



Which airline is the safest in Indonesia?



By **Sharon Petersen** Fri Jul 10, 2026

Indonesia is one of the most demanding places on earth to run an airline. The country scatters more than 270 million people across some 17,000 islands, and for many of them a boat simply will not do. Air travel is the connective tissue of the nation, and it is booming: measured by aircraft orders and trade value, Indonesia is the second-fastest-growing aviation market in the world after China.

Indonesia is also a country that has spent years living down a genuinely fearsome safety reputation. Between 2007 and 2018 the European Union banned Indonesian carriers from its airspace, and the United States downgraded the country's safety

oversight to Category 2 over the same period. The reasons were not hard to find. Indonesia has suffered some of the deadliest crashes of the modern jet age, from the 1997 Garuda disaster near Medan that killed 234 people, to the loss of Adam Air Flight 574 in 2007, the AirAsia Flight 8501 tragedy off Borneo in 2014, the Lion Air Flight 610 MAX crash in 2018, and the Sriwijaya Air Flight 182 disaster in 2021. Difficult weather, volcanic terrain, breakneck growth and patchy regulation combined to make Indonesian skies a byword for risk.

That picture has changed a great deal, and the country now has two carriers back at the very top of the safety scale, though the improvement is far from uniform and the ratings show it plainly. Unfortunately the reputation that surrounds Indonesian airlines has proved harder to shift than the record itself, so let us take a look at how they rate today.

Garuda Indonesia — 7/7 safety rating

The country's flag carrier now holds a 7/7 safety rating. It is a remarkable place to have arrived given where it started.

Garuda was born in 1949 during the fight for independence and grew into one of Asia's larger network carriers, only to be battered by the 1997 Asian financial crisis and a safety record that still sits in passengers' minds today. Its darkest day came in September 1997 when Flight 152, an Airbus A300, flew into hills near Medan in thick haze, killing all 234 on board, it's still the deadliest accident in Indonesian history. A decade later, in 2007, Flight 200 overran the runway at Yogyakarta and burst into flames, killing 21, with investigators blaming the captain for a rushed, unstabilised approach. Those tragedies triggered a reinvention. From 2009 the airline's Quantum Leap programme rebuilt its fleet, brand and service, and it has now gone well over a decade without a serious accident, earning a seven star product rating along the way.

The modern Garuda flies a fleet built around Boeing 737-800s, Boeing 777-300ERs and Airbus A330s, including newer A330-900neos, serving domestic trunk routes alongside international services to Asia, Australia and the Middle East. The one blemish on an otherwise impressive picture is age. Where Garuda's fleet averaged under seven years during its Quantum Leap heyday, financial distress and a lack of renewals have pushed the average age of its active aircraft to around 13 years, and a significant share of the [fleet has been grounded](#) awaiting maintenance while the airline works through a painful restructuring. On the safety scale, though, it now ticks every box. It is IOSA registered, holds a clean record on fatal accidents and pilot-related incidents over the past decade, meets international operating safety standards and carries no EU ban. For a carrier that was banned from European skies little more than a decade ago, a full seven stars is a genuine vindication of its long turnaround.



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Citilink — 7/7 safety rating

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Citilink began life in 2001 as a Garuda side project and was relaunched as a standalone low-cost brand in 2012, since growing into one of the country's larger budget carriers on domestic routes plus a handful of international services. Its record is clean of fatal accidents, though it has had its share of minor drama, including a couple of runway excursions in its early years.

Citilink flies an all-narrowbody fleet of Airbus A320s, including newer A320neos, together with ATR 72-600 turboprops for thinner routes, giving an average fleet age of around 11 to 12 years. On the safety scale it now ticks every box. It is IOSA registered, holds a clean record on fatal accidents and pilot-related incidents, meets international operating safety standards and carries no EU ban. That combination earns it the full seven stars, matching its flag-carrier parent and marking the Garuda group out as the clear safety leader in Indonesian aviation.



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Before we continue... What's IOSA and why does it matter?

Airlines on the IOSA (IATA Operational Safety Audit) registry consistently outperform non-registered counterparts in safety metrics. In 2025 airlines listed on the IOSA registry recorded an all-accident rate of 0.98 per million flights, significantly lower than the 2.55 rate for non-IOSA carriers. IATA member airlines, all of which sit on the IOSA registry, did better still at 0.72 per million flights against 3.09 for non-member airlines. The wider industry rate reflects the same long-term story, falling from 3.72 accidents per million sectors in 2005 to 1.32 in 2025, a decline IATA attributes in large part to global standards like IOSA. This sustained advantage has prompted calls for more regulators to incorporate [IOSA](#) into their safety oversight programmes, underlining its global significance.

Catatan redaksi: Penulis Sharon Petersen menulis untuk AirlineRatings.com, dan kami mengutip seutuhnya hanya sebatas 2 maskapai di Indonesia yang mendapatkan rating "paling selamat" atau 7/7 stars yaitu "The Highest Safety Level" saja. Selain rating "paling selamat" ini, tentunya ada juga rating lainnya yaitu "High Safety Standard" ditandai dengan 6/7 stars dan "High Standing" dengan 5/7 stars. Pemingkatan ini hanya diterbitkan oleh AirlineRatings.com didasarkan kepada hasil audit keselamatan: ICAO USOAP, FAA International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA), IATA IOSA (IATA Operational Safety Audit), European Union EU Air Safety List (ASL) dan data statistik kecelakaan fatal yang dialami maskapai terkait dalam 10 tahun terakhir. (Sumber AirlineRatings.com)