conquered by the Portuguese, and in 1513, they arrived at Sunda Kalapa, establishing a trading post and a fort – also in order to protect the Kingdom of Sunda against the Muslim troops of the Sultan of Demak, from the interior of Java. Nevertheless, Sunda Kalapa was attacked and conquered by Cirebon and Demak in 1527; the city built on the ruins of Kalapa was renamed Jayakarta, Sanskrit for *victorious deed or complete victory*.



Fort of Batavia, 1709

1527-1619	Jayakarta a principality under the sovereignty of the Sultanate of Banten (Bantam)
1596	A trade expedition from Amsterdam reaches Jayakarta.
1602	A British trade expedition establishes a post in Bantam.
1610/11	The Dutch acquire a piece of land east of the mouth of the Ciliwung and establish a warehouse, later a fort.
1615	The British settle on the western banks of the Ciliwung.
1617/1618	Jan Pieterszoon Coen becomes Governor General of the East Indies; Prince Jayawikarta solidarizes with the British.
1619, March 12th	In order to honor the Batavi, the ancestors of the Dutch people, the fort is christened accordingly and becomes headquarter of the <i>Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie</i> (United East Indian Company; VOC).
1619, May 30th	The Dutch Army razes Jayakarta; the city of Batavia is founded instead.
1621	The VOC officially accepts the name of Batavia for the new settlement.
1628/29	Batavia is besieged by 80.000 men of the Sultan of Mataram; death of Jan Pieterszoon Coen
1634-1645	Construction of the city walls with 15 bastions
1677	Contract between Mataram and the VOC, defining the eastern borders of the territory of Batavia
1684	The Banten Sultanate concedes areas east of the river Cisadane to the Dutch.
1696	Experiments with the cultivation of coffee in and around Batavia
1710	Stadhuis completed
1721/22	Conspiracy of Pieter Elberveldt and Raden Kartadria, historians still disagree if there really was a conspiracy or if Elberveldt was simply framed



Batavia, ca. 1780

From 1731 on	Living conditions in the city are crowded and unhealthy; whoever can afford it moves to the countryside
1740	Massacre of the Chinese population of Batavia
1750	Batavia counts roughly 50,000 inhabitants.
1771	On his way back from his first circumnavigation, Captain James Cook anchors in Batavia to get the <i>Endeavour</i> repaired in the dry dock.
1778	Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences is founded
1799	The VOC is dissolved.
1808-1811	Governor General Daendels demolishes the old fort, the city walls and other public buildings.
1810	Construction of <i>Harmonie</i> begins
1811-1816	Batavia under British flag; Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles lieutenant-governor until 1815
1869	First tramway drawn by horses
1871	Railway line between Batavia and Buitenzorg completed
1878	Batavia counts a population of almost 98,000: 68,822 are native from Java, Malaya, Bali and from other islands of the archipelago; 23,466 are Chinese and Peranakans, 4,427 Europeans, 890 Arabs and „Moors“: immigrants from Gujarat, India.
1882	Gas lighting in many streets, tramway steam-powered and on tracks
1883	Telephone company of the Dutch East Indies founded; new port of Tanjung Priok completed
1899	First tramway powered by electricity – the first in the whole Kingdom of the Netherlands
1925	Batavia counts almost 300,00 inhabitants.
1942, March 5th	Japanese invasion; city renamed Jakarta
1945, August 17th	Proclamation of Indonesian independence
1949, December 27th	The Netherlands acknowledge Indonesia as independent state.



Dutch East Indies, 1859

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