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GLOBETROTTER™

*Travel Guide*

# MALAYSIA



HELEN OON

**NH**  
NEW  
HORIZONS



- Highly recommended
- Recommended
- Not recommended

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Perpustakaan Negeri  
Malaysia

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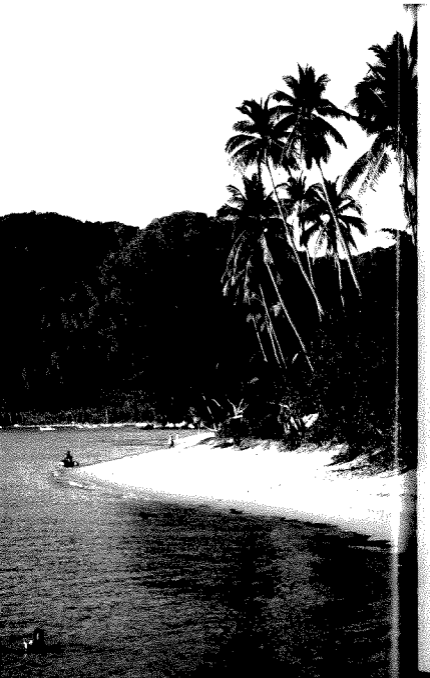
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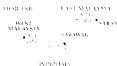


# 1 Introducing Malaysia

Malaysia is an enchanting land with boundless natural beauty. For centuries, traders and explorers arrived seeking their fortune or a place to settle. From many parts came languages and customs which blended with the rich traditions of the indigenous population to create a diverse and fascinating culture.

Blessed with perpetual sunshine, this is an all-year-round holiday destination. For adventurers, the lofty summit of **Mount Kinabalu** beckons and the awesome **Mulu Caves** await. A visit to a **Sarawak longhouse** is unforgettable, and a trek into the ancient rainforests of **Taman Negara** is not to be missed. The islands off the East Coast are idyllic diving locations or isolated retreats for sun-worshippers. Gourmets will be spoiled for choice, whether at an open-air hawker's stall or five-star hotel restaurant. For shoppers, **Kuala Lumpur** and **Penang** offer a seemingly endless selection of bargains. Kuala Lumpur also boasts the world's tallest building and the Formula One Circuit at Sepang.

Peninsular Malaysia has well-developed rail systems and expressways that make the whole country easily accessible from gateway cities which are also well served by air. Political stability and a strong economy make it a safe and attractive destination for business or pleasure. Tourism has fortunately not greatly changed the character of the people; on the contrary, it has encouraged them to preserve and share their rich heritage. It is the friendliness of its people that makes Malaysia irresistible.



## TOP ATTRACTIONS

- \*\*\* **Langkawi** - archipelago of 100 islands
- \*\*\* **Kuala Lumpur** - city of modern buildings and old palaces
- \*\*\* **Taman Negara** - largest tract of rain forest in the world
- \*\*\* **The East Coast** - the best beaches in Malaysia
- \*\*\* **The island of Penang** - the gem of the coast
- \*\*\* **Mount Kinabalu** - one of world's great peaks
- \*\*\* **Sarawak** - longhouse, palaces, waterfalls

**Opposite** Tropical paradise: golden sand, calm blue sea and shady palms on Pulau Tioman, a tiny island off the East Coast.

**MALAYSIA**  
**FACTS AND FIGURES**

Total population 1984: 16,000,000

Total area: 330,000 sq km  
Total population density: 48 persons per sq km

Total area of Peninsular Malaysia: 131,000 sq km  
Total area of Sarawak: 141,000 sq km  
Total area of Sabah: 58,000 sq km

Total area of Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur: 245 sq km  
Total area of Federal Territory of Labuan: 175 sq km

Total area of Federal Territory of Putrajaya: 80 sq km  
Total area of Federal Territory of Cyberjaya: 100 sq km

Total area of Federal Territory of Seremban: 100 sq km  
Total area of Federal Territory of Alor Gajah: 100 sq km

Total area of Federal Territory of Ipoh: 100 sq km  
Total area of Federal Territory of Malacca: 100 sq km

Total area of Federal Territory of Johor Bahru: 100 sq km  
Total area of Federal Territory of Kota Bharu: 100 sq km

Total area of Federal Territory of Kuching: 100 sq km  
Total area of Federal Territory of Sandakan: 100 sq km

Total area of Federal Territory of Jesselton: 100 sq km  
Total area of Federal Territory of Kudat: 100 sq km

Total area of Federal Territory of Tawau: 100 sq km  
Total area of Federal Territory of汶莱: 100 sq km

**THE LAND**

Peninsular (or West) Malaysia straddles the Equator, stretching from Thailand in the north to Singapore in the south. To the east, 600 km (370 miles) across the South China Sea, is East Malaysia, comprising the states of Sarawak and Sabah in the northern parts of **Borneo**. Together they constitute the country of Malaysia which consists of 13 States — Johor, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Pahang, Terengganu, Kelantan, Perak, Perlis, Kedah, Selangor, Penang, Sarawak, Sabah and the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur and Labuan Island (or Borneo).

The mountains of the **Banjaran Titiwangsa**, or Malay Range, which sprawl from the Thai border to Negeri Sembilan, form the main backbone of the Malaysian Peninsula, separating the western coast from the east.

Given the configuration of its physical features and the heavy rainfall, Malaysia is criss-crossed with rivers which still function as arteries for transport, particularly in the rural areas. On the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia, Sarawak and Sabah, alluvial coastal plains (usually fringed with mangrove swamps) are backed by the rugged mountainous interior. The east coast of the Peninsula has long stretches of sandy beaches running from **Kelantan** in the north to **Johor** at the southern end of the country.

**Climate**

The proximity of Malaysia to the Equator gives it a decidedly **tropical climate**. Temperatures are high all year round, averaging 26°C (80°F) in the coastal lowlands. The hills resorts enjoy a slightly cooler climate. **Cameron Highlands** in Pahang, for instance, has a mean temperature of 18°C (65°F). Humidity is high, averaging 80 per cent. The **northeast monsoon** blows across the South China Sea from October to March, bringing heavy rain to the east coasts of Malaysia, Sarawak and Sabah, Kedah



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT



and Perlis, however, lying too far north to be affected by the northeast monsoon, go through a dry spell during this period. The southwest monsoon between May and September brings drier weather to the whole country with the exception of the west coast, which experiences some rain in this season. Even in the wettest months it seldom rains all day long, but it can cause many inconveniences during trips to the interior, for jungle trekking or longhouse river safaris.

### Plant Life

About four-fifths of the land mass of Malaysia is covered with **tropical rainforest**. The vegetation varies according to the elevation of the land. The forest consists of freshwater swamps of mangrove and *Napa palm* in the alluvial coastal regions, dipterocarps in the lowland forest and **heath** and **montane forests** in the hilly and rocky areas especially in Sarawak and Sabah. Wild **orchids** and bright flowers occur, but they are frequently hidden in the thick green foliage of the lush forests or perched high up on the tall green canopy of the trees. The tropical Malaysian forests contain an amazing

### WHAT TO WEAR

variety of insects, and a few of them are poisonous. You should be aware of the fact that the forest is a breeding ground for mosquitoes, and you should take the necessary precautions against them. In the highland areas, the weather is cooler, and you should wear a light jacket. In the lowland areas, the weather is hot and humid, and you should wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. It is also advisable to wear a hat and sunglasses to protect yourself from the sun. Finally, it is important to wear sturdy shoes and socks to protect your feet from the many sharp and poisonous plants and animals in the forest.

—*Dr. J. H. Burley, Kuala Lumpur*

**Above:** Tropical rainforest in Ulu Gombak National Park, Sabah. **Opposite:** The rainforest on the summit of Mount Kinabalu in Sabah.

### RAINFEST TREES

The tropical rainforest is a lush and dense growth of trees and plants. The trees are tall and thin, with a thick canopy of leaves. The plants are diverse and colorful, with many different species of flowers and fruits. The forest is a complex and interconnected system of life, with many different species of animals and insects. The rainforest is a vital part of the world's ecosystem, and it is important to protect it for future generations.

—*Dr. J. H. Burley, Kuala Lumpur*



## BIRDWATCHER'S HEAVEN

highly diverse and richly wooded area of Malacca is one of the country's great bird-watching havens. It is situated on the hills of the mountainous area (see page 26). The dense forest here covers the slopes of hills and small trees. It has a number of bird sanctuaries for the protection of the forest. The forest is rich in bird life and is a haven for many species of birds. The forest is rich in bird life and is a haven for many species of birds. The forest is rich in bird life and is a haven for many species of birds.

number of plant species with an estimated 8000 species of flowering plants of which 2500 are trees. It is quite common to find a hundred species of trees on a single hectare of land that has previously been cleared for agriculture initially supports coarse tall elephant grass or *lalang*, while in the urban areas rain trees and ornamental trees of fiery coloured flowers are commonly found.

## The Animal Kingdom

The wealth and variety of vegetation in the rain-forest sustains an amazing proliferation of wildlife. The natural orchestra of the forest is normally led by the shrieks of the various species of monkeys swinging in the tree tops, the maniacal laughter of the hornbills, the sporadic melodious songs of the common shrike and bulbuls, and the grunting of wild boars, rising above the incessant choruses of the cicadas and crickets. Snakes or big game animals are seldom seen in the Malaysian forest. Unlike the African savanna where tourists can see wild animals in full view from the comfort of a jeep here one would need to exercise great patience to view a tiger or a leopard. In **Taman Negara** National Park in Pahang visitors can go to wildlife hides to view the

animals, but the thick foliage of the forest provides excellent hiding places and camouflage for its elusive inhabitants.

Amongst the carnivores the tiger is the pride of Malaysia and adorns the national ensigns of the nation. Clouded leopards and other wild cats are occasionally encountered while the musing royal cat is more commonly seen at the edge of forests near villages or





plantations. The sun bear is the largest of the omnivores in Malaysia. Asian elephants, while smaller than their African cousins, are hunted and live deep within forests. They move in medium-sized herds and are known to create disturbance on agricultural land. Less commonly found is the largest member of the wild ox family in the world, the seadragon, which can weigh up to 1,500kg (3,300lb). The rare Sumatran rhinoceros and the tapir (which resembles a wild pig with a soft trunk-like nose) are rare and unique sights. Other smaller animals found here are deer, bats, pigs and a wide variety of monkeys, including pig-tailed macaques, which are occasionally trained to harvest coconuts on the east coast. Orangutans and the proboscis monkeys (with their long noses) are found only in the wilds of Sarawak and Sabah. Amphibians and reptiles are plentiful and include crocodiles, monitor lizards, frogs and marine turtles. Turtle Island off Sabah is where turtles can be seen laying their eggs on most evenings. Malaysia supports over 130 species of snakes and a diverse range of insects and other tropical invertebrates.

#### VISITING NATIONAL PARKS

To fully enjoy the natural beauty of your visit to a national park, it's better to reverse the usual tourist itinerary. The parks usually open in the early morning, rather than

**Left:** A dusky lemur (sometimes known as the spotted langur) in the forests of Penang Hill.

**Opposite:** The magnificent Kuala Berang, a species of banyan tree, discovered by the naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace. It has a circumference of up to 17m (56ft).

#### MALAYSIA'S LITTLE HERO

For the past few years, the Malaysian government has been making a concerted effort to protect the country's natural heritage. In 2000, it established the Department of Wildlife and Forests, and has since then been working to improve the management of its national parks. In 2001, it created the Wildlife Conservation Department, which is responsible for the management of the country's national parks. In 2002, it established the National Parks Board, which is responsible for the management of the country's national parks. In 2003, it established the National Parks Authority, which is responsible for the management of the country's national parks. In 2004, it established the National Parks Department, which is responsible for the management of the country's national parks. In 2005, it established the National Parks Commission, which is responsible for the management of the country's national parks. 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## MALAYSIAN PREHISTORY

of the prehistoric period. The archaeological remains of the prehistoric period in Malaysia are scattered throughout the country. The most important sites are the Neolithic sites of the Bujang Valley in Kedah, the Neolithic sites of the Melaka region, and the Neolithic sites of the Perak region. The Bujang Valley is a large area of lowland forest in the north of Kedah, and it is here that the earliest evidence of human habitation in Malaysia is found. The Neolithic sites of the Melaka region are located in the coastal areas of the state, and they are characterized by the presence of earthenware and stone tools. The Neolithic sites of the Perak region are located in the interior of the state, and they are characterized by the presence of earthenware and stone tools. The prehistoric period in Malaysia is a period of great interest to archaeologists, and it is hoped that further excavations will bring to light more of the secrets of this ancient civilization.

## HISTORY IN BRIEF

Situated in the heart of Southeast Asia, at one of the world's major crossroads, Malaysia has always been important to European, Oriental, Indian and Chinese trade routes. Its warm tropical climate and abundant natural attractions made it a congenial destination for immigrants as early as 5000 years ago when the ancestors of the **Orang Asli** (the indigenous peoples of Peninsular Malaysia), settled here as the pioneers of a general movement from China and Tibet. They were followed by the **Malays**, who brought with them skills in farming and the use of metals. Around the first century B.C., strong trading links were established with **China** and **India**, and these had a major impact on the culture, language and social customs of the country. Evidence of a Hindu-Buddhist period in the history of Malaysia can today be found in the temple sites of the Bujang Valley and Muar in Johore, in Kedah in the northwest of Peninsular Malaysia near the Thai border. The spread of **Islam**, introduced by Arab and Indian traders, brought the Hindu-Buddhist era to an end by the 13th century. With the conversion of the Malay Hindu rulers of the **Melaka Sultanate** (the Malay kingdom which ruled both



HISTORICAL CALENDAR

**c1400** Expulsion of Muslims from Prince Parameswara  
**1511** Malacca consolidated by Portuguese; Malacca Sultanate re-established in 1521  
**1541** Portuguese capture Malacca; expelled by British  
**1699** Sultan Ahmad murdered; end of Malacca dynasty  
**1786** France and Britain divide British trade with former Dutch Penang Island  
**1819** Thomas Stamford Raffles and Sir Stamford Raffles on Singapore  
**1824** Anglo-Dutch Treaty of London; British and Dutch divide Indonesia; British acquire Settlements of Malacca and Singapore  
**1841** War of 1841 begins

1842 British capture Malacca  
**1874** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Singapore; British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1881** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1895-1900** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1896** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1909** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1914** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca

**1941-45** Japanese capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1948** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1957** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1963** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1963-6** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1965** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1969** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1971** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca  
**1981** British capture of Malacca; British capture of Malacca

sides of the Straits of Malaka for over a hundred years, Islam was established as the religion of the Malays, and had a profound effect on Malay society.

The arrival of Europeans in Malaysia brought a dramatic change to the country. In 1511, the Portuguese captured Malaka and the rulers of the Malaka Sultanate fled south to Johor where they tried to establish a new kingdom. They were resisted not only by the Europeans but by the Acehese, Minangkabau and the Bugis, resulting in the sovereignty of the present day states of Peninsular Malaysia. The Portuguese were in turn defeated in 1641 by the Dutch, who colonized Malaka until the advent of the British in the late 18th century. Neither the Portuguese nor the Dutch exerted any profound influence on Malay society. The British acquired Malaka from the Dutch in 1824 in exchange for Bengkulu in Sumatra. From their new bases in Malaka, Penang and Singapore, collectively known as the Straits Settlements, the British, through their influence and power, began the process of political integration of the Malay states of Peninsular Malaysia.

**Opposite:** Light tower at Point of Wales Island, a major seaport in 1811. As they port Penang also enjoyed an initial commercial success at this time.

Alhambra's tower  
in 1841, showing  
its stables and  
church.



Meanwhile, in Borneo, the states of Sarawak and Sabah, although under the nominal rule of the ancient Kingdom of Brunei, had lived an autonomous existence until the 19th century. In 1840, a British adventurer, James Brooke, who had helped to quell local rebellions and fought against piracy in Sarawak, was proclaimed Rajah by the Sultan of Brunei as a reward.

With the signing of the Pangkor Treaty in 1874, the British imposed direct supervision on the states of Perak and Selangor and in 1896, these, together with Negeri Sembilan and Pahang, formed the Federated Malay States with Kuala Lumpur as the capital. By 1914, the Unfederated Malay States of Johor, Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis and Terengganu had come under British rule. The East Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak became British protectorates in 1888.

After World War II and the Japanese occupation from 1941-45, the British created the Malayan Union in 1946. This was abandoned in 1948 and the Federation of Malaya emerged in its place. The Federation gained its independence from Britain on 31 August 1957. In September 1963, Malaya, Sarawak, Sabah, and initially Singapore united to form Malaysia. It was a country whose pot-pourri of society, customs and rich heritage evolved from four of the world's major peoples: Chinese, Indian, Islamic and European.

#### MAT SALEM

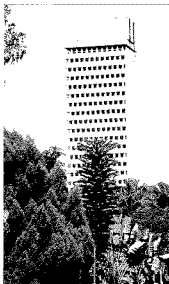
English North Borneo  
charter company was  
founded in 1881 and was  
a company of 1000  
shareholders. It became  
known as the British  
North Borneo Chartered  
Company and with British  
support it was able to  
control the region and  
to set up a system of  
administration. It was  
the first of the three  
British North Borneo  
charter companies. It  
was the first to set up  
a system of administration  
and to set up a system  
of education. It was  
the first to set up a  
system of health care  
and to set up a system  
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public health care.

## GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMY

Malaysia is a constitutional monarchy with the king known as the **Yang di-Pertuan Agong**, as its supreme head of state. The king is elected every five years by his fellow rulers of the royal states of Johor, Selangor, Perak, Pahang, Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah, Perlis and Negeri Sembilan, who act on the advice of the state executive council. The non-royal states of Penang, Malaka, Sarawak and Sabah are headed by governors, appointed on a four-yearly basis. They act in accordance with the advice of the respective state government which is headed by a chief minister. The state government is run along the guidelines of the federal government in Kuala Lumpur, and every elected king has to act in accordance with government advice. The country has a parliamentary democratic government, elected every five years and there is no census surfrage. The head of government is the prime minister. The parliament has two houses: the **Dewan Negara** (the upper house), with over 70 members, and the **Dewan Rakyat**.

### Economic Development

When Malaysia gained its independence from the British in 1957, it was the world's largest producer of tin and rubber. While it enjoyed prosperity from these sources, it was also at the mercy of price fluctuations in the world markets. To



### EDUCATION

Malaysia is a secular country with a high level of literacy. The education system is based on the British model, although the British Malaya Education Commission has advised that the education system should be based on the Malay language and Islamic culture. The education system is based on the British model, although the British Malaya Education Commission has advised that the education system should be based on the Malay language and Islamic culture. The education system is based on the British model, although the British Malaya Education Commission has advised that the education system should be based on the Malay language and Islamic culture.

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Left: Parliament House rises high above the lushes canopy in Kuala Lumpur.



*view; Tourism is a major part in Malaysia's economic growth and the country is seen as a revolution. This exciting swimming pool belongs to a 5-star Sunway Hotel at Sunway Beach.*

combat this unstable situation the administration set out to diversify the economy in the agricultural sector while encouraging industrialization in selected areas. Products such as palm oil, cocoa, pepper, pineapple, timber and tobacco now play an important part in the agrarian sector. Petroleum and gas are another boon to the economy while tourism also makes a major contribution.

The economic strategy of the government is carried out in a series of five year plans guided since 1963 by the New Economic Policy (NEP). Despite regional economic upheaval in recent years, the economy is now bustling along. In recent years, Malaysia's GDP growth rates have been among the highest in the world and the country enjoys political stability, low unemployment and a well-educated workforce, in addition to an excellent infrastructure and a flourishing manufacturing sector. Malaysia encourages foreign investment with attractive incentives like tax breaks of five to 10 years, repatriation of capital and profits, controlled currency exchange and 100 per cent foreign equity ownership. A number of Free Trade Zones allow manufacturers in export-oriented industries to enjoy minimum customs controls and formalities. The Malaysian Industrial Development Authority (MIDA), with branches overseas, was set up to promote and co-ordinate all industrial activities. Malaysia intends to become a fully industrialized nation with a competitive and dynamic economy by the year 2020, and has formulated a new policy, Vision 2020, to strive towards this goal.

#### **TOURISM A BOOMING INDUSTRY**

Malaysia is a beautiful country with a rich cultural heritage and a diverse population. The country is a major tourist destination and has a long history of welcoming visitors from all over the world. The tourism industry is one of the fastest growing sectors in the country and is expected to continue to grow in the future.

## THE PEOPLE

Malaysia is a multicultural society. In a population of 25 million people, it is a multi-raced society with 150 different languages and dialects spoken as they are numerous. So far there are Chinese, Indian and European of various nationalities and influences on the people and together with the original indigenous societies they form a society that comprises Malaysia. Although the language there is Bahasa Malaysia (Malay to Malay), the close cultural integration of the society has produced a cultural spirit derived from all the communities present. It is not unusual to hear a Malaysian using Malay, Chinese, Indian, English and even Portuguese words in one sentence. Inter-racial marriages are commonplace, and acceptable, and the children of such unions may be seen as the true Malaysians of the nation.



## CUSTOMS AND ETIQUETTE: DOS AND DON'TS

- Do not consider the Malay as a people who are completely Islamised. Many Malays are non-Muslims.
- Do not expect all Malays to be Muslims. There are still many non-Muslim Malays in Malaysia.
- Do not assume that all Malays are Muslims. There are still many non-Muslim Malays in Malaysia.
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**Left:** Malay boat on the water near the beach of Sungai. The traditional way of the Malays is to use traditional wooden boats called 'perahu' to go around the river and the sea.



### TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

The best times for shooting brightly coloured flowers are after dawn (5.30am-7.00am) and in the shade of trees.

The best time for shooting the beautiful petals of a tropical flower are 40-60 minutes after sunrise. The best time for shooting the petals of a tropical flower are 40-60 minutes after sunrise.

When taking photographs of people, remember to ask permission first.

### MUSIC AND DANCE

The dance and music of the Malays is very rich.

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### The *Bumiputra*

The *bumiputra*, or 'sons of the soil', are defined as those people whose cultures are indigenous to the region, such as the Malays, the Orang Asli of Peninsular Malaysia and the indigenous tribes of Sarawak and Sabah. Under the common bond of Islam, Malays who migrated across the Straits of Melaka from Sumatra in the late 19th and 20th century, and the Javanese, especially to the western coasts of Johor, Selangor and Lower Perak, and the Bajau of Sabah who originated from the Sulu region in the Philippines are also classified as *bumiputra*. The *bumiputra* are granted a number of special privileges as part of government policy to elevate them to equal economic status with the other races in the country, who at one time had a disproportionate hold on the economy. Today, with the rapid expansion and development that has taken place in Malaysia over recent years, the indigenous people have increased their share of the country's economic wealth.

### The Non-*bumiputra* Group

The non-*bumiputra* group consists of the Chinese, Indians and other minority communities like the Sinhalese, Eurasians and Europeans. The Chinese and Indians came to settle in Malaysia in great numbers during the 19th century due to the rapid economic development in the country brought about by the open trading policies in the Straits Settlements by the British.

### The Malays

The Malays were known to have lived in Cambodia, the Malay Peninsula and the southern seas as far back as 3000 years ago. The Malays of the Peninsula had close affinities with the Malays of Sumatra and for centuries the Straits of Melaka were not a political boundary, but a passage linking the different groups of the same family. They were great navigators and had advanced farming skills, with a knowledge of metal working which enabled them to produce agricultural tools like the axe and the hoe. They invented the  *kris* — a short wavy dagger which is unique to Malay culture. Their traditional beliefs were based on



animism and although they subsequently embraced Islam, their belief in the supernatural powers of nature is still strong. The *bayun* and *rajaung* (magician-men with magical powers) are still accorded respect.

The Malays chiefly live in the rural areas as farmers and some have smallholdings of palm oil and rubber. Those found along the coastal region are mostly fishing folk or own coconut plantations. In the rural areas the life of a traditional Malay *kampung*, or village, with its wooden houses on stilts, is a communal affair. The inhabitants are often self-sufficient, growing their own vegetables and fruit and raising chickens, goats, buffaloes and cows. There is a *mesjid*, or small mosque, in every village, as daily life revolves around Islam. Many Malay women wear the traditional garment of *baju kurung* with *sarong*, while the men wear the *batu Melayu* with *sampin*, a short sarong wound round their waist. However, the *batu Melayu* is now mostly worn for official functions only, as the men opt for western style clothes. With the new economic policy many Malays now play an important role in politics and commerce and the number of Malay professionals is increasing.

**Above:** Malay school girls  
at Kuala Mulu, Sarawak.  
Below: Sarawak.

#### BAHASA MALAYSIA

As Bahasa Malaysia is the official language, it is the only language used in the schools and in the government offices. It is the only language used in the mass media, such as the radio, television and newspapers. The language is used by the government, the military, the police, the courts and the public. It is the only language used in the schools and in the government offices. The language is used by the government, the military, the police, the courts and the public. It is the only language used in the schools and in the government offices.



*Above: Young children swing happily on a rope that supports a large wooden swing set in a forest.*

#### A GIANT SWING

The Malay word for the indigenous people of Sarawak is *Melayu*, which means "Malay." The word "Malay" is also used to refer to the indigenous people of Sumatra and Java. The word "Malay" is also used to refer to the indigenous people of the Malay Peninsula and the island of Sumatra. The word "Malay" is also used to refer to the indigenous people of the Malay Peninsula and the island of Sumatra. The word "Malay" is also used to refer to the indigenous people of the Malay Peninsula and the island of Sumatra.

### The Orang Asli

Before the coming of the Malays, Borneo and Malaya was home to the ancestors of various groups who are now collectively known as the Orang Asli, or original people. The oldest group, the **Semang**, were traditionally nomadic hunter-gatherers in the mountainous interior, constructing only temporary shelters with bamboo poles and roots made of leaves. The **Senni** and the **Proto-Malays** were, after all, Malays, many of whom practised shifting cultivation as well as fishing and hunting. Many Orang Asli now have settled axes as farmers and are increasingly drawn into the modern economy of Malaysia, but by no means have all of them been lured away from their old way of life in the forest.

### Indigenous Peoples of East Malaysia

The **Iban** are the largest ethnic group of Sarawak and most live in longhouses along rivers in the lowland areas. Although a large number have been converted to Christianity or Islam, they still maintain a strong cultural identity and mythical heroes and deities are worshipped. **Diyans** and **Darlungans** play an important part in determining their actions. The Iban are a gregarious race and enjoy merry-making, dancing and ritual consumption of rice or rice wine, their main food by custom to an Iban longhouse, so an always guaranteed a warm welcome.

The **Kayan** and **Kenyah** peoples live in the upper reaches of Sarawak's Rajang and Baram Rivers in massive, carefully constructed longhouses. They are renowned for their artistic and musical skills as well as for their hospitality. In the south-west region of Sarawak live the **Bidayuh**, famous for their skills in basketry, wood and bamboo carving.

The **Melanau** live along the coast and traditionally cultivate sago as their staple crop. Most are Muslims and many have intermarried with Malays, but their former animist beliefs give rise to the custom of carrying "sickness figures" called *lilias*. After the healing ceremony, the *lilias* would be left at the edge of a pool of

or scheduling are not yet to be seen. It is not surprising that taking the patient's history with a Melanau enthsans are skilled in the building of boats and pieral poles. They also display their unique skills in making decorative baskets and sunhats called *tu'ul'ul'*.

The Kadazan are the largest ethnic group of Sabah forming a third of the population of the state. They are mostly rice farmers and many are Christians or Muslims although a few still practise animist religions. Their traditional costumes are black with gold and silver beads and diamonds decorations. In the more remote regions women still wear beaded brass necklaces, armbands and bracelets. Many of their practices are used for medicinal purposes and are combined with the services of a shaman during festivals and ceremonies.

Originally from the southern Philippines, the Bajau are known as the sea gypsies as they lead a nomadic life sailing along the shores coast of Sarawak, Kudat and Kota Bharu, carrying ashore on a raft.

### The Chinese

The main influx of Chinese into Malaya was in the 19th century. Some came as refugees from their war-torn homeland while others came as workers for the tin mines or to trade. Their original trading centres were along the straits of Malacca, Penang and Singapore, but later they spread into other parts of the country prospecting for tin or setting up trading posts. Today the Chinese constitute the third and next largest ethnic group in the country, as is evident in the bustling commercial



Above: A Kadazan woman in traditional costume. Below: A Bajau woman in traditional costume. The image shows a woman in traditional Kadazan attire, including a large, dark, wide-brimmed hat and a light-colored, collared shirt. She is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**Right:** A bustling market in one of the narrow streets of Penang's Chinatown, lined with shophouses fronted by shade trees and awnings. Fishbaskets and motorbikes thread the way between the baskets-stalls. Shopping here is an experience not to be missed.



#### LIONS AND DRAGONS

In Malaysia, there is but one religion, a religion the government of Malaysia has kept and preserved as its state religion, and that of all its state companies and agencies. It is Islam, the religion of the Prophet Muhammad.

There is a mosque in the capital of Kuala Lumpur, and in the heart of each of the 13 states, while a grand mosque is the pride of each of them. To be a Muslim is to be a Malay. The Malays are a mixture of a number of different peoples, and are comprised by 70 per cent of the population. They are of the Malay race, and speak a Malay language, a language that is spoken by 90 per cent of the population. A large number of the Malays are of Chinese origin, and they are the majority in Singapore, and they are the majority in the other states of the Malay Peninsula. The Malays are a people of great spirit, and they are a people of great courage.

of Kuala Lumpur, in Jalan Petaling, Penang, Ipoh, Bahru, Ipoh, and most other major towns. The differing dialects and cultures of the 19th century Chinese immigrants have been preserved down the generations, as has the clan system which aided them on their arrival and contributed to their commercial success. Today, the Chinese constitute approximately a third of Malaysia's entire population.

#### The Indians

Large numbers of Indians were brought from southern India by the British in the 19th century to work as labourers on the rubber estates and to build roads and railways. Long before this, however, a smaller number of Muslim Indians had arrived to trade in textiles. The southern Indians are Hindus and temples were established in every Indian settlement. Traditional Indian dances are still performed at festivals and weddings. Indian cuisine has a great influence on Malaysian food and culinary techniques.

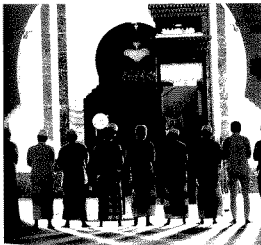
## RELIGION

Although Islam is the official religion of Malaysia, every section of society has the constitutional right to practise its own religion. Virtually all the world's major religions are represented here, reflecting the multi-ethnic population of the country.

### Islam

Islam is recognized as the religion of the Malays, although there are considerable numbers of non-Malay converts amongst the Indians, Chinese, Kadazans and other indigenous tribes in East Malaysia. Muslims form the largest single religious group in the country.

The faith was introduced to Malaysia through Indian and Arab traders, but it was not until the Melaka Sultanate was converted to Islam in the 15th century that it was firmly established. It is interesting to note that in almost every hotel in Malaysia, there is an arrow painted on the ceiling of each room pointing in the direction of Mecca. This sign, called *kalbat*, ensures that Muslim guests face towards Mecca when they observe their five-times daily prayer.



### THE PILLARS OF ISLAM

The practice of Islam which means submission to God, is expressed in a series of ways of life, and is based on five principal tenets.

**Shahada** the profession of faith. There is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is his messenger.

**Salat** worship. The mufti or call the faithful to prayer five times every day, when Muslims prostrate themselves in the direction of Mecca. Friday or *day* prayers are especially important.

**Zakat** charity. Muslims are expected to contribute a percentage of their income to the poor.

**Saum** fasting. During the month of *Rahman*, the faithful refrain from eating, drinking or smoking.

**Hajj** pilgrimage. All Muslims who are able afford a pilgrimage to Mecca once in their lives.

*Left: A time for prayer at the Ubudiah Mosque in Kuala Lumpur, Perak. The calls of the muezzin punctuate the daily lives of all Malays.*

## MALAYSIA'S POPULATION

Malaysia's population, which is 21 million, is a mixture of Malays living in the Peninsula, about 70 per cent of the total, and Chinese, Malays, Indians and others. About 70 per cent of the population of Malaya are Muslims. About 15 per cent are Chinese, 10 per cent are Indians and 5 per cent are other races.

*Below: An Indian wedding in Kuala Lumpur. The bride and groom are enthroned on the marriage dais. This practice is also followed at Malay weddings, a custom retained from the Hindu period before the coming of Islam in the 15th century.*

**Buddhism**

Buddhism is the religion with the largest following in Malaysia after Islam. Although Buddhism is identified primarily with the Chinese, it is also the religion of the Thais, Siamese and Burmese living in the country. The establishment of the Chinese community in Melaka during the 15th century gave Buddhism a permanent footing in Malaysia, and the great waves of immigrants who came from China in the late 19th century further enhanced the spread of the religion, taking it into every part of the country.

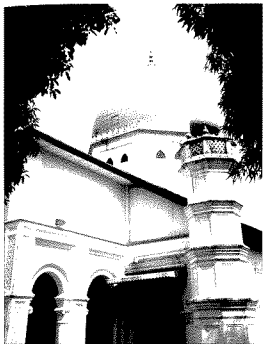
**Hinduism**

There are two phases of Hinduism in Malaysia. The early Hindu period of the 15th century (preceding the coming of Islam), instituted by Hindu traders, has very little to do with the practice of Hinduism today. The aristocratic Brahmanical Hinduism of that era was the religion of the ruling class. Today, this form of Hinduism survives only in some aspects of Malay language and literature, as reflected in the traditional *wayang kulit* or shadow-puppet play and in the Malay wedding ceremony, or *bersanding*, where the bride and groom sit in state as 'king and queen for a day'.

The Hinduism practised in Malaysia today came into the country through the contract labourers who were recruited to work in rubber and coffee plantations in the late 19th and the first half of the 20th century. Hindu temples and institutions are diverse and the two most popular deities worshipped are Lord Subramanyam and Mariamman.

**Sikhism**

The Sikh community in Malaysia, originally brought into the country as recruits for paramilitary units and the police force by the British during the 1930s, settled mostly in the regions of Penang, Perak and Selangor. The Sikh population of Malaysia represents approximately three per cent of the total Indian community in the country.



*Letti Kapitan Mosque  
situated on Pitt Street and  
is one of the oldest  
mosques in Kuala Lumpur.*

## Christianity

Christianity was introduced into the country by early traders and travellers passing through the Straits of Melaka en route for China. Colonization by the Portuguese in 1511, the Dutch in 1641, and later the British in 1786, set a permanent root of Christianity, even though the faith was largely confined to the expatriate community. It was not until the 19th and 20th centuries that Christianity began to have any influence on local people, through the work of missionaries who provided a major role in medicine and education by establishing schools and hospitals in many parts of the country. Their converts were notably among the Chinese, Indians, and some indigenous tribes in East Malaysia. Today, most Christian churches in Malaysia are in the hands of local church leaders. The Christians number about one million or six per cent of the population.

## CHRISTMAS AND EASTER

Christmas and Easter are the most important religious festivals in Malaysia. Christmas is celebrated on 25 December, and Easter on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox.

Christmas is a public holiday in Malaysia, and is celebrated with a variety of religious and social activities. The most common is the Christmas Eve service, which is held in many churches and community centres. The service is usually held at 7.30 pm, and is a time of prayer, singing, and the reading of the Bible.

Easter is also a public holiday in Malaysia, and is celebrated with a variety of religious and social activities. The most common is the Easter Sunday service, which is held in many churches and community centres. The service is usually held at 10 am, and is a time of prayer, singing, and the reading of the Bible.



**CALENDAR OF MAJOR  
FESTIVALS IN MALAYSIA**
**January/February**

Malay: Festival of Hari Raya  
Chinese: New Year\*  
Pusasa\*

**February**

Chinese: Festival of Hungry Ghost

**March/April**

Chinese: Meng, Chinese  
Festival of the Tomb

**May**

Buddhist: Festival of Vesak  
Wesak Day

Kudat: Harvest Festival in Sabah

**June**

Gua: Napak Festival of the  
Dyak and Iban in Sarawak

**August**

Malay: Festival of Hari Raya  
\*Raya

Chinese: Festival of the  
Mid-Autumn

**September**

Birthday of the Prophet  
Muhammad

Chinese: Moon Cake Festival

**October**

Malay: Festival of Deepavali\*

**December**

Christmas Day

\* Dates vary according to the  
lunar

Calendar from [www.malaysia.gov.my](http://www.malaysia.gov.my)

## FESTIVALS

A significant part of Malaysia's rich cultural heritage is played by the traditional festivals of the four main groups of the population – the Malays, Chinese, Indians and the ethnic tribes of East Malaysia. They are mostly of a religious nature, but it is customary in Malaysia for the whole community to participate in all the major festivals, regardless of race or religion.

### Islamic Festivals

There are three very important Islamic festivals. The Hari Raya Haji marks the conclusion of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, when the pilgrims are given the title of Haji (for men) or Hajjah (for women). This festival falls on the tenth day of the twelfth moon in the Muslim calendar. Of a more social nature is Hari Raya Puasa, which signifies the end of the fasting season of Ramadan. The celebration is determined by the sighting of the new moon by the religious elders. This festive occasion is greeted with great joy and starts with mass prayers in the mosques. The young will ask for forgiveness from their elders and everyone will put on new clothes in preparation for the customary visiting of friends and relatives in an 'open-house' fashion, where visitors are welcomed day and night and Malay delicacies are served to guests. Houses will have been given a thorough cleaning and decorated with coloured lights to 'welcome the angels' believed to be visiting the earth during the seven days preceding the festival. The Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, on the twelfth day of the third moon in the Muslim calendar, is another important festival. Special prayers are offered in the mosques followed by processions.

### Buddhist Festivals

The most important Buddhist festival is Vesak Day in May, which commemorates the birth, enlightenment and death of Buddha. The celebration begins at dawn when devotees offer prayers at the temple. The sutras are chanted in unison by monks in saffron robes. Acts of

charity such as feeding the needy and giving donations to the temples are performed. The ceremony is highlighted with a candle procession by the devotees.

### Chinese Festivals

New Year is the most important festival for the Chinese and is celebrated on the first day of the Chinese lunar calendar, in January or February, in the same fashion as for the Muslim celebration of Hari Raya. Houses are

cleaned and painted preceding the big day. Debts are settled, accounts closed, and special prayers and offerings are made, particularly to the kitchen god to send him off on his annual visit to heaven. Bad omenage or unpleasant topics like death should not cross anyone's lips, for fear of attracting bad luck and evil spirits.

Chinese characters depicting happiness, prosperity and longevity are written on red paper and posted on front doors. Red packets, or *ang pao* - containing money in even numbers - are given to children when they visit the house. The festival starts with a reunion dinner for families on New Year's Eve, followed by visits to one another's houses where sweets and drinks of all kinds are served. During the 'open house' period, which is normally on the first three days of Chinese New Year, homes are open to friends, family, races and religions. This is a reflection of the close and harmonious relationship that exists amongst the people of Malaysia and the respect and acceptance of one another's religious beliefs. New Year lasts until the 15th day of the new moon, which is known as Chap Goh Mei or Lantern Night.

Ching Ming, or the Festival of the Family, falls at the end of the second month of the lunar year. On this day, the Chinese show their respect for their deceased ancestors by tidying up their tombs and cemeteries. Offerings of food and prayers are made in honour of the departed. The Moat Lake, or mid-summer festival, is another colourful occasion celebrated on the 15th day of the eighth Chinese lunar calendar, in



*Above: Lion dance at a Chinese festival. Lion dance is an ancient tradition in Chinese culture, common in all parts of the world. Photo: Hui Xian, Kuala Lumpur*

### FESTIVAL OF THE HUNGRY GHOSTS

On the 15th day of the 7th lunar month, the festival of the Hungry Ghosts is celebrated. It is a time when the spirits of the dead are believed to be restless and hungry. People are advised to eat less and to give alms to the poor. The festival is celebrated with lanterns and processions. In the past, people used to burn incense and light lanterns to guide the spirits. The festival is also a time when people are advised to be kind to their parents and to do good deeds. The festival is celebrated with a lot of food and drink. People are advised to eat less and to give alms to the poor. The festival is celebrated with lanterns and processions. In the past, people used to burn incense and light lanterns to guide the spirits. The festival is also a time when people are advised to be kind to their parents and to do good deeds. The festival is celebrated with a lot of food and drink.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT

September. This festival has historical rather than religious significance, as it marks the successful rebellion against the Mongol rule of 14th-century China. It was said that secret messages were hidden in moon cakes to spread word of the plot against the Mongolians, and lanterns were used as signals from hill-tops. Hence today, the Moon Cake Festival is celebrated with lantern processions, and moon cakes are exchanged as gifts.

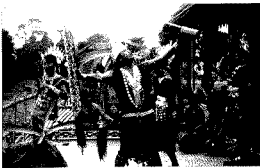
### Hindu Festivals

Amongst the Malaysian Indians, two major Hindu festivals are observed with great pomp and ceremony. Deepavali, or the Festival of Lights, is celebrated in the Hindu month of Kartik (October–November). It symbolizes the mythological victory of Lord Krishna over the demon king Narakasura. It also marks a new beginning, especially for business people, for whom it is the start of a new financial year. On this day, the Hindu celebrate with up to the crack of dawn and bath ritually, oil their new clothes and say their prayers. Oil lamps are lit in every Hindu home at night to welcome Laxmi, the goddess of wealth, who supposedly will not enter an unlit house.

Thaipusam, which falls in the Hindu month of Thai (January–February), is the celebration of the birthday of Lord Subramaniam, also known as Lord Murugan. Devotees carry 30–400 wooden frames decorated with

**Right:** At the Hindu festival of Thaipusam, devotees prostrate in front of deity, carrying spectacular beaded wooden frames, called kavadis, onto supported by hooks and spikes inserted in their flesh.





*Left: Offered as ceremonial burnt and skinned whole goats, these dancers perform outside their longhouse.*

peacock feathers and flowers – fastened on their bodies by metal hooks and spikes embedded in their bare flesh. Others defy all sense of pain by piercing their backs and tongues with metal skewers and hooks. This self-mutilation is an act of penitence in exchange for favours asked of the gods. As many as 200,000 people will turn up in Kuala Lumpur to see the procession of the celebrants in their trance-like state, dancing to the beating of drums, escorting the chariot with the statue of Lord Murugan from Maha Mariamman Temple in Chinatown to the temple at Batu Caves, in Penang. Thaipusam is celebrated at the Balai Mandir Thaliam Temple in Waterfall Road, while in Ipoh it is held at the Sri Subramaniam Temple at Gunung Cheroh.

### Harvest Festivals of East Malaysia

Thanksgiving celebrations dedicated to the rice gods are held each May by the Kadazan or Sabah and by the Iban in Sarawak, whose festival of Gawai Dayak welcomes their New Year on 1st June. There is much merrymaking and feasting, with rice wine flowing freely throughout the festivities and traditional games, dances and beauty pageants. Everyone in the community gathers together in a true spirit of comradeship, and foreign visitors are welcome to participate. The festivals are times for family reunions and friends to visit, with the emphasis on eating and drinking.

#### TRADITIONAL BELIEFS

The Malays believe that a spirit inhabits every part of the natural world, from the smallest insect to the largest animal. In their view, the spirit of a rice seed is protected by a guardian spirit, which will be destroyed if the seed is eaten by a pest or a bird. In the past, the rice guardian spirit was believed to be a dragon, but now it is a dragon-like creature called a *berang*. It is believed that the guardian spirit of a rice seed will protect it from being eaten by a pest or a bird. In the past, the rice guardian spirit was believed to be a dragon, but now it is a dragon-like creature called a *berang*. It is believed that the guardian spirit of a rice seed will protect it from being eaten by a pest or a bird.

The Iban believe that the rice seed is guarded by a spirit called the *berang*. It is believed that the guardian spirit of a rice seed will protect it from being eaten by a pest or a bird. In the past, the rice guardian spirit was believed to be a dragon, but now it is a dragon-like creature called a *berang*.

The Kadazan believe that the rice seed is guarded by a spirit called the *berang*. It is believed that the guardian spirit of a rice seed will protect it from being eaten by a pest or a bird. In the past, the rice guardian spirit was believed to be a dragon, but now it is a dragon-like creature called a *berang*.

## TROPICAL FRUITS

- **Durian** 'Pride of Borneo' Malaysian claim of 'heavily like hell' and tastes like heaven. In the unfortunate case of just sniffs and tastes like hell. A pungent spiky fruitball with soft flesh with the texture of full cream ice-cream, the apple and, of a large seed.
- **Rambutan** 'Wine fruit', red or yellow when ripe, white flesh tastes similar to a lychee.
- **Mangosteen**, the queen of fruits - smothered white juicy flesh in orange fleshy skin.
- **Starfruit** with green, juicy flesh has a sweet taste with a very tangy.
- **Cempedak** greenish yellow fruit skin and golden segments of flesh containing large edible seeds.
- **Ciku** looks similar to kiwi fruit but has a pear-like taste.

## FOOD AND DRINK

The variety of Malaysian cuisine is enough to satisfy the most discerning epicurean. Borrowed from, and influenced by, each of its migratory populations and the indigenous populace, Malaysian food and drink can aptly be described as an Asian melting pot. The traditions of Chinese, Indian, Arab, Portuguese and European cooking have all contributed. The celebrated cuisine of the Nonyas, a unique fusion of Malay and Chinese cooking, exemplifies the delicious results of this blending of styles. There are also strong influences from Thailand and Indonesia.

Rice forms the basis of the diet of most Malaysians, though noodles are also popular. The characteristic flavours are hot and spicy, and Malay cooks make extensive use of coconut in curries and soups.

Don't be disappointed if your Malaysian hosts choose an American fast-food concept when they select a restaurant.

## Glossary of popular Malaysian food

- **Satay** Small pieces of marinated meat, skewered on thin sticks, barbecued over charcoal. It is served with spicy peanut sauce, slices of cucumber, raw onions and rice cubes (*ketupat*).
- **Gado Gado** Of Indonesian origin, this is a Malaysian salad of cucumber, bean sprouts, fried bean curd and boiled eggs, with spicy peanut sauce.
- **Laksa** Originally from India, this soupy dish of rice noodles varies from state to state. The soup base is usually flavoured with coconut milk or with tamarind (as in Penang) and served with shredded chicken meat, prawns or fish and bean sprouts.
- **Sambal Belachan** This is a popular condiment of fermented shrimp paste blended with chillies, garlic and sometimes with lime juice. It is normally eaten with raw vegetables as a sauce (known as *lauku*) or as an accompaniment to other dishes.
- **Roti Canai** Of Indian origin, this pancake-like bread is cooked on a hot plate and served with curry. In the

*Below: A mixed table at the Indonesian restaurant in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Abundant delicious seafood is one of the staples of Malaysian cuisine.*



preparation of the roti, the soft dough is flung in the air and spun round and round until it stretches into a huge pancake or up to 45cm (18in) in diameter before it is placed on the hotplate to cook. Commonly eaten at breakfast.

- **Bah Kut Teh:** This is a Chinese dish, whose name literally means 'meat bone tea'. It is made of pork spine ribs stewed with Chinese herbs, garlic, and soy sauce. There's also a chicken version of this dish, eaten by Muslims.
- **Mee Goreng:** Fried noodles with seafood, meat and vegetables seasoned with soy sauce, this dish is also prepared with rice noodles to make a hot or at white noodles called *sayur paku*, a specialty of hawk stalls in Penang and Ipoh, Perak.
- **Nasi Goreng Istimewa:** Special fried rice with seafood, meat and vegetables served with fried eggs, fried chicken and sometimes satay.
- **Loh Bak:** A specialty of Penang, Chinese in origin, this dish is made of minced pork or chicken, wrapped in bean curd skin and deep-fried. It is best eaten with chilli sauce.
- **Nasi Lemak:** Coconut rice served with *rendang* (dry fried peanuts and coconut) fried anchovies, boiled egg and sometimes with fried fish. Another popular breakfast dish.
- **Yung Tau Foo:** Clear soup with stuffed beans and vegetables, usually served for breakfast.
- **Ais Kachang:** A dessert of shaved ice served with boiled red beans, coconut milk, palm sugar, palm seeds and possibly sago or rice. Sometimes strips of gyoza (dumplings) are added and the dessert will then be called *gyoza*.
- **Air Bandung:** A sweet drink of rose syrup with condensed milk, served cold.



*Above: The central markets of Sun-Mulia after an hour's sale of fresh produce.*

#### THE ART OF TEA-MAKING

There is a great deal of interest in the art of tea-making in Singapore. The Chinese, who have lived in this island since the 15th century, have a long tradition of tea drinking. The tea they drink is mostly green tea, but they also drink black tea, oolong tea, and white tea. The art of tea-making is a very old one, and it is still practiced in many parts of the world. In Singapore, the art of tea-making is still practiced in many parts of the island. The Chinese, who have lived in this island since the 15th century, have a long tradition of tea drinking. The tea they drink is mostly green tea, but they also drink black tea, oolong tea, and white tea. The art of tea-making is a very old one, and it is still practiced in many parts of the world. In Singapore, the art of tea-making is still practiced in many parts of the island.



## 2

## Kuala Lumpur

**K**uala Lumpur, the federal capital of Malaysia, is the main gateway to the country, and one of Asia's most dynamic cities currently experiencing dramatic change. First-time visitors to Kuala Lumpur can be forgiven for feeling a little disorientated by the traffic congestion, the modern glass skyscrapers (including the world's tallest building), giant department stores and all the trappings of any modern city. Yet beneath this veneer of modernity lies the heart and soul of a very interesting metropolis.

Tucked into the concrete jungle are the remains of a rich cultural heritage from a bygone era. Known as 'Kl' (its name means 'muddy river-mouth') and reflects its humble beginnings as a malaria-infested tin-mining community which developed at the confluence of two rivers, the **Klang** and the **Gombak**. Warehouses, shop-houses and shelters for the miners were constructed where tin was discovered. Tin mine prospectors and traders from India, China and Indonesia flocked to the settlement. The Malays settled in villages up-stream from the area while the Chinese went downstream and populated the area around today's **Jalan Bandar** and **Jalan Petaling**.

Early Kuala Lumpur was plagued with disturbances, fires and malaria epidemics. The British, alarmed that the restless situation would lead to a takeover from the Malay rulers, persuaded them to appoint British advisers or Residents at court. The acceptance of a British Resident was tantamount to Selangor (the state where Kuala Lumpur is located) becoming a British protectorate and

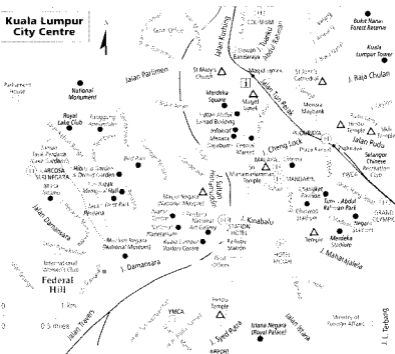


## CLIMATE

The climate is generally hot and humid, with a mean annual temperature of 27°C (81°F). The rainfall is abundant, averaging 2,150 mm (85 in) per year. The climate is generally hot and humid, with a mean annual temperature of 27°C (81°F). The rainfall is abundant, averaging 2,150 mm (85 in) per year.

**Opposite:** The exact location of Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia and the area shown, built by the British in 1910.





elevated the Resident to a prominence previously enjoyed by Malay chieftains. Under British protection, law and order was restored. The tin mines were re-opened and more rubber plantations were established. Against this background, Kuala Lumpur soon became the most important city in Malaya and in 1880 was made the Selangor capital. In 1974, Kuala Lumpur became a Federal Territory and today is one of the most thriving and prosperous cities in Asia, riding on the crest of the Malaysian economic boom.

The city's varied architectural styles are outstanding—modern skyscrapers (including the Petronas Twin Towers, the world's tallest building), minaretted edifices and handsome colonial buildings, quaint old shophouses in Chinatown and Little India and suburban Malay *kampungs* (villages). While Malaysians live side by side, certain areas reflect the varied cultural mix.

## CITY SIGHTSEEING

Sightseeing in Kuala Lumpur is a wonderful experience and one needs time to appreciate the sights fully. The heat and the traffic are important factors to consider.

### Merdeka Square \*\*\*

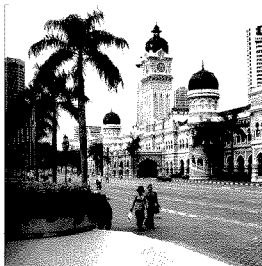
Merdeka, or Independence, Square (also known as the Padang) is a good starting point. A black marble plaque marks the spot where the Union Jack was lowered for the last time at midnight on 30 August 1957 and the Malayan flag hoisted in its place. The national flag today flies on the tallest flagpole in the world, standing at 100m (328ft). This was formerly the ground used for cricket, hockey, tennis and rugby matches by the colonialists, fronting the famous mosaic, Indrag Building of the Selangor Club (which is only open to members).

Stroll across the road to the Sultan Abdul Samad Building, built in 1897 in a beautiful Moorish design by the architect J.C. Norman, complete with three copper onion domes and a central clocktower. One of the government administrative centres, it now houses the supreme

### Don't Miss

- \*\*\* **The Moonish** (see Day 10, page 104)
- \*\*\* **The National Museum** (see Day 10, page 104)
- \*\*\* **Central Market** (see Day 10, page 104)
- \*\*\* **The National Museum** (see Day 10, page 104)
- \*\*\* **The Lake Gardens** (see Day 10, page 104)
- \*\*\* **Petronas Twin Towers** (see Day 10, page 104)
- \*\*\* **Menara Kuala Lumpur** (see Day 10, page 104)
- \*\*\* **Bangsar** (see Day 10, page 104)
- \*\*\* **KL Tower** (see Day 10, page 104)
- \*\*\* **Bintang Walk** (see Day 10, page 104)
- \*\*\* **Masjid Jamek** (see Day 10, page 104)

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**Left:** The Sultan Abdul Samad Building, opened in 1897 as the 'Government Secretariat', it is now the 'Supreme Court'



*Above: One of Kuala Lumpur's oldest historical buildings, the Masjid Jamek stands as a testament to the heritage of the city.*

and high courts. Nearby, beside the Gombak River is **St. Mary's Church**, also designed by A. C. Norman. The church has a magnificent pipe organ built by the renowned 19th-century British organ builder Henry Willis.

### **Masjid Jamek \*\***

Near the confluence of the Gombak and Klang Rivers is the

birthplace of KL, where tin mining commenced in the 1860s. This historic spot is marked by the Masjid Jamek. This architecturally ambitious mosque is Indian Muslim in style with its onion-shaped cupolas, numerous arched colonnades, minarets and balustrades. It was built in 1909 in distinctive stripes of red and white brick.

### **Masjid Negara and Surroundings \*\***

Along Jalan Raja Laut and Jalan Sultan Hishammudin still in the same area, the information centre for Malaysian handicrafts is located in a renovated Moorish-style building. Arts and crafts from all over Malaysia are displayed. Admire the beautiful batik, pottery, tinware, place mats, jewellery and basketwork, all made from local materials. Adjoining Infokraf is the multi-storey complex of **Dayabumi**, the massive white building in Moorish Byzantine style in keeping with the earlier establishment.

From Dayabumi, an underground passage leads to the **Masjid Negara** – the National Mosque – across the busy road. Built in a modern design incorporating contemporary Islamic art and calligraphy, its outstanding feature is its fan-like roof whose folds and waves symbolize the aspirations of an independent nation. Its 7m (23ft) minaret stands out prominently against the city skyline.

#### **VISITING MOSQUES**

If you are not Muslim, the only mode of admission is as a frequent guest. Women are advised to wear head coverings and long, loose-fitted dress (not trousers). Dressing and wearing the headscarf before entering a prayer area is a mandatory requirement. The mosque is open to the public on weekdays from 9am to 5pm.

## Kuala Lumpur Railway Station \*\*

Further up Jalan Sultan Hisamuddin are perhaps the most famous buildings in KL – the **Railway Station**, built in 1910, and the **Malaya Railway Administration Building** of 1917. Designed by the architect A.B.Hubback, the station shows a strong Moorish influence, featuring domes, arches and minarets which give the moose the appearance of a sultan's palace in the *Andalus Nights*, rather than a train station. The British establishment notes in their attention to detail: "relayed the building of the use until it could meet certain specifications, namely the ability to hold up to ten (10) feet of snow (in the tropical heat)". Trains leave for Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia destinations from here. Suburban trains also pass through. An ambitious project will soon link the city to KLIA, the international airport.



*Above: Kuala Lumpur station, a magnificent blend of form and the part of the British colonial administration's*

*Below: walking, we can see a view of the Malacca Street and the numerous shops of KL's Central Market*

## The Central Market and Chinatown \*\*\*

Backtracking a little down the road across the Klang River is Kuala Lumpur's equivalent of London's Covent Garden – the **Central Market** (Pasar Seni) – an art deco building of 1963 and formerly a wet market selling poultry, meat and vegetables. It is now a delightful vibrant place selling arts and crafts from Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia. The market has 10 shops, 30 food outlets, 700 small stalls, cinemas, an eshtrifan corner (Pasar Pameran) and an outdoor theatre amphitheatre staging free cultural performances. Prices for goods here are fixed and bargaining is not encouraged. This is a good place to shop for bric a brac.

A short distance away is Jalan Petaling, the heart of KL's **Chinatown**, reflecting the important role the Chinese play in Malaysian society. Shopping starts early in the morning, before the onslaught of the peak hours,





**Above:** A *hotei* is still cooking in traditional style in the shops in the Central Market, Kuala Lumpur

There are vendors selling seafood, fruits and vegetables while the shops, dating back as far as the 1930s, sell an array of oriental goods ranging from dried duck, fruit, Chinese sausages, mushrooms and traditional medicine to gold and iron monetary. There are coffee shops and roadside stalls selling roast duck, pork, chicken, noodles, herbal soup and local delicacies. By night, the whole street is closed to traffic and transformed into a bustling market place selling a mind-boggling selection of fake designer goods, videotapes of the latest film releases,

T-shirts, clothes and jewellery. This is one of the liveliest shopping areas in KL and brings out the real excitement of shopping in Malaysia.

### Sri Mahamariamman \*\*

On the fringe of Chinatown, this Hindu temple is a colourful and ornate building full of decorative features and intricate carvings of Hindu deities. Shoes must be removed before entering the temple and for a small fee you can leave your footwear in a pigeon hole in a shoe nest door for safe keeping. The temple was founded in 1877 and is said to be the most ornate and elaborate in the country.

### The Lake Gardens \*\*\*

The city's green spaces open out a little further away from the centre. The Lake Gardens (Taman Tasik Perdana) near Jalan Parlimen were constructed in the 1950s. The park has 92ha (230 acres) of lush greenery with flowering shrubs and trees around an artificial lake. On a hilltop within the gardens is the Orchid Garden, featuring over 800 species, and a Hibiscus Garden with 700 varieties in every shape and colour. Admission is free except on Saturday, Sunday, public holidays and exhibition days when there is a small charge for adults. The garden is open from 09:00 to

#### THE ART OF HAGGLING

Malaysians are steeped in the art of haggling and it is one of the major shopping experiences in the country. However, even in the past decade, it has almost probably a more gradual decline in popularity, and it is only in the last few years that it has become a more popular activity. In fact, it is still a very important part of the shopping experience in Malaysia.



**DINING OFF A BANANA LEAF**

Use this opportunity to enjoy the famous and delicious traditional Malay cuisine at a banana leaf dining party. A must and is available in many luxury restaurants. Using banana leaf plates is an experience. As guests enjoy the food at a restaurant where our helpful staff and waiters assist you, fill your belly with a variety of pickles and vegetable dishes. The hot food is cooked in a delicious curry sauce. Dishes are served on plates with their handles at their right hand, although plates and bowls are available. Enjoy them to complete this delightful meal.

**National Monument \***

Across the road from the Lake Gardens, this memorial was constructed in 1966 in honour of the nation's war heroes. Sculpted by the American Felix de Weldon, who also designed the two-lion Memorial in Washington, the bronze monument, 15.5m (51ft) high, depicts seven men from the Malayan Security Forces, symbolizing the seven qualities of leadership. The imposing sculpture is surrounded by mountains and a mead filled with water lilies.

**National Museum \*\***

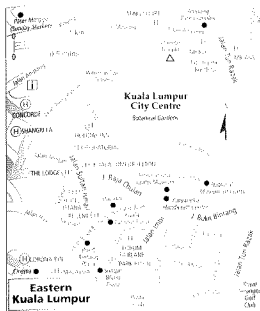
To the south of the Lake Gardens at Jalan Damansara lies the National Museum, built in the style of old Malay architecture. It is a treasure-house of exhibits on local history, culture and traditions, arts and crafts, economic activities, native flora and fauna, weapons and currency. In the grounds are locomotives, vintage cars and other transportation of bygone eras. There are reconstructions of Malay palaces from other parts of the country. It is an excellent introduction to Malaysia's history. The museum also holds special exhibitions of special aspects of life and culture from other parts of the world. Admission is free but there is a small charge for the special exhibitions. It opens daily from 09:00 to 18:00.

*Below: An ornate altar in the magnificent Beas Chinese Temple.*

**Thean Hou Temple \*\***

On a hilltop overlooking Jalan Syed Putra, this incredible Chinese temple is one of the largest in the Far East. Looking like a grand emperor's palace, it has a golden roof with dragons perched on the eaves, and imposing red pillars supporting the whitewashed structure. Statues of mythological figures and deities stand guard in the grounds. In a small garden by the side of the temple is a 'In-teh' statue of the Goddess of Mercy, which spouts holy water when a devotee kneels in front of her. Plastic cups are provided to receive this water for drinking. Shoes must be removed before entering the main praying hall. Nearby is Istana Negara, the official residence of the King of Malaysia. The palace was once the mansion of a tin magnate.





### JALAN AMPANG

One of the main roads through the city centre, Jalan Ampang is a busy thoroughfare. The road is lined with many shops and buildings. One of the most notable buildings is the **Le Conq d'Or** at 111, Jalan Ampang. It is a modern building with a unique design. The building is a landmark in the city and is a popular attraction for tourists. It is a good example of modern architecture in Kuala Lumpur. The building is a good example of modern architecture in Kuala Lumpur. The building is a good example of modern architecture in Kuala Lumpur.

### Crafts Museums

The **Karyaneka Handicraft Centre** in Jalan Raja Chulan provides for one-stop souvenir shopping, selling arts and crafts from all over Malaysia. In the same vicinity is the **National Museum of Crafts** which displays traditional works of art by local craftsmen in ceramics, brass and silverware. Behind the Karyaneka Complex is the **International Crafts Museum** and next to the museum is Taman Karyaneka, an ethnic botanical garden featuring plants from various parts of the country.

### Malaysia Tourist Information Centre

In Jalan Ampang, the **Malaysia Tourist Information Centre (MATIC)** has an exhibition hall, information counter, souvenir shop, a restaurant and travel services. Cultural performances and audio-visual shows may be held. This beautiful colonial building, dating from 1933, was formerly the mansion of a Malayan planter and

*Below: Mengkuang, or palm leaf weaving, is used to make a wide variety of household articles.*





**Right:** *There are many shops and stalls in the Central Market selling a variety of Malaysian and regional crafts.*



in tinmin. It served as the British Army headquarters in 1941. Walk from the MMHC along the Jalan Ampang towards the Petronas Twin Towers to appreciate the varied skyline.

### Royal Selangor Pewter Factory \*\*

Pewter, an alloy of pure tin with a small proportion of copper and antimony for added strength, is one of Malaysia's most famous products. The art of pewter-making was brought to the country by a Chinese immigrant, Yang Koon, who used traditional methods to produce handcrafted ceremonial and domestic pewterware for his wealthy clientele. The industry began in 1885 following the discovery of abundant tin ore in the Larut region in Perak and in Kuala Lumpur. At the factory, a guide will take you through the various processes involved in the making of pewterware. All items are painstakingly handcrafted to the finest detail. The tour inevitably ends at the showroom where you may purchase the finished product. The factory is at 4 Jalan

#### SHOPPING TIPS

Malaysia has a wide range of goods to buy, from traditional handicrafts to modern fashion accessories. Here are some shopping tips to help you make the most of your visit. *For more information, see the Shopping Tips section on page 77.*

**Usahawan Enam**, Setapak Jaya, on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur, and is open Monday to Saturday (including public holidays) from 09:00 to 10:45 and on Tuesday from 09:00 to 10:00. The factory has showrooms in most department stores in central KL.

## SHOPPING

**Jalan Bukit Bintang/Jalan Sultan Ismail/Jalan Imbi** Many of the famous department stores are here in 'The Golden Triangle' of Kuala Lumpur. **Metrojaya**, **Parkson**, **Isetan** and **CK Tang** are some of the big stores. There are various independent boutiques within the store selling books, computer wares and electrical goods. **Bintang Walk** next to Starhill Shopping Centre is the trendy end of the city, with sidewalk cafes and bars. **Suria KICC**, at the base of KICC, has a smart shopping mall with leading international brands. Restaurants, bars and an extensive botanical garden make it a popular venue for shoppers.

In the suburbs, **Mid Valley** near Bangsar, and **One Utama** near Taman Tun are leading shopping precincts. Mid Valley is Malaysia's biggest. **Suhang Parade** is another major shopping centre. **Bangsar** is the bar and restaurant centre of the capital.

**Sungei Wang Plaza** comprises many small outlets selling leisure wear, sports gear, optical products, shoes, handbags and watches, and is popular with the locals. Prices of goods here are very reasonable and bargaining is allowed. There are also several food outlets selling mainly hawker-style meals and snacks. It is a good place to shop for clothes, and some shops offer an instant alteration service for clothing that needs adjustment.

For handicrafts, antiques, curios and works of art, the **Central Market** and the **Craft and Cultural Complex** offer a wide choice. **Chinatown** or **Jalan Petaling** is a bargain hunters' paradise selling inexpensive clothes and imitation watches and bags. There are also many shops and department stores at **Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman**, a curious blend of ultramodern buildings sandwiched between pre-war shophouses which have been carefully restored.

## A BARGAIN-HUNTER'S DREAM

It is a complete shopping paradise where all things and prices are at an unbeatable level, mostly at bargain prices. It is open 7 days a week from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm. There are other branches in other parts of the city, especially in the area of Jalan Bukit Bintang, Jalan Imbi and Jalan Sultan Ismail. The store is open 7 days a week from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm. There are other branches in other parts of the city, especially in the area of Jalan Bukit Bintang, Jalan Imbi and Jalan Sultan Ismail. The store is open 7 days a week from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm. There are other branches in other parts of the city, especially in the area of Jalan Bukit Bintang, Jalan Imbi and Jalan Sultan Ismail. The store is open 7 days a week from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm.

## Kuala Lumpur at a Glance

### BEST TIMES TO VISIT

For a visit that's not too hot, not too rainy, the best time to visit is during the dry season (April to September), with the best time to visit being from April to June. The weather is generally pleasant, with temperatures ranging from 25°C to 30°C (77°F to 86°F).

### GETTING THERE

Kuala Lumpur is a major international airport, with flights from all major cities. The airport is located in Subang, about 45 km (28 miles) from the city center. The airport is served by several airlines, including AirAsia, Malaysia Airlines, and Garuda Indonesia. The airport is also served by several train lines, including the MRT and LRT.

### GETTING AROUND

Malaysia has a well-developed road network, with major roads connecting all major cities. Kuala Lumpur is a major transportation hub, with a well-developed public transport system. The MRT and LRT are the main public transport options in Kuala Lumpur. There are also several bus services, including the Rapid KL bus service, which provides a convenient and affordable way to get around the city.

The city is also served by several taxi services, including the Grab app, which is a popular and convenient way to get around the city. There are also several private hire services, which provide a more comfortable and convenient way to get around the city. The city is also served by several bicycle-sharing services, which provide a convenient and eco-friendly way to get around the city.

### WHERE TO STAY

#### Luxury

**Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

#### The Regent of Kuala Lumpur

(Tel: +603 2163 1000)

**Shangri-La Hotel, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000)

**JW Marriott Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

**Sheraton Imperial, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000)

**Ritz Carlton, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

**Carcosa Seri Negara, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

#### MID-RANGE

**Equatorial Hotel, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000)

**Crown Princess, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000)

**Federal Hotel, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000)

**Micase Hotel Apartments, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000.

#### Budget

**Sungei Wang Hotel, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

**Apollo Hotel, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

**The Lodge, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000)

**YMCA of Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

**Central Hotel, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

#### Colonial Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

(Tel: +603 2163 1000)

**Malaysian Youth Hostels Association, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

**Lodge 51, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000)

### WHERE TO EAT

Kuala Lumpur is a major international airport, with flights from all major cities. The airport is located in Subang, about 45 km (28 miles) from the city center. The airport is served by several airlines, including AirAsia, Malaysia Airlines, and Garuda Indonesia. The airport is also served by several train lines, including the MRT and LRT. There are also several public transport options, including buses and taxis. The city is also served by several private hire services, which provide a more comfortable and convenient way to get around the city.

#### Malay

**Eden Village, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

**Seri Melayu, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

**Nipah, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

#### Indian

**Taj Restaurant, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

**Bharath's Curry House, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

**Saffron, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

**Dev's, Kuala Lumpur** (Tel: +603 2163 1000) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: +603 2163 1000. Fax: +603 2163 1000.

## Kuala Lumpur at a Glance

Sambantun, 7311-1111, 1111, 1111  
bananas and a banana.

### Mitra Kanchana Curry & Tandoori

7371-1111, 1111, 1111  
Sambantun, 7371-1111, 1111  
(03) 273-1111

**Shiraz**, 1111-1111, 1111

### Chinese

**Futt Yow Yuen**, 1111-1111, 1111  
9-11, 1111-1111, 1111-1111, 1111  
5704

### Hakka Restaurant

Bukit Bintang, 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
1907, 1111-1111, 1111, 1111

### Lee Wong Kee

Tuanan, 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
(03) 271-1111

### Restoran Sze Chuan

Sultan, 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
2806, 1111-1111, 1111, 1111

### International

#### Spices

Sultan, 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
2200, 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
Magnum, 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
dishes.

#### Cilantro

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#### Colliseum Cafe

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### Mango Tree

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### Restaurants serving

#### Western and Eastern food

#### Bon Ton

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#### Cesars

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#### Ginger

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### TOURS AND EXCURSIONS

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**Evening tours** 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
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### USEFUL CONTACTS

**Tourism Malaysia** 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
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**Information Centre (MAMC)** 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
1111-1111, 1111, 1111, 1111

**Kuala Lumpur Tourist Information Centre** 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
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**National Library of Malaysia** 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
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**Car Rental Association of KL & Selangor** 1111-1111, 1111, 1111  
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KUALA LUMPUR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
AVERAGE TEMP °F	76	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	78	76	76	76
AVERAGE TEMP °C	26	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	26	26	26	26
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	6	6	7	7	7	6	7	5	5	5	5	5
RAINFALL, mm	0	6	9	11	7	5	5	6	11	11	9	9
RAINFALL, mm	12	144	218	294	165	126	129	145	192	232	275	232
DAYS OF RAINFALL	10	13	14	16	13	9	10	11	14	17	16	15



### 3 Beyond Kuala Lumpur

**K**uala Lumpur is the gateway for excursions to a variety of outstanding places of interest. Within a few hours' drive are the cool hill resorts of Cameron Highlands, Fraser's Hill and Genting Highlands, the awe-inspiring Hindu cave temple at Batu Caves or a journey back in time to the historic city of Melaka.

#### Batu Caves \*\*

The famous Batu Caves are situated on the northern outskirts of Kuala Lumpur. A 17 minute drive, turning off the main road to Ipoh, brings you to a massive limestone outcrop which is honeycombed with a series of caves. One of the biggest in the system is the Cathedral Cave, deriving its name from its towering cavernous interior. The huge cavern was transformed into a Hindu temple in 1891, and is reached by climbing 272 steps. At the start of the climb visitors walk over a small flame to undergo a symbolic spiritual cleansing before entering the temple. Statues of deities from the Hindu pantheon are erected in colourfully painted shrines. Worshippers come daily to make offerings of coconuts, fruits, milk and flowers. The temple has a menagerie of chickens, monkeys, cats and pigeons all roaming freely, given sanctuary by the temple as the Hindus have a deep respect for animals. Visitors feed them with green beans, coconuts, bananas and peanuts, although it is best to avoid this.

The temple is dedicated to the Hindu god, Lord Murugan (otherwise known as Lord Subramaniam), and



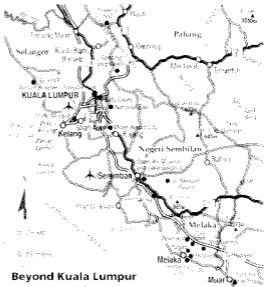
#### CLIMATE

The hot equatorial climate of West Malaysia is characterised by high humidity, high temperatures, high rainfall and a high level of sunshine. The climate is generally hot and humid, with a high level of sunshine. The climate is generally hot and humid, with a high level of sunshine. The climate is generally hot and humid, with a high level of sunshine.

**Opposite:** *Tea bushes. Ask the rolling hills of the Cameron Highlands. The first plantations were established in the 1920s.*

## Don't Miss

- \*\*\* Melaka (pp. 135-136) - a UNESCO World Heritage site
- \*\*\* Kuala Selangor (pp. 136-137) - a UNESCO World Heritage site
- \*\* Batu Caves (pp. 137-138) - a UNESCO World Heritage site
- \*\* The Hill Resorts (pp. 138-139) - a UNESCO World Heritage site



## Beyond Kuala Lumpur

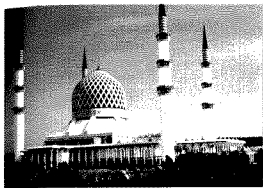
*Below: Stalactites silhouetted against the daylight of the entrance to the Batu Caves.*

is the setting for the spectacular annual celebration of Hari Gawai (see page 20). At the foot of the temple they are several souvenir shops, vegetarian restaurants and stalls selling drinks, which are much needed after the walk up and down. Fortune tellers abound, charging RM10.00 for palm reading or RM2.00 for a mini version of your future told with the aid of a tarot card which is picked at random by a bird, usually a parakeet or a canary.

## Shah Alam (Selangor) \*\*

After Kuala Lumpur became a Federal Territory in 1973, the Sultan of Selangor built a new state





capital. The border between the two territories is marked by an ornate Malaysian-style gate with domes and minarets. The city is Shah Alam and it is dominated by industries and big companies. Its main attraction is the magnificent Shah Alam Mosque, completed in 1988, the largest mosque in southeast Asia, with its sparkling turquoise dome and four towering minarets standing guard on each corner.

About 15 minutes' drive away is the **Malaysia Agriculture Park** (Bukit Caraya) so named a large agro-forestry park. Opened in 1986, its permanent displays occupy a site of 1278ha (3110 acres) against a backdrop of lush tropical jungle. Visitors can watch the entire process of paddy rice cultivation, or take a walk through the Spice and Beverage Garden, where cinnamon, cloves, pepper, tea and exotic spices and herbs evoke Malaysia's rich history as a key producer of these commodities. Trading traders, colonial powers and explorers to its shores. Scroll through the Orchid Gardens and revel in the vibrant profusion of flowers, both wild species and cultivated varieties. Other attractions include the Cocoa Gardens, Mushroom Garden, Aviary Park, Animal Park, Four Seasons Temperate House depicting the annual cycle, and a stocked lake where visitors can fish. There are recreational areas for picnics and jungle tracks, as well as a handicraft centre. The park is popular at the weekends.

*Left: The shining, 18th-century Mosques of Shah Alam - the largest of its kind in Malaysia and also amongst the 100 best mosques ever ranked in one of the top 100 mosques in the world.*

#### DANCE OF THE FIREFLY

Fireflies glow in the darkness of the night. Insects of the family Lampyridae, they are the source of the magic of the bioluminescence. The insects themselves take about the time it takes you to read this page of light to give their bodies an overall glow. The best place to see them is in the hills of the Cameron Highlands. The fireflies are attracted to the light of the car headlights, and the glow of the car headlights is reflected in the water of the stream. The fireflies are attracted to the light of the car headlights, and the glow of the car headlights is reflected in the water of the stream. The fireflies are attracted to the light of the car headlights, and the glow of the car headlights is reflected in the water of the stream.



## JIM THOMPSON

The people of Malaya have always found ways to find their happiness in their homes and families. From the old traditional houses with their steep roofs to the modern high-rises and the modern conveniences, the culture of home ownership has always been a part of the way of life. Indeed, the way of life has always been a part of the way of life. The culture of home ownership has always been a part of the way of life. The culture of home ownership has always been a part of the way of life.

## THE HILL RESORTS

## Genting Highlands and Bukit Tinggi\*

An hour's drive from Kuala Lumpur, 2000m to 3000ft above sea level, is the recreational and gambling capital of Malaysia, Genting Highlands. It is a popular resort for many locals and Singaporeans, like a mini 'Las Vegas in the clouds'. The casino has Western as well as Chinese gaming tables. Gamblers must be properly attired such as the formal Malaysian dress of long sleeved batik shirts. For non-gamblers, there is an 18 hole golf course at the **Awana Golf and Country Club**, with over 45ha (110 acres) of challenging landscape. The cable car ride affords a splendid view of the rainforest below as it travels from 914m (3000 ft) to 1768m (5800ft) up the mountain. The **Bukit Tinggi Resort** (including Colmar Tropicale, Japanese Tea House and golf course) is further down the Karak Highway. The French-themed Colmar is quite unique and good fun for the family.

## Fraser's Hill \*\*

North east of Kuala Lumpur, 96km (60 miles) away, is the hill resort of Fraser's Hill, actually built on seven hills, 1524m (5000ft) above sea level. Named after James Fraser, an intrepid trader with interests in tin, opium and gambling, it has a very colonial atmosphere.



**Right:** Mountain viewpoints seen from Fraser's Hill with the thickly forested slopes of the Titiwangsa Range in the background.

with its bungalows and gardens. It is rich in wildlife and even tigers have been known to make a rare appearance. The narrow winding road has an alternate one-way system on an hourly basis over the last 8km (5 miles) between 08:30 and 19:00. There are several hotels, chalets and bungalows available for visitors, including the **Merlin Resort**, the biggest hotel there, which overlooks a nine-hole golf course.

### Cameron Highlands \*\*

Straddling the states of Perak and Pahang is the best known hill station in Malaysia, the Cameron Highlands. Named after William Cameron, a governmental surveyor who explored the area in 1885, the resort nestles amongst sweeping valleys and mountains. At 1524m (5000ft) above sea level it enjoys a refreshing cool climate, with temperatures no higher than 20°C (68°F) and rarely falling below 10°C (50°F). Here flowers, fruits and vegetables grow in profusion, not to mention the rolling green carpet of the tea plantations. The Orang Asli, the indigenous peoples of Peninsular Malaysia, lead a semi-nomadic life in the highland forest, building small *gagah* huts on the hill slopes. They are slowly being integrated into Malaysian society and some have found employment in the area. It is possible to stop at one of these settlements on the way to watch them making bamboo traps and baskets. For a small fee they will demonstrate their skill at blowpipe shooting. If you wish to photograph them, it is only polite to ask for permission first.

You may want to stop at **Lata Iskander**, a beautiful waterfall by the roadside halfway up to the Highlands. **Ringlet**, a small town with shops and hotels, stands guard over the hill just before reaching Cameron Highlands proper. The air cools by degrees as you travel further to **Tanah Rata** and **Brinchang**, the two Highlands towns, both have plenty of accommodation, shops, restaurants, fruit and flower stalls selling local produce. The fruit and vegetables here taste better and sweeter than in the lowlands, and grow to prodigious size: some cantaloupes are as large as toothballs! The



PERAK PAHANG

### STEAMBOAT

There is still a way to reach especially hazy and misty Malaya-Indonesian coniferous highland forests from the European continent – by boat. But in this case the boats are packed to the brim with passengers, the food is not so good, and the facilities are cramped. One of the best ways to see the hills and the forest is by air. There is a small airport near Teluk Anson and after a few minutes, the boat is ready to sail. Each person is equipped with a metal wire basket to scrape the mud and oil from the water. The water is clear, at its best at the end of the rainfall season. The canopy of the forest has a magical quality. It is the only way to get the reward for a really relaxing holiday in the cool mountains. This is just the time to read and relax!

**Right:** *Yule Hotel*

*Sandakan was a thriving tin-gold centre in British Borneo built 40 years ago by a British resident of the Cameron Highlands, Stanley Yule. Its original Tudor style has been carefully preserved to the present-day theme.*


**OLD ENGLAND IN THE  
HEART OF MALAYSIA**

include the better known resort areas of Batu Gajah, Ipoh and Teluk Anson. The southern area of Ipoh and Teluk Anson is particularly attractive to tourists. The region is set in a high plateau and is dominated by the Ipoh and Teluk Anson resorts. The Ipoh resort is a well-known resort with a long history. The Teluk Anson resort is a well-known resort with a long history. The Ipoh and Teluk Anson resorts are well-known resorts with a long history. The Ipoh and Teluk Anson resorts are well-known resorts with a long history.

population is predominantly Chinese who make their living as farmers. Most land is cultivated, with vegetables and fruit grown on terraces carved into the hills.

No visit to this resort is complete without a trip to the tea plantations. The most famous plantations belong to **Boh Tea**, the country's first highland estate, established in 1929 by John Russell. The company has two estates, one at each end of the Highlands, the Boh Tea Estate near Kinglet and The Sungai Pakes Tea Estate near Comber Brunching in the northernmost part of the Cameron. Both plantations are still owned by the Russell family and produce four million kilograms (900 tons) of tea per year. Watch the production of tea from the time it is picked to the end product, as it goes through shredding machines, driers, rollers and gant sieves to produce one of the finest teas. Shops sell souvenirs and tea samples. Fresh tea in the gardens is also available.

Other attractions in the area include a butterfly farm (though not as impressive as the one in KL), a large collection of Rajah Brooke's Birdwing, rose gardens, strawberry farms, flower nurseries and the Sun Fo Kong Buddhist temple at Brunching. For the adventurous, jungle treks are organized by local tour operator. Cameron Highlands may have lost a few of its old charm through the growth in tourism, but the rolling hills, the green terraces of vegetables and the spectacular valleys of the tea plantations will make your visit really worthwhile.

## NEGERI SEMBILAN

Wedge-shaped between KL and Melaka is the 'State of Nine Districts'. The traditions of its early settlers, the Minangkabau from Sumatra, included a matriarchal system: women play an important part in society and traditionally inherited a major portion of the family wealth. It is famous for its fiery dishes spiced with *cili padi* (very hot small chilli) and *lemang* (glutinous rice cooked in bamboo stems). The outstanding buffalo-horn roofs of Minangkabau architecture dominate most of the landscape (even some petrol stations are built in this style).

### Seremban \*

The state capital is 68km (40 miles) from KL and makes an easy day trip. Once a two-shophouse ten-minute centre, it has developed into a busy town with shopping complexes and international standard hotels. The **State Assembly Building** is in the Minangkabau style, and doubles as a venue for state assemblies and the town library.

The beautiful **Lake Gardens**, with two lakes and a collection of Malaysian plants, is a favourite with locals and fitness enthusiasts who use the park for jogging and to practise Tai Chi. A floating stage on one of the lakes is occasionally used for cultural shows.

**Taman Seni Budaya** is a cultural complex at Labur

Spur. Three outstanding historical buildings are located here. The **Terapak Perpatih** is a Minangkabau building which houses handicrafts, costumes and weapons, and the **Istana Ampang Tinggi** (State Museum) built in 1861, was formerly a royal residence. The third building is the beautifully carved **Rumah Minangkabau**, also known as Rumah Hantu (the Haunted House) by the locals because of its gloomy appearance. It was constructed in 1898 for a Malay prince and was taken to England in 1924 for an exhibition as an example of Malay architecture. The interior is not open to the public.

### Port Dickson \*\*

Situated 32km (20 miles) from Seremban, Port Dickson is a popular coastal resort for Malaysians, particularly during weekends and holidays. It has 18km (11 miles) of beaches stretching from **Tanjung Gemuk** in the north to **Tanjung Tuan** in the south. Windsurfers and jet-skiers abound here. There are chalets and bungalows for hire as well as several international resorts in the area. The shaded areas along the coast are popular for picnics.



### SRI MENANTI

State Emblem of Negeri Sembilan  
 The emblem of Negeri Sembilan is a symbol of the state's rich cultural heritage. It features a central figure, a traditional Minangkabau house, and is surrounded by various symbols representing the state's history and identity. The emblem is a testament to the state's unique cultural and historical legacy.

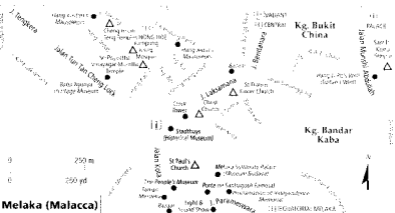
## THE PORTUGUESE

The landmarks of Melaka are descended from the Portuguese conquerors of the 16th century. Along with their Portuguese names, they have retained their distinctive lifestyle as well: the centuries-old still speak *Crustan*, a 17th-century dialect which is hardly spoken in Portugal today. The little community centres on Portuguese Square, an island of Albuquerque, which thrives with traditional songs and dances of workdays and especially at festival times such as the *Feira de São Pedro* on 29 May, celebrated with "super houses" and beach movability.

## MELAKA

Two hours' journey south of Kuala Lumpur, 147km (91 miles) away, is historic Melaka on Malaysia's west coast. This was the centre of the Malay Sultanate in the 15th century. It was founded by a refugee Sumatran prince, Parameswara, who supposedly named the town after the *melaka* tree under which he rested. During its heyday it was a thriving port trading in gold, silk, tea, opium, tobacco, perfumes, spices and other commodities from neighbouring countries and as far away as Europe and South America. Melaka reached the peak of its supremacy during the reign of Sultan Mansur Shah, who ruled from 1459 to 1477. The importance of this town, particularly its role in the spice trade, prompted the Portuguese, Dutch and British successively to colonize the port. Each colonial regime left behind a legacy which today provides historical interest for tourists. The city is seeking heritage protection as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Visiting Melaka on a day trip does not do this fascinating city much justice. To appreciate the real flavour of the place and savour the atmosphere, not to mention the tantalizing *Nonya* cuisine, a three days/two nights stay is recommended. Most of the historic sights of Melaka are within walking distance of one another.



Melaka (Malacca)

### Historical Square \*\*\*

The bright red **Stadthuys** (Townhouse) was built in 1650 as the official residence of the Dutch governor and his officers. It is now the **Museum Sejarah** (or Historical Museum) where some authentic Portuguese and Dutch relics as well as traditional Chinese and Malay costumes are displayed. It opens daily from 10:00 to 18:00 except on Fridays when it is closed between 12:15 and 14:15 to allow Muslims to pray. Next to



*Above: The distinctive red buildings of Dutch colonial Melaka. On the right, is the Stadthuys built on the foundations of the old Portuguese fort.*

the Stadthuys is **Christ Church**, which was completed in 1753. It is an excellent example of Dutch architecture. A notable feature of the church is its ceiling, whose beams, over 15m (16yd) long, were each made from a single tree. The 200 year old pews are still in evidence. Over the altar there is a painting of the Last Supper on glazed tiles and on the floors are tombstones in Armenian script. Entry to the church is free but you are politely asked to make a donation towards its upkeep. Further up the road, next to the Malaysian Youth Museum, is **St Francis Xavier's Church** which was built in 1849 by a French priest, the Reverend Lamy. This Gothic church is dedicated to St Francis Xavier who was a missionary in Southeast Asia during the 16th Century.

On the hilltop site of the former Melakan Sultan's palace, is the ruin of **St Paul's Church**. It was built by a Portuguese captain, Duarte Coelho, in 1521, when it was called 'Our Lady of the Annunciation' and known as 'Our Lady of the Hill'. When the Protestant Dutch assumed power in Melaka, they changed the dedication. The body of St Francis Xavier was briefly enshrined here in 1571 before being shipped to Goa in India. Today, the empty

#### CITY OF MUSEUMS

Melaka is a city of museums, from the old St. Paul's Church to the new ones that are being built. Visit the museums of Malay and Portuguese Culture, Maritime, Fisheries, Zoology, Aquatics and more at the "Museum of the Museum" (operates on 94-966-2821628).



**Above:** *A local church built in 1722 is the oldest Protestant church in Malacca*

**Opposite:** *Visitors can take a ride on a traditional cart in Melaka's Padang*

grave remains open to the church. The Dutch used the church as a fortress and burial ground for their noble dead. Huge 30-inch tombstones of the Dutch and the British remain on the grounds of the church yard today.

From the church, a number of steps leads down to the site of *A Famosa*, the massive fortress built by the Portuguese in 1511. During the skirmish between the Dutch and the Portuguese in 1641, much of the building was rather damaged but the Dutch

restored it in 1657. When Malacca was handed over to Britain, the British began to demolish the fortress, until the intervention of Sir Stamford Raffles, the founder of Singapore. He managed to save only the gateway, however. The *Porta de Santiago* remains as the only national legacy of the Portuguese era. Next to the fortress is the reconstruction of the 15th-century *Melakan Sultanate's Palace*, built from the original plan of an ancient palace found in the Malay historical chronicle, the *Sejarah Melayu*. It serves as the Melaka Cultural Museum displaying the splendour of the sultans' lifestyle, including a royal beshamber.

Opposite the Palace Museum is the **Historic City Memorial Garden** with a strong Islamic theme to usen; on the monument commemorating the declaration of Melaka as an Historic City on 15 April 1989. Next to the memorial garden is the **Proclamation of Independence Memorial**, a Dutch colonial building which formerly housed the Malacca Club, the social centre of the British colonial era. It now contains an exhibition illustrating events leading to Malaysian independence.

### Heritage Trail \*\*\*

Moving away from the historic square, a 10-minute taxi ride (or 30 minutes by rickshaw) will take you to **Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock** (known as 'Millionaires Row' and formerly called Heeren Street), a narrow street lined with ancient shophouses that still evoke the good old days of the wealthy Baba-Nonya community. This is the old part of the city. The shophouses have a 'five-foot way' forming a walkway in front, which leads to tall wooden doors and shuttered windows painted in charmingly faded colours. Most of the facades of these townhouses are decorated with beautiful tile motifs and delicate carvings of flowers and birds. Some of the houses need repairs but the semi-lapidated state of the buildings only adds to the air of history and authenticity that pervades this part of the city. On this street, do not miss the house at numbers 48 and 50. This is the address of the **Baba Nonya Heritage Museum**, a treasure trove of exquisite Chinese furniture (of mother-of-pearl and marble, silk embroidery, family heirlooms, lanterns, a bridal chamber complete with chamber pots and spittoon, beautiful silk painting and other elegant



### BABAS AND NONYAS

When you visit a museum, you are usually given a leaflet or brochure to read. This is a good idea as you can read up on the history and culture of the place before you visit. The Babas and Nonyas are a unique community in Melaka, and this book is a good starting point for learning more about them. The Babas are the descendants of Chinese immigrants who came to Melaka in the 17th century, and the Nonyas are the descendants of Dutch immigrants who came to Melaka in the 17th century. The Babas and Nonyas have a rich and diverse culture, and this book provides a detailed account of their history and traditions. The book is written in an accessible and engaging style, and it is a must-read for anyone interested in the history and culture of Melaka. The book is available in both English and Malay, and it is a valuable resource for anyone who wants to learn more about the Babas and Nonyas.



## EXCURSIONS FROM MELAKA

Some of the 200 or so old and Melaka-style *Peranakan* houses in the *Malacca Street* area, which includes the *Malacca Street* area, are the *Malacca Street* area. Many houses from each of the 17 states and territories of the Malay Peninsula and Sabah and Sarawak are housed in the *Malacca Street* area, which is a collection of well-preserved houses kept in good condition for tourists to see. In the past, it was a site of a temple.

paraphernalia. Girls dressed in sarongs and embroidered tops known as *kebaya* (the typical costume of the *Nonya*) will take you on a guided tour around the grand mansion which belongs to the wealthy Chan family, who made their fortune in the spice trade. Mr Chan Cheong Siew (of the second generation of the family) built the house in 1896. At the entrance, look out for the picture of the matriarch of the house, Mrs Chan, who was a larger-than-life lady in every sense of the word. Her massive splendidly embroidered silk costume hangs on the wall as an exhibit. Today, the museum is looked after by Mr Chan Kim Lay, a member of the fourth generation, who is sometimes on hand to give a friendly talk about his fascinating family. This museum is more than an exhibition, it recreates the entire lifestyle of a typical wealthy Peranakan family during the early years of the 20th century. As part of the social elite of the time they entertained their colonial masters in the grand manner, as is evident from the display of expensive vintage brandy and whisky, silverware and fine porcelain dinner services. The museum opens from Saturday to Wednesday, 10:00 to 12:30 and 14:00 to 16:30, and on Thursday 09:00 to 12:00.

**Jalan Hang Jebat**, formerly known as *Jonkers Street* is a haven for antique and bric-a-brac collectors. The rows of traditional shophouses are crammed with collectables dating as far back as the 17th century, in addition to modern souvenirs from Indonesia and other

**Right:** *The Cheng Hoon Teng Temple is Malacca's oldest Chinese temple. Its name means 'Temple of the Everlasting Clouds'*



neighbouring countries. One could spend hours sitting through the artefacts. Take a rest in Loukers Restaurant and admire the interior. Try their cakes! Nearby at Jalan Tokong is the oldest temple in the country, **Cheng Hoon Teng Temple** built in 1673 with materials imported from China. Mythological figures adorn the eaves of the roof while the interior of the temple has lavish carvings and lacquerwork. The main altar is dedicated to the 'Goddess of Mercy' and a side altar is devoted to the 'Queen of Heaven', the guardian of fishermen and sailors.

**Sam Po Kong Temple** dates from 1795, and is dedicated to Admiral Cheng Ho, the famous envoy of the Chinese Ming Emperor, who first visited Melaka in 1499. It was said that during this journey, a bad storm tore a hole in his ship. Disaster would have struck had not a fish, known as Sam Po, ploughed itself into the hole and saved the ship from sinking. The temple is located at the bottom of the massive hill of Bukit Cina (Chinese Hill) which was the former residence of Princess Hang Li Po and her 700 ladies-in-waiting when she arrived to marry Sultan Mansur Shah in 1499. Today, it is the largest Chinese cemetery outside China and has 17,000 graves covering 25ha (62 acres) with many of the tombs dating back to the Ming period. The undulating terrain and peaceful location is also a favourite with joggers. Beside Sam Po Kong Temple is **Hang Li Po's Well** (also known as the Sultan's Well) which was built for the princess. The well never dried up, even in times of drought. When the Dutch occupied Melaka, they built a strong wall round the well to ensure their exclusive use of it. It is said that those who drink the water are bound to return to Melaka but this theory cannot be put to the test as a metal grill now guards the well.



*Above: A Melakan berok (rickshaw) takes a load of passengers to a living altar, one walking, and the other.*

#### PULAU BESAR

THE NAME OF THE ISLAND of Pulau Besar (Big Island) has been used since the 16th century. The island is 17km long and 4km wide, and is a beautiful place with a lot of greenery and many old buildings. It is a popular destination for tourists and is a great place to visit if you are looking for a peaceful and scenic spot. The island is also a great place to visit if you are looking for a peaceful and scenic spot.

## Beyond Kuala Lumpur at a Glance

### BEST TIMES TO VISIT

Any time of year is a good time to visit Malaysia, but the best time to visit is between May and September.

### GETTING THERE

**Genting Highlands** (Kuala Lumpur, 100 miles) is the only place in Malaysia where you can enjoy a winter holiday. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Fraser's Hill** (Kuala Lumpur, 100 miles) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Cameron Highlands** (Kuala Lumpur, 100 miles) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Melaka and Negeri Sembilan** (Kuala Lumpur, 100 miles) are popular resorts for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The towns are popular resorts for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

### WHERE TO STAY

**Hotel Equatorial** (Kuala Lumpur) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Bukit Tinggi** (Kuala Lumpur, 100 miles) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Parkland Hotel** (Kuala Lumpur) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Fraser's Hill** (Kuala Lumpur, 100 miles) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Cameron Highlands** (Kuala Lumpur, 100 miles) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Kowloon Hotel** (Kuala Lumpur) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Parkland Hotel** (Kuala Lumpur) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Negeri Sembilan** (Kuala Lumpur, 100 miles) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Avillion Village Resort** (Kuala Lumpur) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Carlton Star Hotel** (Kuala Lumpur) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Tasik Hotel** (Kuala Lumpur) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

**Melaka** (Kuala Lumpur, 100 miles) is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city. The town is a popular resort for those who want to escape the heat of the city.

CAMERON HIGHLANDS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
AVERAGE TEMP °F	64	64	66	66	66	66	66	66	66	66	66	66
AVERAGE TEMP °C	18	18	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
HOURS OF SUN PER DAY	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	3	3
RAINfall (in)	5	4	6	11	11	5	2	5	9	13	12	8
RAINfall (mm)	120	110	150	270	270	130	100	240	240	330	300	200
DAYS OF RAINFALL	10	11	14	16	13	9	10	11	13	12	18	15

## Beyond Kuala Lumpur at a Glance

**Hotel Equatorial** (151) 221-1111  
Abdullah Road, Kuala Lumpur  
fax: (60) 3-221-9999

**City Bayview** (17) 333-3333  
Bandar Hilir, 11000 Tanjung  
ter: (60) 3-291-1733 fax: (60) 3-292-8443

**Grand Continental Hotel**  
201, Tropicana Avenue, Kuala Lumpur  
(06) 211-1888 fax: (06) 211-1125  
125, Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Lumpur  
accorahotel.com

### Pulau Besar

**Tapa Nyai Island Resort** (17) 333-3333  
Jalan Pantai Teluk Anson, Kuala Lumpur  
4106 Teluk Anson, Kuala Lumpur  
But a tropical island resort, it's not  
but with modern amenities  
including a swimming pool.

### WHERE TO EAT

#### Hill Resorts

**Arzed Restoran** (17) 333-3333  
Fusion 118, Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Lumpur

**Highlands Restaurant** (17) 333-3333  
Batu Caves, Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Lumpur  
Highlands, Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Lumpur

#### Negeri Sembilan

**Blossom Court Chinese Restaurant** (17) 333-3333  
Klang Resort, Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Lumpur  
(06) 771-1111

**Dragon Palace, Peninsula Plaza** (17) 333-3333  
731 685

**Restoran Sakura** (17) 333-3333  
Tanjung Arden, Kuala Lumpur  
(06) 424-1111, Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Lumpur  
at Tanjung Arden, Kuala Lumpur  
Malay Peninsula

**Syazan Cafe** (17) 333-3333  
Malay Peninsula, Kuala Lumpur  
424-1111

### Melaka

11, Jalan Melaka, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Jonkers** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Restoran Peranakan** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Restoran Peranakan Town House** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Ole Sayang Restaurant** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**My Baba's** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Portuguese**  
**Restoran de Lisbon** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Restoran de Portugis** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Chinese**  
**Hikeng** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Lim Tian Puan** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

### TOURS AND EXCURSIONS

**Malaka** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Annah (Melaka) Tours & Travel** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**MBTS Tour (Malacca)** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Melaka City Tours & Travel** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Stadthuys Tours & Travel** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

### USEFUL CONTACTS

**Genting Highlands** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Fraser's Hill Development Corporation** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Cameron Highlands Tourist Information Bureau** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

**Melaka Tourist Information Centre** (17) 333-3333  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur  
Tel: (60) 3-221-1111, Kuala Lumpur

MELAKA	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
AVERAGE TEMP °F	76	80	80	80	80	80	78	76	76	76	76	76
AVERAGE TEMP °C	26	27	27	27	27	27	26	26	26	26	26	26
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	6	7	7	7	7	7	6	6	6	5	5	5
RAINFALL in	3	4	6	8	7	7	7	6	6	9	5	5
RAINFALL mm	73	91	154	196	152	166	164	164	170	173	121	121
DAYS OF RAINFALL	7	7	10	14	12	12	12	12	12	17	17	11



## 4 The Northern States

The northern states of Perak, Penang (see page 75), Kedah and Perlis combine the natural beauty of rivers, lakes and mountains, with island resorts, historic sites and bustling border towns. The area is easily accessible from Penang or via the North-South Expressway from Kuala Lumpur, Thailand or Singapore.

### PERAK

Known as the 'Land of Grace', Perak covers an area of 21,000km<sup>2</sup> (8100 sq miles). Its name is probably derived from the Malay word *perak*, meaning 'silver', because of the silvery tin deposits found in abundance in the Larut area. The discovery of tin drew the attention of the outside world, bringing prosperity and, along with it, much turbulence. The Acehnese invaded in the 16th century, followed by the Dutch who built forts on Pulau Pangkor and at the mouth of the Perak River in the 17th century. In turn, it was threatened by the Bugis from the south and the Thais from the north. The British came to its rescue in the 1820s but there were internal problems with the Malay sovereignty while the Chinese immigrants squabbled over land rights and violent gang warfare broke out among the trading factions. In 1896 Perak became one of the four Federated Malay States.

### Ipoh \*\*

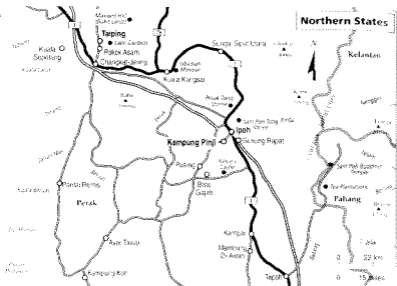
Ipoh, with its grand colonial buildings, is the administrative and state capital. The first railway line in the Peninsula was laid here by the British to service the tin



### CLIMATE

- The climate in Perak is the most temperate in the region. It has a high level of rainfall with a wetter afternoon from 12.00 to 6.00 pm.
- The highest temperature is recorded at Ipoh, with a daily average of 32.4°C (90.3°F).  
For more information see page 77-78.

*Opposite: A view from the north-east of the island of Langkatak, a tranquil paradise of sandy beaches and turquoise waters.*



industry. Its railway station, with the adjoining Station Hotel, is similar in design to the one in Kuala Lumpur. South of Ipoh, about 7km (4 miles) away, is the cave temple of **Sam Poh Tong** in Gunung Rapat. It is reputed to be the biggest cave temple in Malaysia and dates from the 1890s. A monk passing through Ipoh from China found the cave and made it a place of meditation, occupying it himself for some 20 years. Buddhist monks and nuns still live here. Statues of the Buddha are interspersed among the stalactites and stalagmites. For the energetic, a steep climb of 246 steps will afford you a spectacular view of Ipoh and its surroundings. Outside the shrine is a Japanese garden with ponds containing carp and tortoises – symbols of longevity. There is a vegetarian restaurant in the grounds. Situated in the opposite direction, 6km (4 miles) north of Ipoh, is the **Perak Tong** temple in Gunung Lasek. Built in 1926, the temple has over 40 statues of Buddha including a seated Buddha that is 12.8m (42ft) high. A climb up 385 steps will reveal on a clear day, a wonderful view of the Kinta Valley.

#### Don't Miss

- \*\*\* **Pulau Pangkor and Pulau Pangkor Laut:** mesmerizing island sanctuaries
- \*\*\* **Langkawi:** legendary islands, mountains, waterfalls and UNESCO World Heritage Site
- \*\* **Ipoh:** Malaysia's best preserved Chinese town, spectacular cave temples
- \* **Kuala Kangsar:** the royal town of Perak

### Taiping \*

Travelling northwest on the North-South Expressway 55km (34 miles) from Ipoh is Taiping. Like Ipoh, it has its fair share of colonial buildings and edifices, especially along Jalan Taming Sari. The **Perak Museum**, built in 1887, is the oldest museum in Malaysia and has a fine collection of aboriginal ornaments and archaeological treasures. The most notable landmark in Taiping is the **Lake Gardens**, converted in 1890 from old tin workings. Noted for being the wettest spot in Malaysia, this 64ha (160 acres) of garden is beautifully endowed with exuberant green turf and a profusion of trees and shrubs. There is a recreational park and a Japanese Garden in the grounds with Taiping Zoo, a 9-hole golf course and the colonial Taiping Rest House nearby.

### Bukit Larut

About 9km (5 miles) from Taiping is the oldest hill resort in Malaysia, **Bukit Larut**, more commonly known by its old colonial name of Maxwell Hill. Situated at an altitude of 1054m (3460ft), it is accessible only by four-wheel drive government Land Rovers, which depart hourly from 08:00 to 18:00 daily for the journey up the steep winding road built by Japanese prisoners of war. At the summit on a clear day you can see Penang and Pulau Pangkor. It is a refreshing change to visit a hill resort without the modern trappings of the others. There is no commercial development here, just nature at its best.

### Kuala Kangsar \*

Halfway between Ipoh and Taiping is the royal town of Perak, where the Sultan has his official residence at the Istana Iskandariah. Prior to the construction of this

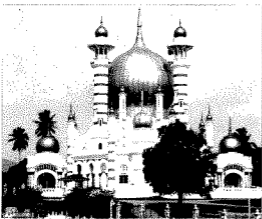


*Above: Ipoh Railway Station, a Moorish-style structure built of Kuala Lumpur's station building, dates from 1917. A small path, or apas, runs from which the train takes its name, is to be found at head of it.*

#### A SCOTTISH CASTLE IN MALAYSIA

A notable landmark in Perak is **Kellie's Castle**, a fully-fledged 1700m<sup>2</sup> (180,000 sq ft) replica of a palace built by the British in the 1850s. It was built by a Scottish settler, James W. Kellie, and was destroyed in 1918. It is now a well-maintained site, featuring a large garden and a museum. The castle is a fine example of Scottish architecture in Malaysia. It is a well-maintained site, featuring a large garden and a museum. The castle is a fine example of Scottish architecture in Malaysia. It is a well-maintained site, featuring a large garden and a museum. The castle is a fine example of Scottish architecture in Malaysia.





*Above: The Ubudiah Mosque at Kuala Kangsar with its glistening golden domes is one of Malaya's most beautiful mosques.*

#### THE LEANING TOWER OF TELUK INTAN

When the Dutch first came to the area in 1656, they found the settlement of Teluk Intan, a small village on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula. The Dutch built a fort here in 1660 and it became a major trading post. In 1795, the British took over the fort and the settlement. The fort was destroyed in 1812 and the settlement was abandoned. The ruins of the fort are still visible today. The settlement was founded by the Dutch in 1656 and it was one of the earliest settlements on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula. The settlement was founded by the Dutch in 1656 and it was one of the earliest settlements on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula.

palace in 1926, the royal family lived in the Istana Kenangan, in Jalan Istana, which is now the Museum di Raja. The old palace was built in traditional Malay style, apparently without any architectural plans and without using any nails. The other outstanding landmark in Kuala Kangsar is the Ubudiah Mosque, a fine example of Islamic architecture with its beautiful

golden domes. The mosque was completed in 1917 after construction had twice been interrupted, first by the sultan's elephants when they accidentally trampled on the imported Italian tiles and second by the outbreak of World War I. South of the mosque is the 'House of the East', the exclusive Malay College built in 1905 for the children of the Malay elite.

#### Pulau Pangkor \*\*

Lying off the coast of southern Perak, about 90km (55 miles) southwest of Ipoh, the island of Pangkor has many good beaches of golden sand lapped by tropical waters. As this is the main resort island in the Straits of Melaka, it tends to get very crowded at weekends and during public and school holidays. The main beaches are concentrated on the western coastline. Among them are **Pantai Puteri Dewi** (Beach of the Lovely Princess), **Teluk Belanga** (Golden Sands) and **Pasir Bogak**, and there are a few more secluded bays at **Tortoise Bay**, **Teluk Nipah** and **Teluk Cempedak**.

The old ruins of the Dutch Fort at Teluk Cempedak are a reminder of the colonial past when the Dutch attempted to control the tin trade in the 17th century. The busy fishing villages with their quaint coffee shops add colour to the very cosy going island lifestyle.

### **Pulau Pangkor Laut \*\*\***

This 120ha (300-acre) island lying off the southwest tip of Pulau Pangkor is privately owned and run as the Pangkor Laut Resort. Too small to attract any permanent settlement, it was once a pirate's hideaway, but is now the most exclusive island resort in Malaysia. It is concentrated on **Royal Bay**, but the sea here is disappointingly muddy and there are many sea urchins amongst the rocks. On the other side of the island, accessible by a path through the jungle or by boat, is **Emerald Bay**. In contrast to Royal Bay, here a beautiful white sandy beach sweeps round the secluded cove and the water, which is indeed emerald green, is invitingly clear and warm and ideal for scuba diving and snorkelling. Emerald Bay has been voted one of the best 100 beaches of the world. **Marina Bay**, accessible along a path from Emerald Bay, is another delightful cove, with even more limited and exclusive accommodation. As this is a private island, no day trippers are permitted in the resort.

### **KEDAH**

Documented by Chinese pilgrims in the seventh century and Arab traders in the ninth century, Kedah is Malaysia's oldest state, though its early importance as a trading post declined as Melaka rose to prominence on the trade route between India and China. Today, with Perlis, the state is Malaysia's main producer of rice. Its other primary industries are fishing and tourism. The influence of its proximity to Thailand can be seen in both its architecture and its cuisine.

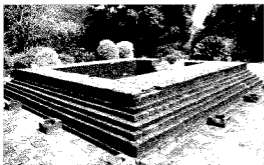
### **Alor Setar \***

The state capital boasts some interesting historical buildings, including the **Zahir Mosque**, with its distinctive black domes, completed in 1912. The nearby **Balai Nubat**, a pagoda-like structure built in 1907, houses the ancient royal orchestra. The **Balai Besar**, or Great Hall, is a fine example of Malay-Thai architecture built in 1898, and is the official venue for the Sultan's audiences on his birthday and other special occasions. The elegant



### **F. SPENCER CHAPMAN**

Travel Agent, Kuala Lumpur. In 1971 he commenced a tour of 100 countries in 144 months. From 1976 onwards he cannot say he has ever had a bad holiday, as he always brings a change of scenery to his holidays. He has visited 105 countries. For a detailed travel guide, see *Kedah* by F. Spencer Chapman, published by the author in Kuala Lumpur in 1998. He is also the author of *Alor Setar, Kedah, Malaysia* (1991), and *Alor Setar, Kedah, Malaysia* (1994). He is also the author of *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (1991), *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (1994), *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (1997), *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (2000), *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (2003), *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (2006), *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (2009), *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (2012), *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (2015), *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (2018), *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (2021), *Malaysia, a cultural heritage* (2024).



**Above:** *Andi Bukit Batu Pahat, Temple of the Hill of Chiseled Stone, the most important Hindu temple unearthed so far in the excavations in the Bujang Valley.*

#### BUJANG VALLEY

Excavations have unearthed a large pre-Malay Rapa-Rapa culture of the 5th and 6th centuries AD. A Malay archaic culture succeeded this, but is poorly understood. It is still unclear if the 13th-century A.D. Hindu-Buddhist civilisation represented by the Bujang Valley is a continuation, evolution or a new development of the Bujang Valley. As a result of the discovery of the Bujang Valley, the Malay Peninsula is being

re-evaluated as a national park with scenic walks and waterfalls. There is a forestry museum at the peak.

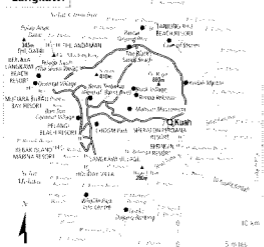
#### LANGKAWI

Situated 30km (19 miles) on the coast of Perlis is a cluster of 104 islands collectively known as Langkawi (although the name best belongs to the biggest and only truly inhabited island in the archipelago). Tourism came to Langkawi late in 1987 when it was declared a duty-free port. Despite its recent rise to tourism fame, the island has managed to retain its rural charm, with quaint Malay villages, *peti* fields and rubber plantations. The islanders seem to take the onslaught of visitors in their stride, and many holiday developments simply pass them by.

The islands, mountains and caves of Langkawi are shrouded in mystery and legends. The island is dominated by three mountains, Gunung Makinwang (Asia's oldest mountain), Gunung Raya and Gunung Sawah. Legend has it that these mountains were once two feuding men, Mat Chinchang and Mat Raya. Their son and daughter, however, fell in love, despite their families' disapproval. Matters came to a head at the wedding and the two fathers fought using pots and pans as missiles. A pot of curry crashed on the site of the village now called **Kampung Belanga Pecah**, 'Broken Cooking Pot Village'. The gravy began to seep into the ground in the area today called **Kisap**, 'soap in'. The spot where the gravy stopped its flow is now **Kuah**, 'gravy'.



## Langkawi



Below: The untouched Langkawi Islands are popular for sailing.



## Gunung Raya \*\*

A detour into the district of Ulu Melaka leads to a very good but steep road up the legendary Gunung Raya with scenic views of the coast. The road serves the telecommunications centre at the summit. For tourists there is a viewing tower and small shop where you can buy drinks and souvenirs.

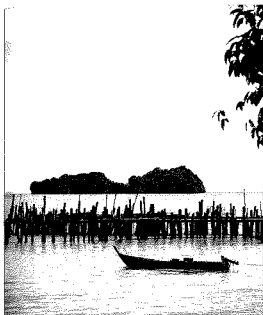
## Pantai Cenang \*\*\*

Travelling southwest further down the coast, a left turn on the main road from the airport will take

you to one of the most famous beaches on the island (albeit not the best). The white sand stretches on for miles, dotted with accommodation of all types, from modestly priced huts and motels to the deluxe **Pelangi Beach Resort**, designed and built like a traditional Malay village. Next door is the **Bon Tun Coconut Village** offering invited accommodation in thatched chalets, a restaurant, handicrafts and a traditional spa. Sadly, parts of the bay have been filled in for a development.

## Pantai Kok \*\*

The long public beach now features the **Summer Palace** from the set of the movie, *King and the King* (open 09:00-20:00). Burau Bay adjoins the beach and here the **Mutiara Burau Bay** and **Berjaya Resorts** share an excellent bay front. The market **Oriental Village** shops and restaurants are nearby. Tuck into the jungle nearby in search of adventure amongst the dense growth and cool down at **Telaga Tujuh**, 'The Seven Wells'. A series of cascading waterfalls drop from a height of 900m (3000ft) into seven deep pools.



*Left: Pantai Pasir Hitam, Black Sand Beach, is also a traditional fishing village*

### Teluk Datai \*\*

At Pantai Kok, the road veers inland northwards. Follow Jalan Datar going north-west to one of the most spectacular sights of Teluk Datai. The road passes the Crosshale Farm and the Ibrahim Hussein Museum and Art Gallery. The winding road is flanked on one side by the azure sea, and on the other by the lush greenery of Gunung Mincung. The road ends at the deluxe resorts of **The Datai** and **The Andaman**, where the beach is one of the best on the island – the white sand is lapped by the Andaman Sea, with Thailand in the distance. The Datai Golf Course adjoins the resorts.

### Pantai Pasir Hitam \*

To explore the northern part of the island, travel back down Jalan Datar to the junction, then turn left travelling in a northeasterly direction towards **Pantai Pasir Hitam**, 'Black Sand Beach'.

### BUFFALOES

Buffaloes used for rearing fish larvae, Langkawi are also reared for sale throughout the Malay Peninsula (being so the demand is high). We warned that these buffaloes have eight legs and five (or more) tails, the highway rules. It is occasionally funking out for motorists, especially in forest areas.



*Above: Exploring the outer islands like Pulau Dayang Bunting is highly recommended*

#### LAKE OF THE PREGNANT MAIDEN

The 'The Lake of the Pregnant Maiden' is a beautiful scenic spot located in the heart of the island of Langkawi. The lake is surrounded by lush green hills and is a popular spot for picnicking and sightseeing. The lake is said to be the resting place of a pregnant woman who died in a boat accident. The lake is a beautiful sight and is a must-visit for anyone who visits Langkawi. The lake is surrounded by lush green hills and is a popular spot for picnicking and sightseeing. The lake is said to be the resting place of a pregnant woman who died in a boat accident. The lake is a beautiful sight and is a must-visit for anyone who visits Langkawi.

#### Pantai Lanjung Rhu \*\*\*

This beach, whose name means 'the Cape of Pine Trees', is the finest stretch of beach on Langkawi, exclusive with the Lanjung Rhu Resort occupying the best position. At the end of the road there are a few stalls which sell souvenirs, drinks and snacks. Mangrove tours leave from here. This is an ideal place for a day away from the crowds.

#### Island Hopping

Boats to the islands leave from various places, including Kuala CC Ferry and Beland, Langkasuka Resort. Pulau Dayang Bunting is the second largest island in the group. Pulau Singa Besar ('Island of the Big Lion'), has a small wildlife park where mousedeer, iguanas, monkey and exotic birds live. There is a wide choice of islands to visit and most of them have sandy coves and clear waters for scuba diving and snorkelling. Pulau Rebak is a short ride away and the Rebak Marina and Langkawi Crystal can be found here. A sunset cruise on Bon Ton Cruises is highly recommended.

#### Pulau Payar \*

For diving enthusiasts, the Pulau Payar Marine Park is worth visiting. It comprises four small coral islands, just

south of Langkawi. Coral gardens and fish of all colours abound in the clear water. There is no accommodation on the islands but there are picnic tables. A floating facility offers a complete day's activity for all the family.

## PERLIS

Nestled against the Thai border, this is the smallest and most northerly Malaysian state and is known as the country's 'Rice Bowl'. Its economy is mainly agrarian, with rice, rubber and sugar as the main crops in addition to fruit. Its rural scenery, with its rolling carpet of green padi fields, is punctuated by rounded lime-stone hills.

## Kangar \*

The state capital is a small rustic town surrounded by padi fields and trading mostly in seafood and agricultural produce. The main places of interest are the **State Mosque** and the **Dato Wan Ahmad house** of traditional wooden construction with ornate carvings.

**Arau**, the Perlis royal town, is 10km (6 miles) from Kangar. Fruit trees line the avenues between mostly traditional houses. The **Royal Palace** fronts the main road with the **Royal Mosque** nearby.

## Perlis State Park, Gua Kelam and Kaki Bukit \*

The park, on the Thai border, protects the unique limestone forests. Gua Kelam is a limestone cave in the small town of Kaki Bukit, 26km (16 miles) from Kangar. It is about 570m (1214ft) long and is accessed by a suspension bridge over a subterranean stream.

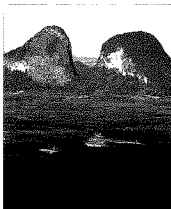
## Padang Besar \*

On the rail border between Malaysia and Thailand is Padang Besar. This bustling town's main attraction is its shopping bargains. Its shops and stalls sell goods from both countries. The Immigration and Customs counters separate the two countries. The main expressway border is at Bukit Kayu Hitam.

## A CONQUERED HISTORY

After several years, a pact was the political move. It was the part of the pact, and it was accompanied by the fact that 1921 saw the settlement of the Malay States. Perlis was one of the Malay States, and it was the only one of the Malay States that was not a part of the Malay States. The Malay States were the only Malay States that were not a part of the Malay States. The Malay States were the only Malay States that were not a part of the Malay States. The Malay States were the only Malay States that were not a part of the Malay States.

*Between rounded limestone hills are a common sight in Perlis State Park.*











## 5 Penang

Penang, known as 'the Pearl of the Orient', lies off the northwest coast of Peninsular Malaysia. It was originally settled by Ragam, an early trader from Sumatra. He called the island 'Pelan Bersatu' which means 'Single Island'. It is said that the present international airport at Bayan Lepas ('free parakeet'), is built on the site where Ragam set free some parakeets. Later, the Portuguese, in their search for new colonies and spices, settled on the island and called it 'Pulo Pnaom' after the betel nut palms *pinang* in Malay (which grow in abundance here).

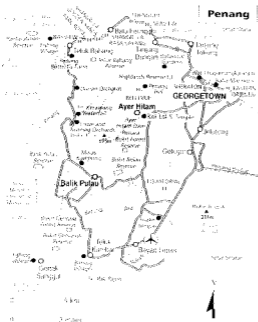
In 1771, **Captain Francis Light** of the British East India Company set sail to Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula looking for a suitable trading post. After some negotiation with the Sultan of Kedah who ruled Penang at that time, the East India Company set up a naval base on the island in 1786. Francis Light promptly hoisted the British flag in the name of King George III and renamed the island after the Prince of Wales. This infuriated the sultan as Light had pre-empted any formal treaty, and he attempted to repel the British. But his army of 30,000 men was no match for Captain Light's forces who were better equipped. The sultan reluctantly retreated and settled for a treaty in 1791. In return for occupying the island, the British agreed to pay an annual sum of 6000 Spanish dollars, the recognized currency at that time, to the sultan. This promise is still kept today by the state government of Penang, which makes a token annual contribution of RM10,000 to the Sultan of Kedah.



### CLIMATE

Penang's climate is hot and humid with the monthly average temperature between 26°C and 32°C. The annual rainfall is 2,100 mm. Penang is one of the most beautiful islands in the world. Light thought it was the ideal trading post.

**Opposite:** The distinctive red landscape of the capital of Penang, Georgetown, its narrow streets bordered by rows of shophouses and covered by hot sun rays.



When the British occupied the island, it had a population of only about 1000, mainly Malay fish-otfolk. It is said that as an enticement to the people to clear the jungle for him, Francis Light fired Spanish silver dollars into the undergrowth from a cannon. Soon the trees were cleared and trails were carved out of the forest while shelters were built together with a wooden stockade. Light declared the island a free port and offered further encouragement to traders by giving generous land grants. Immigrants, particularly the Chinese, flocked to settle on the

island and the area began to prosper.

Within a short time, Penang was flourishing as a busy port with its natural harbour. For a short time it became the capital of the Straits Settlements: the British territories of Malacca, Singapore and Penang itself, until it was eclipsed by the greater glory of Singapore. Penang enjoyed further periods of prosperity during the 1850s with the discovery of tin deposits on the mainland nearby, and at the peak of the rubber industry in the early 20th century. Some of the opulent mansions built during these boom times are still to be seen dotted about the island.

In 1800, an area on the mainland called Province Wellesley was added and is today linked by a bridge to the island. On 31 August 1957 Penang became a state in the Federation of Malaya, when Britain relinquished its rule and Malaya became an independent country.

#### Don't Miss

- \*\*\* **The Garage** Restored early Penang bar, games, restaurants and bars
- \*\*\* **Khoo Kongsi** Home of the Chinese Diaspora in Penang
- \*\*\* **Kek Lok Si Temple** One of Southeast Asia's most beautiful temples
- \*\*\* **Penang's beaches** World famous Batu Ferringhi
- \*\*\* **Eastern and Oriental Hotel** 19th century gem
- \*\* **Georgetown's historic centre** Foot-candle walks and Penang Museum
- \*\* **Penang Hill** A paradise above the spectacular coast

## GEORGETOWN

The chequered history of Penang is today reflected in its variety of cultures and traditions, its narrow streets of old shophouses, its grand mansions, especially along Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, 'Millionaires' Row', and the handsome colonial edifices of Georgetown, its capital. The old town is a maze of narrow streets, and is small enough for it to be most enjoyably explored on foot. Many streets have covered 'flye-foot ways' in front of the shophouses to shelter pedestrians from both sun and rain, and these make for cooler walking. Hiring a trishaw is a good alternative.

### Fort Cornwallis \*

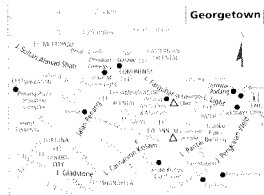
The fortress built on the spot where Francis Light first landed in Penang in 1786 today still stands guard on the seafront, complete with cannons. Originally built in wood, it was replaced by a stone construction using convict labour in 1804. It never had any military importance and the cannons were never fired in defence. The compound within the fort is now converted into a park with souvenir shops, stalls and an amphitheatre used for concerts and shows. There is a model of a typical Malay house near the souvenir shops. Shoes must be removed before entering the house.



*Above: The clock tower has been erected in 1897 in the memory of a brave military aviator - Charles Vassall's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. The tower is over 100m high - a real feat for most of its age.*

### THE LEGEND OF SRI RAMBAI

The Sri Rambai is a brave legend of Penang, first put into writing by the English in the latter half of the 19th century. The Sri Rambai was first recorded by the Dutch in 1773, when it was written up by the first British agent in Penang, Captain Robert Black. The legend is set in the 16th century, when the Chinese merchant and explorer, Admiral Cheng Ho, visited the island. Cheng Ho was a powerful Chinese admiral who led the largest fleet of ships in the world at that time. He was on a mission to establish trade relations between China and the West Indies. Cheng Ho's fleet was the largest in the world at that time, and he was the first Chinese to reach the West Indies. Cheng Ho's fleet was the largest in the world at that time, and he was the first Chinese to reach the West Indies.



## Penang Museum and Art Gallery \*\*

Within walking distance of the fort, in Lebuh Farquhar, this museum traces the history of Penang and includes an exhibition of the Peranakan heritage. In front of the museum is the statue of Francis Light, modelled after his son William, the founder of Adelaide in Southern

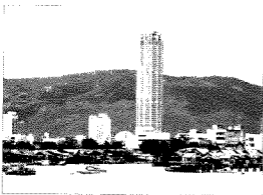
Australia, as there was no known portrait of the man himself. The museum is open from 9.00 to 17.00 daily except on Friday when it is closed between 12.33 and 14.45 for Friday prayers. Nearby is the Anglican **St George's Church**. An elegant example of Georgian architecture, it was built in 1818. In the churchyard is the simple tomb of Francis Light who died in 1794 of malaria, only eight years after founding the colony.

## Cheong Fatt Eze Mansion \*\*

This magnificent house in Lebuh Leith was built in the 1880s by Hio Hway Sui, a Kwantung businessman using a team of skilled Chinese craftsmen. It is believed to be one of only three such buildings outside China. Surrounded by a 6m (20ft) wall, it has sumptuously decorated ceremonial halls, bedrooms and libraries linked by a maze of small gardens and cobbled stone courtyards. The grand spiral staircase, stained glass windows, lattice screens, silk scrolls, tapestries, sculptures, porcelain carvings, lacquers, bronze and furniture all add to its heritage. There are tours offered through the building.

## Georgetown's Temples \*\*

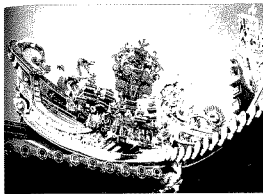
The diversity of religious beliefs in Penang is reflected in the number of places of worship crowded into the same vicinity. **Kapitan Kling Mosque**, in the street



*Above: The modern Kontinental housing offices, shops, an auditorium, cinema and restaurants towers over the old houses on stilts that line the bustling sidewalk*

### THE EASTERN AND ORIENTAL HOTEL

Opened in 1904, it is one of the grandest hotels in Penang. The hotel was built on the former 'Pillar Point', a strategic site for the military. The hotel has a rich history and is one of the most important buildings in the city. It is a fine example of colonial architecture. The hotel has a long history and is one of the most important buildings in the city. It is a fine example of colonial architecture. The hotel has a long history and is one of the most important buildings in the city. It is a fine example of colonial architecture.



*Left: Blue dragons and other mythical creatures in various motifs protrude on the majestic prow of the Khoo Kongsi at Cannon Square, the most splendid of Penang's Chinese clan houses.*

which now bears its name, was built by Muslims from southern India, or Kling, in the early 19th century. On the same road is the **Temple of the Goddess of Mercy**, the oldest temple in Penang, built in 1800. Nearby is the Indian Temple of **Sri Mariamman**, built in 1883 and ornately decorated with figures from the Hindu pantheon. The statue of Lord Subramaniam, which is used to lead the procession to the Waterfall Temple during Thaipusam (see page 26), is dripping with jewels.

### **Khoo Kongsi \*\*\***

The Khoo clan originally came from the Hokkien Province in China. Their magnificent clan house at Cannon Square is lavishly decorated, with an especially ornate roof sporting blue dragons intertwined among mythological figures, flowers and birds. All this paraphernalia reputedly weighs 25 tons. Inside, walls, pillars and windows are exquisitely carved with figures depicting Chinese legends including a series of stories of filial piety, since love and respect for parents and elders are of paramount importance in Chinese society. Across the square is a Chinese opera theatre. Opening hours are from 09:00 to 17:00, Mondays to Fridays, and 09:00 to 14:00 on Saturdays. Current renovations may affect visits here.

### **THE CHINESE CLAN HOUSE**

The Khoo Kongsi clan house was built after the arrival of Chinese immigrants, and is a fine example of the tenacity and enterprise that has led to the success of the Chinese in Malaya.

It was built by the Khoo clan, a branch of the Chinese people who came to Malaya in the 17th century. The Khoo clan is one of the most prominent Chinese clans in Malaya, and has a long history of success in business and industry. The Khoo Kongsi clan house is a fine example of the traditional Chinese architecture, and is a testament to the wealth and power of the Khoo clan. The house is built on a hillside, and is surrounded by a wall. The entrance is through a large gate, and is flanked by two towers. The interior of the house is equally impressive, with a large hall and many rooms. The house is a fine example of the traditional Chinese architecture, and is a testament to the wealth and power of the Khoo clan.



## EATING OUT

A favourite Malaysian dish, and typically eaten at night, is a favourite with me. Penang has a quintessential palate where food of many varieties is available at hawkers' stalls, coffee shops and restaurants. Along George Street, however, is available a huge array of food stalls, serving delicacies of the Chinese and abiding traditions to their neighbours. Penang's hawker food, that Army food, is well-reputed for its quality, quantity, variety, price and availability. It is a good idea to try some of the food stalls, especially those serving traditional Malay and Chinese dishes, and to try some of the traditional dishes.

**Below:** Mosque on the summit of Penang Hill  
**Opposite:** Kek Lok Si Buddhist Temple is one of Asia's most unique temples



## AROUND THE ISLAND

To get a spectacular panoramic view of Penang, take the funicular railway from Ayer Hitam Station to **Penang Hill**, 800m (2,600ft) above sea level. The scenic journey takes 30 minutes with a change of train midway. Along the way, orchids, pitcher plants, durian trees and other tropical vegetation grow along the embankment, enlivened by the ubiquitous monkeys sitting by the railway track or leaping through the trees. Further up the hill, grand mansions with red roof tiles perch on the hillside amongst beautifully manicured gardens. Scenes from the movie *Indochine* were shot here. At journey's end, there is a kiosk selling food and drinks, and a vantage point from which you can look over George Town, the red-tiled shophouse roofs looking like a patchwork quilt. There is also a hawkers' centre near the summit, where an Indian temple and a mosque sit side by side. For those who want to stay overnight, the Bellevue Hotel provides comfortable accommodation. This old hotel has a bird park by its entrance with a small collection of exotic birds including some noisy manakias. A path leads down to the **Botanical Garden** which has 3ha (7.5 acres) of tropical plants. Look out for the caution-bell trees near the entrance with the brown fruits from which they get their name clustering around their trunks. There are also manakias who fly in freely and rob visitors of their food and drinks (so watch out!).

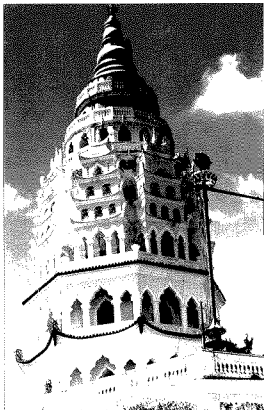
## Kek Lok Si Temple \*\*\*

The largest, and one of the most beautiful Buddhist temples in Southeast Asia stands majestically on a hill at Ayer Hitam, a small town in the centre of the island. The temple sprawls over a wide area with praying halls dedicated to various gods, interspersed with pagodas with numerous statues of the Buddha in many manifestations. The most outstanding feature is the seven-storey pagoda which forms the focal point of the complex. Standing 37m (120ft) tall, the tower was constructed in three different architectural styles. The octagonal base is typically Chinese, the middle tiers are Thai, and the whole edifice

is topped with a golden Burmese spiral dome. Each tier has an altar dedicated to the Buddha and the Goddess of Mercy. It is customary to make a small donation to gain access to the top of the pagoda, which affords a spectacular view of Ayer Hitam.

### Wat Chayamangkalaram Thai Temple \*\*

This gaudily painted Thai Buddhist temple at Tonong, Burmah is guarded by two fearsome-looking gods, while giant multi-headed dragons flank the way to the entrance. This temple houses the world's third largest reclining Buddha, measuring 130 (1080). On the left hand side of the main altar is the figure of a monk in a lotus position. It is believed that this is the actual preserved body of the founder of the temple. Thin sheets of gold leaf cover his face and limbs. Behind the giant Buddha is a crypt where the ancestral ashes of families of devotees who donated money to the temple are kept in niches on the walls with tablets bearing the names and pictures of the deceased. Across the road, on a smaller scale but equally beautiful, is the **Burmese Temple**, with a colourful altar of red and gold and a seated giant Buddha in the centre. Saffron-robed monks are on hand to bless and counsel the faithful about their everyday problems.





*Above: Parasailing is one of the many water sports along the Batu Feringghi*

#### BATIK

The batik motif is a traditional form of art, which is a complex of the best of any design from any of the 22 states of the Malay Peninsula. The batik is a traditional art form of a state of the Malay Peninsula.

The batik motif is a traditional form of art, which is a complex of the best of any design from any of the 22 states of the Malay Peninsula.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES HARRISON

### The Snake Temple \*

Further south, on the road to the airport, the Temple of the Ancestral Cloud was built in 1870 in memory of a Buddhist priest of Chief Siao Kong, who was believed to possess spiritual healing powers. Here in the incense smoke-filled temple are green and black striped Wagler's pit vipers coiled round twigs placed on the altars. Most of these poisonous snakes have been rendered harmless by having their fangs removed. The incense seems to have a sedative effect on them as they are completely oblivious to the tourists who cowl them round their neck for pictures taken by other disappointed photographers. The

procession from the photographs goes towards the upkeep of the temple. The number of snakes has dwindled over the years although it seems to mysteriously increase at the time of the monk's birthday in July. The snakes are believed to be the incarnation of the monk.

### Penang's Beach Resorts

No journey to Penang is complete without visiting the sandy beaches stretching from Tanjung Bungah through Batu Feringghi, 'Foreigner's Rock' to the fishing village of Teluk Bahang. Whilst most of the beaches have clean sand, they do not have the advantage of the clear waters of the East Coast and those near the city look quite dirty. Accommodation to suit all budgets is dotted along the coast. Watersports of all types are available, with parasailing being the most exhilarating and colourful sight. Trips can be arranged to the nearby secluded islands of Bidan, Teluk and Song Song, where other snorkelling and fishing

## Penang at a Glance

### BEST TIMES TO VISIT

Visit Penang all year round. The best time to visit is during the dry season (April to October) when the Penang Beaches are at their best.

### GETTING THERE

Penang is accessible by air from several cities in Malaysia and at 10 hours by sea from Hong Kong. There is a daily passenger ship service to Singapore.

### GETTING AROUND

Taxi services are available at an affordable price. The public bus service is good, but slow. There are a number of cycle rickshaws for hire, and the private hire car service is best.

### WHERE TO STAY

#### Luxury

**Parkroyal**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1111, Fax: (604) 241-2244

**Eastern and Oriental**, The Oriental Hotel, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-6677

**Mutiara Beach Resort**, Telok Bahang, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 891-2529. Also see our Travel Events calendar.

**Farfalla**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-6677

**Shangri-La Rasa Sayang Resort**, Batu Ferringhi, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241. Also see our Travel Events calendar.

**Golden Sands**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-6677. Also see our Travel Events calendar.

**Shangri-La Penang**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-6677

**Sheraton Penang**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

#### MID-RANGE

**Lone Pine Hotel**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**Hotel Grand Pacific**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

#### Budget

**Eastern Hotel**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**Hotel Fortuna**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**Hotel Hong Ping**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**Hotel Sri Pantai**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**White House Hotel**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

### WHERE TO EAT

Most of the best restaurants are in the old town area. Most weeks, the government organises a 'Penang International Food Festival' in the old town area.

**Dawood Restaurant**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**Golden Gate Steamboat**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**The Emperor**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**Nonya Corner**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**Hot Wok**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**The Brasserie**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**Tours and Excursions**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

### TOURS AND EXCURSIONS

For more information on excursions, visit our website at [www.penang.gov.my](http://www.penang.gov.my)

**Tourist Information Centre**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

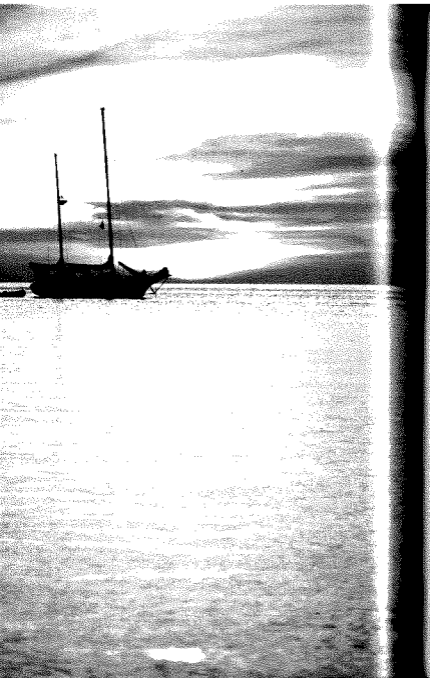
### USEFUL CONTACTS

**Tourism Malaysia**, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Tel: (603) 2511-2000

**Penang Development Corporation**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

**Penang Development Corporation**, Telok Ayer Stait, Penang, Tel: (604) 221-1241

PENANG	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
AVERAGE TEMP °F	80	80	82	82	82	80	80	80	80	78	80	80
AVERAGE TEMP °C	27	27	28	28	28	27	27	27	27	26	27	27
HOURS OF SUNLIGHT	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	6	5	6	6	7
RAINFALL (in)	3	3	6	9	9	7	6	9	14	15	9	4
RAINFALL (mm)	69	72	165	223	230	178	160	242	356	383	232	104
DAYS OF RAINFALL	5	6	9	14	14	11	12	14	18	19	15	9



## 6 The East Coast

Blessed with miles of sandy beaches from Kelantan through Terengganu and Pahang down to parts of Johor, the East Coast offers some of the best beaches in Malaysia. Being fairly undeveloped compared with the West Coast, it has managed to retain its charm and unique Malay characteristics, with its coconut plantations and quaint villages on stilts. The unhurried pace of life on the East Coast makes it an ideal place for a relaxing holiday with just sun, sea and sand, and the occasional cultural break in between the applications of suntan lotion.

### KELANTAN

The northernmost of the East Coast states, Kelantan, whose name means 'Land of Lightning', shares a border with Thailand. In the early 1900s Kelantan was recognized as a tributary state of Thailand but in 1909 it was handed to the British. The state became part of the Federation of Malaya in 1948. During World War II **Kota Bharu**, the capital, witnessed the first landing of Japanese troops in the Peninsula in 1941.

### Kota Bharu \*\*

In Kelantan's capital, modern buildings sprout amongst landmarks of past eras and colourful trishaws still jostle with the traffic. For an insight into the strong traditions and culture of the Kelantanese, take a stroll through the 'Cultural Zone' along **Jalan Sultan** and **Jalan Hilir Kota** and the bustling **New Central Market**. Other attractions reflect the culture and religious nature of this state.



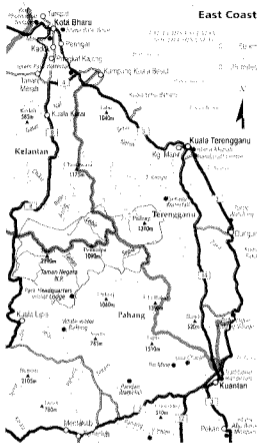
### CLIMATE

The East Coast is subject to the monsoon winds. The wet season (November-June) is when the northeast monsoon is at its height and will be the best time to visit the East Coast, and visit Ayer Kuning and get a taste of the world of blue skies and turquoise seas.

**Opposite:** Sunset over the South China Sea, off the Peninsula's peaceful East Coast.

## Don't Miss

- \*\*\* **Pulau Redang** An unspoiled island with the world's best diving.
- \*\*\* **Taman Negara** The oldest rain forest in the world.
- \*\*\* **Pulau Tioman** A tropical paradise island.
- \*\*\* **Miles of golden sand** Along the west coast of Langkawi (Malaysia).
- \*\*\* **Kota Bharu** Capital of Kelantan.
- \*\*\* **Rantau Abang** Best place for waterback turtles.



Below: A banana seller in Kota Bharu's vibrant central market. Over 20 varieties of bananas are grown in Malaysia, from delicate sweet-sour pisang mas, to golden bananas, to giant pisang tanduk, and edible alien cocked.



### Malay Cultural Traditions

Kelantan is steeped in tradition and is the centre for Malay culture. At the Gelanggang Seni, the Kelantan Culture Centre in Jalan Mahabud, visitors can watch highly skilled **top spinners** hurling *gasing* (tops), the size of a dinner plate and weighing up to 5.5kg (12 lbs), into a spin which may last as long as two hours! **Kite-flying** is another national pastime which dates back to the 1500s during the early days of the Melaka Sultanate. The *gasing*

of lotus, conical shapes and colours and are made from bamboo and paper. The most popular variety is the *kam kalis* (or 'moon kite'), whose tailpiece resembles the crescent moon. A typical one is 10cm in length, up to 30cm (1ft) from head to tail and is capable of soaring to great heights. Malaysia Airlines adopted it as their logo, as it symbolizes stability and controlled flight.

Theatre plays an important part in East Coast culture. The most popular is *wayang kulit*, the shadow puppet play, in which puppets made from batanahide mounted on bamboo sticks are cleverly manoeuvred behind a screen of wet rice cloth with an oil lamp providing the light. Backed by a traditional orchestra, the *dalang* (or puppeteer) skilfully narrates the story, usually from the Hindu epics, and eventually the play ends with the triumph of good over evil.

Silvercraft is a thriving cottage industry in Kelantan. Silver, trail bowls, tea sets, ash trays, spoons, bracelets and other jewellery are popular buys here in addition to *batik* in silk, cotton or rayon. This area is a hotbed for its *kain songket*, in which threads of gold and silver are woven into silk cloth used for weddings and other ceremonial occasions. This is a legacy handed down from the ancient court of Kerantan where silk from China and gold and silver thread from India were formerly woven exclusively for royalty. You can visit a *songket* workshop at Kampung Penambing near Kota Bharu.

The New Central Market in Kota Bharu exudes the real atmosphere of Malay life. The market place is a hive of activity and colour as the traders, mostly women, sit in groups behind their displays of vegetables, fruits, cakes and coconuts, haggling and gossiping loudly while chewing at betel leaves.



*Above: Dancers of Kelantan's shadow puppet festival perform behind a wet rice cloth screen. Below: Kampong songket, a traditional silk cloth with gold and silver threads.*

**THE EAST COAST:  
MUSLIM STRONGHOLD**

It is important to note that Malaysia's east coast of Malacca and Johore is a Muslim area. The other part of the country, where 20 per cent of the population live, is the state of Penang. When the British arrived in Malacca in 1511, they brought with them a number of religious and cultural practices, including Islam, which had been spread in the region by Arab traders in the 13th century. Called the 'Three pillars of Islam', they are the pillars of faith and a central element of the culture and life of the Malay Peninsula. The area's ethnic diversity, past and present, is reflected in its



**THE ARRIVAL OF ISLAM**

The first part of Borneo's Malay Peninsula is Islam was the first to take a strong hold. In around the 15th century, when the first missionaries came from Java, Temenggong, a chief who ruled over the whole of eastern Malay led an expedition to set up the Sultanate in Selat. Some years earlier than the arrival of Islam of the Malay peninsula, the Malay Muslims in the Eastern Malay Islands (Lombok, Sumatra, and Kalimantan) had already been converted to Islam.

**Below:** *White sand topped by clear blue sea characterises the beautiful beaches around the islands off the coast of Terengganu, which also has some of the best dive sites in Malaysia. This beach is on Pulau Redang.*



Although the population of Kelantan is predominantly Malay, the Thai Buddhist influence extends over the border, especially around Jempol. Here in Kampung Lambu is the Buddhist temple of **Wat Phothivihan**. Completed in 1980 and accommodating a reclining Buddha 40m (131ft) long, it is Southeast Asia's largest.

**Kelantan's Beaches \*\***

Kelantan's sandy coast includes a beach whose original name of **Pantai Cinta Berahi**, the 'Beach of Passionate Love', has officially been changed to **Pantai Cahaya Bulan**, 'Moonlight Beach'. It is crowded at weekends and holidays. Further down the coast is **Pantai Dasar Sabak** where you can watch fisherfolk coming ashore in their ornately painted boats. At **Dalam Rhu** about 6km (3.5 miles) from Kota Bharu is the 'Beach of Whispering Breeze', ideal for snorkelling and fishing. Customs are strict in Kelantan and brief swimwear is frowned upon.

**TERENGGANU**

There is a story that Terengganu derived its name from an early traveller who saw a light on the distant shore and called out 'Terang' (which means 'light'), to which his companion replied 'gan' (meaning 'where'). This stretch of golden coast which stretches all the way to Pahang is synonymous with unspoilt beaches, clear blue skies and warm emerald seas rich with marine life, particularly around the numerous small islands off the coast. From **Kuala Besut** in the northern part of the state to **Kemaman** in the south, the coast is dotted with typical Malay villages surrounded by swaying coconut trees with goats, cows and chickens roaming freely.

## Kuala Terengganu \*

The Terengganu state capital is a former fishing village, and the centre of activity is still the busy waterfront near Kampung Cina. The market sells abundant seafood in the early morning. The **Geolanggang Seni** (cultural centre) is housed in one of the town's traditional carved Malay houses; it stages performances of traditional dance and games. Trishaws are still a popular mode of transport.

## The Coastal Resorts \*\*\*

Although there are numerous modest beach resorts, there are only a few international standard resorts situated in this area. The **Primula Parkroyal** in Kuala Terengganu has a pleasant garden, swimming pool and beach. The property is basically a business hotel and holidaymakers would be better off travelling to one of the beautiful islands. **Berjaya Pulau Redang Resort** is located on a beautiful beach. The **Marang Resort** is an elegant resort, which spreads over a beachfront and a coastal lagoon.

Near the town of Dungun is the delightful **Tanjung Jara Resort**. This resort, like an old Malay palace, is set in large, beautifully landscaped gardens with a swimming pool by a small stream where huge monitor lizards sunbathe freely. The garden sweeps onto one of the best beaches on the East Coast. It has recently been renovated and now offers very stylish accommodation.

A few minutes' drive away is **Rantau Abang** where between the months of May and September you might be lucky enough to see the giant leatherback turtles that rarely come ashore to lay their eggs. There is a Turtle Information Centre here; tel: (09) 844169.

About 6km (4 miles) and 30 minutes by regular boat service from the fishing village of Marang is **Pulau Kapas**, renowned for its clear water and marine life. **Pulau Tenggol**, 37km (23 miles) off the village of Kuala Dungun, is cloaked in luxuriant forest rich in wildlife, particularly reptiles. Chalets are available and the diving is excellent.



### LEATHERBACK TURTLES

Leatherback turtle nesting grounds are on the East Coast of Malacca, and one of the best is located in the area of Tanjung Jara up to Kuala Terengganu and are used by the hundreds of years. The turtles come here to lay their eggs on Rantau Abang beach. The eggs have been destroyed by people trying to collect them for medicinal use. However, they are being protected and are being laid in a safe place - a hole is made at the end.

A large shell and orange of the egg and the mature turtles may only be damaged from poachers on land, and many small turtles are caught by fishers as they reach the sea. Egg collection by human beings many years has seriously depleted their numbers. Tourism in Rantau Abang is now limited along with the turtles.



**Above:** *Lake and beach  
are a highlight on the East  
Coast of Malacca.*

### Exploring Inland

For adventure seekers, the **Sekayu Recreational Park** (5km (3 miles) from Kuala Terengganu) is the ideal place. The park is set amongst rainforest with cascading waterfalls and natural pools (ideal for swimming). There are chalets, picnic areas and changing rooms. **Kenyah Lake**, 55km (34 miles) from Kuala Terengganu, offers a peaceful sanctuary for picnics and nature walks. The lake, formed by the Kenyah Dam, is a fishing haven. Boats can be hired from local resortsfolk. The **Lake Kenyah Resort** and golf course offer good holiday packages.

### PAHANG

Pahang is the largest state in Peninsular Malaysia and bears all the hallmarks of a great holiday destination. It almost monopolizes the major places of interest in the Peninsula – superb beaches, **Taman Negara**, Pulau Tioman and the three top hill resorts (for details of the latter, see Chapter 3). **Kuantan**, the state capital, is a non-descript coastal town but an ideal launch pad from which to explore the state.

### Seaside Villages \*\*\*

Only 7km (4 miles) from Kuantan is **Teluk Chempedak**, a popular beach with plenty of accommodation, restaurants, and craft shops specializing in batik. A short trek through the **Teluk Chempedak Forest Reserve** will lead you to the secluded **Teluk Pelindung**. Nearby is the picturesque fishing village of **Beserah**. Here you will be able to see water-buffaloes transporting fish from the sea to the sunshackle factory on the beach which produces the *ikan bilis*, or anchovies, for which this area is famous. North of Beserah is **Kampung Balok** which is the ideal spot for windsurfing. The **Coral Beach Resort** dominates this stretch of the beach but there are a number of smaller resorts around the area. Further up the coast is **Cherating Beach**, 47km (29 miles) from Kuantan, which is normally associated with Club Med/centimes, although this resort occupies only a fraction of the vast beach. About 17km (11 miles) from Cherating is **Chendor Beach** where green turtles come ashore to lay eggs.

### Gua Charah \*

Venturing inland about 25km (16 miles) north-west from Kuantan at **Panching**, **Gua Charah** is a series of limestone caves which are revered as a Buddhist sanctuary. In one of the caves, a 9m (30ft) long reclining Buddha has been carved out of solid rock. There are monks in residence in the temple. Visitors may explore deep into the gorges. The nearby **Sungai Pandan Waterfalls** cascade into a big pool which is perfect for a dip after a long trek.



### Tasek Chini\*

**Kampung Belimbing**, about 100km (63 miles) south from Kuantan, has boat rides through 12 picturesque lakes carpeted with lotus blossoms from June to September. Tasek Chini, it is said, once supported an ancient Khmer walled city. The lakons, one of the Orang Asli tribes who live by the lake, believe that a giant monitor, the *Naga*, still guards its depths. Tasek Chini has a number of wooden chalets and campsites.

### Taman Negara\*\*\*

For the ultimate experience of the oldest rainforest in the world, undisturbed for about 40 million years, hike in the largest national park in West Malaysia. Taman Negara covers an area of 1316km<sup>2</sup> (510 sq miles) and actually extends to neighbouring Terengganu and Kelantan. This park was designated in 1938 for the purpose of propagation, protection and preservation of the indigenous flora and fauna. To appreciate it fully, a stay of two to four days is recommended. For the botanist, there is an extensive range of vegetation, from the lowland dipterocarp forests and swamp forests to the oaks and dwarf upper montane flora near the summit region of **Gunung Tahan**. While large mammals exist, spotting them is difficult. There are six wildlife hides in



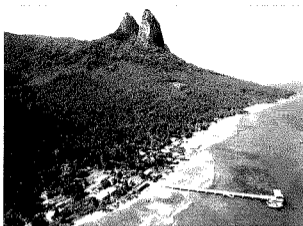
### GUNUNG TAHAN

At the summit of *Tahan*, a view of Tasek Chini, which supports a rich variety of plants and animals, from the common langur, to the tiger, hornbills, eagles, and many other species. The lake is a major tourist attraction, with a number of resorts and a 1500-111 campsite.

*Above: Exploring the tranquility of Tasek Chini in one of the chalets set out at a campsite in Taman Negara.*

*Below: Lotus flowers carpet the waters of Tasek Chini from June to September.*





**Above:** *Exotic* *large rocks* dominates the skyline.

**Opposite:** The Abu Bakar Mosque facing the Strait of Johor.

#### SINGAPORE

For more information on Singapore, see the Singapore section in the Singapore & Malaysia section of this book. For more information on the island of Singapore, see the Singapore section in the Singapore & Malaysia section of this book. For more information on the island of Singapore, see the Singapore section in the Singapore & Malaysia section of this book. For more information on the island of Singapore, see the Singapore section in the Singapore & Malaysia section of this book.

#### Pulau Tioman \*\*\*

The island of Tioman lies off the southern coast of Penang. What it lacks in size—measuring only 39km (25 miles) long and 9km (5.2 miles) at its widest—it makes up in beauty. It is surrounded by sparkling blue waters teeming with marine life and beaches of golden sand. It gained international fame when it was chosen as the location for the film *Sarah Bath* in the 1950s. This is one of the most popular islands off the East Coast for scuba diving and snorkelling. The shallow waters at **Salang Beach** and around the nearby islands of **Tulai** and **Renggis** offer the best diving spots. Tioman's interior is equally spectacular, with lofty mountains, lush tropical forests and quaint villages. Tourists easily outnumber the local inhabitants at the height of the season. There are jungle tracks which traverse the island from **Juara** to **Tekek**, and for those reluctant to walk, ferries move around the island. Check the timetables at the restaurants in the main resorts.

## JOHOR

When the Portuguese invaded the Melaka Sultanate in 1511, the Sultan and his court fled to Johor and set up a new kingdom. **Johor Bahru**, the present capital, is a modern city and the gateway to Malaysia from the south. Accessed by the 1km (half-mile) causeway over the **Johor Straits** and a new bridge crossing, the people of Singapore virtually use Johor Bahru, or 'JB', as an extension of the island for shopping and eating out, especially in the seafood restaurants. Hence weekend traffic on the causeway is congested. Places of interest in this city include the **Istana Besar** (Grand Palace) and the **Royal Abu Bakar Museum** along Jalan Tun Dr Ismail. Built in 1806 by Sultan Abu Bakar, it is the oldest building in the city and today is a museum exhibiting his possessions. The beautifully landscaped gardens of the Grand Palace spread over 54ha (133 acres) of land. The present Sultan's residence is the **Istana Bukit Serene**, with a spectacular 32m (106ft) tower. Its superb grounds feature the Sultan's orchid gardens and vintage car collection. The garden is open to the public. Not far from the Grand Palace is the imposing **Sultan Abu Bakar Mosque**.

Most of Johor is devoted to pineapple and palm oil plantations, rubber estates and industry. **Mersing** on the east coast is a bustling fishing town and is a selling-off point for Pulau Tioman and Johor's **Marine Park**, a cluster of seven islands surrounded by clear blue seas, white sandy beaches and marine life. Most of the islands offer basic accommodation in wooden chalets. **Kukup**, a village on the tip of the southwest coast, is worth a visit for its seafood restaurants built into the sea on stilts. The prawns and chili crab dishes here are famous and it is a popular stop for tourists on Singaporean package tours (it gets very crowded at weekends).



### SULTAN ABU BAKAR

Singapore has the honour of making Sultan Abu Bakar the first Muslim ruler of the island. A man of great capability, he ruled the island for 30 years, and his reign was marked by the building of the first mosque in Singapore, and the appointment of the first Muslim judge in the island in 1891. He was crowned King of Johor in 1895. He was succeeded by his son, Sultan Ibrahim, who was the last ruler of the Malay sultanates in 1914.



## East Coast at a Glance

### BEST TIMES TO VISIT

July and August are the best months to visit. The weather is hot and humid, but the sea is calm and the humidity is not too oppressive.

### GETTING THERE

Travel from the Malaysian mainland to Kota Bharu, Kuantan, Kuala Terengganu, Kuala Kangsar, Pulau Tioman, Kuala Lumpur, Kemaman, Kuala Terengganu, and Kuala Pahang. Kuantan is a major port for the Malacca Strait, and is served by express air services to Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bharu, and Singapore. Express air routes to the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia are served by the national carrier, Malaysia Airlines. Kuala Lumpur is the national air hub, and is served by international airlines. Kuala Lumpur is also a major port for the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia.

### GETTING AROUND

Express air services operate from Kuala Lumpur to Kota Bharu, Kuala Terengganu, Kuala Kangsar, Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Terengganu, and Kuantan. Kuala Lumpur is also served by express air services to Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Terengganu, and Kuantan. Kuala Lumpur is also served by express air services to Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Terengganu, and Kuantan.

### WHERE TO STAY

#### Kelantan

##### LUXURY

**Hotel Perdana** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001

#### Perdana Beach Resort

0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001

##### MID-RANGE

**Juiza Inn** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
**Kencana Inn** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001

##### BUDGET

**Hotel Aman** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
**Windmill Guesthouse** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001

#### Terengganu

##### LUXURY

**Primula Parkroyal** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
**Sutra Beach Resort** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
**Tanjung Jara Resort** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001

##### MID-RANGE

**Qurata Riverside Resort** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001

#### River Garden Hotel

0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001

##### BUDGET

**City Hotel** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
**Hotel Marina Kemaman** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
**Pulau Kapas Garden Resort** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
**Hotel Sura** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001

#### Pahang

##### LUXURY

**Hyatt Kuantan** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
**Impiana Resort Cherating** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001

##### MID-RANGE

**Hotel Pacific** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
**Hotel Samudra Riverview** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
**Tanjung Gelang Motel** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
**Le Village Beach Resort** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001

##### BUDGET

**Hotel Beserah** 0954110001  
 0954110001, 0954110001

## East Coast at a Glance

**Moonlight Hotel** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Hotel New Wing Yuen** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117  
Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117  
Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

### Pulau Tioman

#### LUXURY

**Berjaya Tioman Beach Resort** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

#### MID-RANGE – BUDGET

**ABC Beach** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Mastura Chalets** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Nazri's Place** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Salang Indah** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Samudra Swiss Cottage** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Tioman Paya Resort** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

### WHERE TO EAT

#### Kelantan

**Choo Choon Huay Restaurant** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Malaysia Restoran** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Satay Indera Restoran** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Sun Too Restaurant & Snack** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

#### Terengganu

**Restoran Awana Sea Food** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Delima Restaurant** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Good Luck Restoran** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Pahang**

**Bunga Raya Restoran** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Golden Sea Food Restaurant** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Meena Curry House** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

### TOURS AND EXCURSIONS

**Kelantan and Terengganu** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**The Tourist Centre** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Rantau Abang Visitor Centre** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Taman Negara** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

### USEFUL CONTACTS

**Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Kelantan Tourist Information Centre** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Culture, Art & Tourism Division of Terengganu** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**Pahang Industrial & Tourism Division** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

**The Tourist Centre** (Telok Anson) (Telok Anson) Telok Anson, Telok Anson, 09-7211117

KUANTAN	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
AVERAGE TEMP (°C)	27	27	26	27	27	27	26	26	26	25	25	25
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	5	6	7	7	7	6	6	5	4	4	4	4
RAINFALL (mm)	12	6	7	6	6	7	9	10	14	22		
RAINFALL (mm)	236	162	128	164	221	165	112	124	233	212	304	584
DAYS OF RAINFALL	12	9	9	11	12	9	11	11	14	16	19	18





## 7 Sarawak

Known as 'The Land of the Hornbills', Sarawak, the largest of the 13 states of Malaysia, sprawls across the northwestern part of the island of **Borneo**. Whilst its sister states in West Malaysia are predominantly Malay, Sarawak is characterized by the distinctive ethnic culture of its indigenous tribes. It has the most diverse populace in the country, with more than 25 ethnic communities, including some migrant Indonesians. Its savage and colourful history might have come straight out of a romantic Victorian novel: a young swash-buckling Englishman setting sail to the wilds of Borneo, fighting pirates and fierce head hunters, and eventually becoming the country's first 'White Rajah'. Its wild terrain of rugged mountains and rainforest covering three quarters of the land, makes Sarawak one of the best places for adventure holidays. If you are looking for high-rise buildings, large shopping malls and all the trappings of modern resorts, then it is not recommended. Sarawak takes tourism at its own pace, with a heavy emphasis on its rich, colourful tribal culture, and to a lesser extent, its colonial past.

Sarawak became a state in its own right when it was handed over as a fief by the Sultan of Brunei to **James Brooke**, a young English trader, seeking adventure and fortune in the East. Quite by chance he arrived in Sarawak where he helped to quell a local rebellion and as a reward was officially installed as 'Rajah' of Sarawak on 18 September 1842. He ruled Sarawak well, bringing law and order to the country by fighting piracy and



### CLIMATE

Essentially equatorial, Sarawak has a hot, humid climate. Most of the rain falls during the month of the peak monsoon, between May and July, with the heaviest rain falling in the second half of the month. The temperature is around 27°C (81°F) in the state capital, Kuching. Average rainfall in Malaysia (the figure for Sarawak is 2,600 mm) is 2,000 mm (79 in) per year, with 250 or more rainy days a night, and humidity is usually above 80%.

**Opposite:** The *dinobirds hornbill*, called *kenyalang* by the Iban, is the state bird of Sarawak. It is one of the largest hornbills in Borneo.



#### Don't Miss

- \*\*\* **Kuching** The White Rajah city, the renamed of the old Kuching
- \*\*\* **Iban and Orang Ulu longhouses** Under the roof of the indigenous people of Borneo
- \*\*\* **Bako National Park** Ecogate with forests and waterfalls
- \*\*\* **Niah and Mulu National Parks** Exciting prehistoric caves and the world's largest caves
- \*\*\* **Batang Ali** Longest sand beach in the world
- \*\*\* **Damai Beach** Beach, championship golf course and Sarawak Cultural Village

head hunting. He died in 1868 and was succeeded by his nephew, Charles Brooke, who set up a formal government administration. While his uncle had had a difficult task fighting pirates and quelling tribal rebellion and Chinese uprisings, Charles concentrated on economic development of the country. Rajah Charles Brooke died in 1917 and his second son, Charles Vyner Brooke became the third and last Rajah of Sarawak. In 1911 while Rajah Vyner Brooke was on holiday in Australia, the Japanese occupied Sarawak. Much of the economic infrastructure was disrupted and destroyed. For ten years the country suffered extreme oppression and hardship and most of the European officers in Sarawak were rounded up and interned in prison camps. Many died during their ordeal. After the liberation in 1947, Rajah Brooke, realizing that he would not have the resources to restore the country, decided to relinquish his power and ceded Sarawak to Britain. On 1 July 1963, Sarawak became a British Crown Colony, until in 1963 it joined Malaysia.

## KUCHING

The name of Sarawak's capital means 'cat' in Malay. Some sources claim that the town was named after the *puta kaching* 'cats' eyes trees which grow in abundance in the area. The city today is affectionately known as 'Cat City' and even has its own cat museum, located in the new city hall in Petra Jaya. Kuching is small enough for visitors to reach its main places of interest on foot.

### Sarawak Museum \*\*\*

This museum is a good place to start touring, as it has one of the finest ethnological collections in Southeast Asia, as well as examples of Bornean wildlife and colonial relics. The new wing at Dewan Abdul Razak concentrates on models of ethnic dwellings and crafts, and includes a replica of Niah Cave with its stone-age relics. The museum opens from 09.15 to 17.30, from Monday to Thursday, and 09.15 to 18.00 on Saturday and Sunday. It is closed on Friday. Admission is free.

### The Legacy of the White Rajahs \*\*\*

A short walk into town along Laluan Tun Haji Openg brings you to the city's historic centre. But for the tropical heat and the people, you could easily be fooled into thinking you were in a British city. The indelible legacy of the Brooke period is evident in the imposing **General Post Office** built in Renaissance style in 1931. The Brooke emblem of a badger with the inscription *Duro quo opto*, 'White Hair, I hope', is displayed on the pediment. Directly opposite the post office is the **Pavilion**, which has been described as looking like a cake covered in white icing. It was originally the General Hospital. The **Round Tower**, next to the Pavilion, was built

### THE PEOPLE OF SARAWAK

by a British population of 1.7 million living in an area of 124,767 sq mi (319,811 sq miles). Most of the population are aboriginal, with more sophisticated civilisations in the coastal region, and along the banks of the major rivers which divide the country. The four main language groups, known as the Iban, Bidayuh, Melanau and Mestizo, often mix in various proportions. In the Kapit area, around the banks of the upper Baram and Rajang Rivers, the culture still preserves many of the high-culture, inland Borneo, traditions of the most ancient kingdom, the Melayu. The principal cities, besides Sarawak, are the German, Dutch and British colonies captured by the occupying forces of Great Britain. The state capital is Kuching, Malaya, in the process

of becoming a major port city.

**Below:** Kuching rises from overlooking the Alimart Swamp in the background.



### BURIED ALIVE

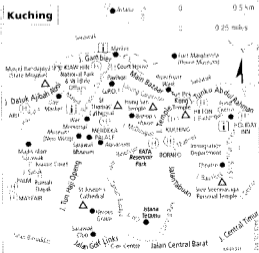
In front of the new Sarawak Museum stands a 100-year-old wooden structure with a coffin-like roof, intricately carved with designs of trees, vines, ferns, and stylized animals. This is the mausoleum of the King and Queen of the Rajahs and Queen of the Rajahs. The old tomb structure was built during the times of the Rajahs in a pit on top of the structure. Below the King's way, on the left, a stone wall built by the Rajahs to the pit as a wall to be used for the Rajah's and left there to die. The belief was that the Rajahs would be coming back to life after a period of 100 years. The other was used for the Rajahs of the Rajahs and the Rajahs of the Rajahs.

in 1886 as a dispensary. Its twin round towers command an unimpeded view of the main avenues leading to the town centre, and it is thought that the Rajahs might have intended to use it as a watch tower in an emergency. Across a courtyard is the **Court House**, erected in 1874. The building is raised slightly above ground, possibly to avoid floodwater from the river. At the front of the Court House is a clocktower with a balcony from which the Rajahs used to address their subjects. In front of the building is the Charles Brooke memorial obelisk which was completed in 1924.

Across the road on the river-bank is the **Square Tower**, built in 1879 in late Renaissance style. During the days of the Rajahs it was used, in an unlikely combination of functions, as a fortress and occasionally as a ballroom. One of the most magnificent buildings of the Brooke era is the **Astana** (Palace), now the home of the Governor of Sarawak. Built in 1870 by Rajah Charles Brooke for his bride, the Ranee Margaret, the palace stands on a rolling hill on the northern bank of the Sarawak River, facing the Main Bazaar. It is not open to the public but you are allowed to

visit the beautiful grounds. There is a regular sampan service ferrying passengers across the river. The castellated **Fort Margherita** is near the Astana. Named after, and designed by, Ranee Margaret, it was built in 1879 on a hill overlooking the river. It is now a police museum, housing a display of execution methods, confiscated fire arms, and a cluster of skulls from the head-hunting days of the Iban. Small colourful bambusts ferry visitors across the river.

### Kuching



## Main Bazaar \*\*

Along the river front are some of the oldest Chinese shophouses in the country, which make for a fascinating stroll along the 'five-foot way'. The Sarawak Tourist Association is situated along here. Further down the road at **Jalan Gambier** are some dilapidated shophouses owned by Indian traders, selling mainly spices. Between them is a very narrow alleyway leading to one of the oldest mosques in Sarawak. It was built by Indian Muslims in the mid 19th century. Indian textile shops on this lane sell silk and other fine fabrics. The lane will lead you to **Jalan India** (which has recently been closed to traffic). It is a delightful place to shop for fabrics and trawling is expected. A walk to the end of **Jalan India** leads to the open air market by the bus terminal and taxi stand. Opposite the **Main Bazaar** is the brand new Riverfront esplanade. The once dilapidated river bank has now been transformed into a beautiful promenade with musical fountains and gardens. There are food stalls, restaurants and an amphitheatre. It is a pleasant way to spend an evening watching the local colour. The area is very popular and is easily one of Malaysia's best open spaces.

Perched on the bank of the Sarawak River near the open air market on **Jalan Mesjid** is the splendid **State Mosque** built in 1968 on the site of an old wooden mosque. In front is the old Muslim cemetery, at the far end of the **Main Bazaar** is the Chinese community's principal place of worship, the **Tau Pok Kong Temple**. Built in 1870 on a pillock facing the river, it is a gaudy structure of bright red walls with a very ornate blue roof festooned with mythological figures. This temple is famous for the **Wang Kang** celebration in commemoration of the deity.



*Above: The 19th century Fort Margherita on the banks of the Sarawak River is now a Public Museum.*

## GUARDIAN OF KUCHING

Although there had been a fort on this site since 1841, an iron palisade, which had been built in 1878, protected the existing settlement from any outside threat. Fort Margherita was used to protect Kuching and as a base for the police. The fort was mostly destroyed during the Japanese occupation of Sarawak in 1943 but the clock tower, as well as the front entrance, has survived, and is now a part of the old fort built by the Rajah of the Astors.



*Above: Bako National Park, with its lovely beaches and diverse vegetation is a coastal forest habitat.*

*Opposite: Sarawak Cultural Village houses the main cultural groups of the state.*

#### PUA KUMAU

Both women are skilled weavers, and the richest part of this project and an art form is the pua kumbu, a complex rug hanging. An ikat technique is employed – the warp threads are dyed using colours traditionally extracted from forest plants – and the designs are passed down from one generation to the next. Many are stylised versions of birds, animals or plants, some motifs represent mythical spirits, and have a spiritual significance.

### EXCURSIONS FROM KUCHING

There are beach resorts approximately 35 minutes' drive from Kuching city centre including **Holiday Inn Damai Beach Lagoon** and **Santubong Resort**. The four-star international standard Damai Beach Resort has a long beach. Guests from the Holiday Inn Kuching can make use of the facilities here. The more modest Santubong Resort is better geared to the local market and golfers. The **Damai Golf and Country Club** 18-hole golf course is adjacent to the resort. For those who want a more rustic holiday, **Camp Permai** is the place. A few minutes' walk from Damai Beach, the main features here are jungle trekking, rock climbing, mountain climbing, overland expeditions, night hikes, water sports and fishing.

### Sarawak Cultural Village

One tourist attraction not to be missed, adjacent to Damai Beach Resort, is the Sarawak Cultural Village. Built on a site of 7ha (17 acres), it contains seven representative ethnic houses: longhouses of the Belayut, Iban and Orang Ulu, a Penan Hut, a beautiful traditional woodlark Melanau house (now the only such building in Sarawak), a Malay house and a Chinese farmhouse. Each group is represented by craftspeople demonstrating their various traditional skills. The village has a restaurant, souvenir shops and a theatre with a daily multicultural show featuring all the ethnic dances from the state accompanied by traditional instruments. The Cultural Village opens at 09:00 daily and closes at 17:30. It is highly recommended if you do not have the time to travel throughout Sarawak to see the 'real thing'.

### Bako National Park \*\*\*

Situated 37km (23 miles) from Kuching is the first national park in Sarawak. Its coastline is dotted with beautiful sandy coves and unique rock formations with spectacular colours like pieces of abstract art. It has a very diverse vegetation and several jungle trails are carefully mapped out for visitors. You may encounter wildlife at close

range, especially proboscis monkeys, masked pigs, giant monitor lizards and monkeys, who often stroll along the beach and feed a few metres from the water. Beware! Access is via boat and there are simply furnished bungalows and chalets for overnight stays. There is a small kiosk selling groceries and local food. A permit to visit the park can be obtained from the Sarawak National Parks Booking office at the Sarawak Tourist Information Centre in Main Bazaar, or at the Bako boat terminal.

### Longhouse Safari \*\*\*

A visit to a longhouse is best organized through local tour operators who will arrange transport, a guide and board and lodging in the longhouse. Travelling independently can be expensive as you may have to charter your own boat. There are a few longhouses which welcome visitors by the Skrang River, Lemanak and Ulu Ayer, all about six to eight hours' journey by car and boat from Kuching. Most tour operators offer resthouses with basic facilities near the longhouse.

It is important to remember that, when visiting a longhouse, you are a guest and you should respect the customs of the tribal people. Always remove your shoes when entering a longhouse and never refuse the traditions,



#### LONGHOUSES OF SARAWAK

the food and the drinks. It is also important to remember that you are a guest and you should respect the customs of the tribal people.

Always remove your shoes when entering a longhouse and never refuse the traditions, the food and the drinks. It is also important to remember that you are a guest and you should respect the customs of the tribal people. Always remove your shoes when entering a longhouse and never refuse the traditions,

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*Above: In Sarawak, a hornbill is a traditional head-dress worn at its ceremony, often among a traditional and modern traditional performance of the hornbill.*

#### THE HORNBILL DANCE

The hornbill dance is a traditional dance performed in Sarawak, Malaysia. It is a traditional dance performed by the Iban people. The dance is performed in a traditional way, with the dancers wearing traditional Iban attire. The dance is performed in a traditional way, with the dancers wearing traditional Iban attire. The dance is performed in a traditional way, with the dancers wearing traditional Iban attire.

drink of *tuak* (rice wine) when it is offered, even if you do not drink, just a token sip will suffice. Here you may be able to mingle with retired headhunters, although now sober—and cured by the fumes of their ketickle and their tinouts, the insignias of warriors, some on horses put on over-egging performances of traditional riding, and it will please your hosts to part-cry in the darkness and moonrise, etc. Small gifts from your homeland are sufficient to show your appreciation. I send books, pens and pencils, things that we take for granted in the modern world, are also greatly appreciated. If you're planning to visit a longhouse, be prepared to reach it by the truth of the adventure, the experience of being in the interior amongst cultural beauty and the scenery created, make it unforgettable.

#### Batang Ai \*\*\*

If you feel the real thing would be too much for you, you can enjoy a soft adventure journey to **Hilton Batang Ai Longhouse Resort**, your horse starts from Kuching, followed by a 27-minute boat ride across a beautiful lake. It's a village on the traditional longhouse of the Iban, though each room is air-conditioned. Amenities include a bar, lounge and a restaurant featuring regular cultural performances. The lake can be used for fishing and canoeing. Day trips by boat to authentic longhouses can be arranged by the resort staff.

#### Semenggoh Orang-utan Sanctuary \*\*\*

Nature lovers should not miss this 70ha (180-acre) preserve, 22km (14 miles) from Kuching on the way to Serapi. The sanctuary is a rehabilitation center for orang-utans rescued from captivity or wounded by hunters. One such victim was 'Bulut', a twenty-something male orang-utan who was the centre's star attraction until his death in April 1994. Rescued from the wild as an infant with a bullet in his chest, he was found to have suffered brain damage and was unable to cope in the wild. Other animals here include primates, monkeys, gibbons, sloth bears,

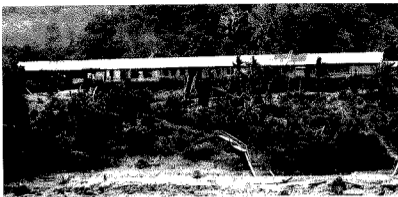


Fig. 1. Longhouse on the bank of the Rajang River.

monkeys and sea eagles. It is advisable to go during feeding times, 08.30 to 09.00 and 13.00 to 13.15. Most of the orang utans who return daily to town are those newly released to the jungle who have not yet developed the habit of hunting for themselves. The centre is open daily from 08.30, 12.15 and 13.00. Entry procedures can be completed at the entrance.

### Sibu and the Rajang River \*

The second largest town in Sarawak is a busy port at the mouth of the Rajang River, the longest river in Malaysia. This mighty river was once the scene of many a fierce battle among warring tribes. The Iban are mostly settled along the middle reaches of the river. In its upper stretches beyond Belaga, above the rapids, there are several longhouses belonging to Kayan, Kenyah and Kaping tribes, while some nomadic Penan still roam the forest deep in the interior.

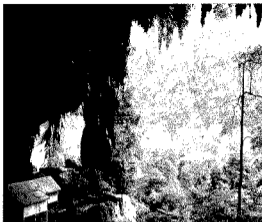
### NORTHERN SARAWAK

The gateway to northern Sarawak is the oil town of Miri. It is dominated by the Shell Petroleum Company, and many Western expatriates live here. The town itself has a few attractions, but is mainly used as a starting point for discovering the district.

**Above:** *A longhouse built on stilts on the bank of the Rajang River. These longhouses are typical of the Iban people, who are hunting and gathering in place of traditional paddy in their ancestral lands.*

#### SMALL BEGINNINGS

Miri is a town of about 100,000 people, mostly of Chinese and Malay descent. It is a busy port, and a major centre for the oil industry. The town is a good starting point for exploring the district. The Miri District is a large area of about 10,000 sq km, and is home to many of the Iban and Kayan tribes. The Miri District is a beautiful area, and is well worth a visit.



### Niah National Park \*\*

The most famous of the caves in the district is the Niah Caves, situated 17700 yards, National Park, approximately 139km (87 miles) south of Miri. Here limestone formations, which cover an area of 11ha (27 acres), form the Niah Great Cave where world renowned archaeological finds include a 57,000-year-old skull. Nearby is the Painted Cave. It was used for pythons, but also

#### NEEDLE-SHARP PEAKS

As you enter the cave, the temperature drops and the humidity disappears. The cave is very dark and the only light comes from a small opening at the top. The cave is very narrow and the ceiling is very low. The cave is very interesting and the atmosphere is very mysterious. The cave is very beautiful and the scenery is very nice. The cave is very interesting and the atmosphere is very mysterious. The cave is very beautiful and the scenery is very nice. The cave is very interesting and the atmosphere is very mysterious. The cave is very beautiful and the scenery is very nice.

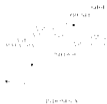
as is evident from the remains of boat shapes (often known as 'death ships') containing human remains, washed over by paintings of the mammoth figures drawn in red kaolin on the walls. Today the caves are home to bats as well as swallows, whose nests are of the interest collectors climb a costly bamboo scaffolding to gather the nests, an expensive and essential ingredient for park nest soup. The caves are reached by a 15 minute process of raised planks, through the downward-funnel wind beams with birds and butterflies. A permit to visit the Caves can be obtained from the National Parks and Wildlife Office at Miri, Sarawak, Tourist Information Centre, or the park. Simple accommodation, including camping, is available at the park (must be pre-booked) and there is a posthouse at Batu Niah, the nearest town to the caves.

### Mulu National Park \*\*\*

This park is dominated by the sandstone mass of Gunung Mulu which stands at 2570m (7900 feet), but the high light of a journey to the park is the exploration of its awesome caves. Only four are open to the public. The Deer Cave is reputed to be the largest cave passage in the world. It is as high as it is wide, measuring 120m (390ft) and is over 3km (1.5 miles) long. Millions of bats live in

the cave by day and fly free during it with the swallows who occupy it at night. It is an amazing spectacle to watch the interchange between the two species as the bats fly out of the cave like puffs of black smoke in a solid column while the swallows duck impatiently to get in. To add to the chaos, bat hawks circle round the cave entrance to rest on the bats as they make their nightly exodus. This performance happens every night at about 1800.

Next to Deer Cave is Lang's Cave, the smallest of the four, but the most beautiful, with colourful stalactites, stalagmites and strange rock formations. The Clearwater Cave boasts the longest cave passage in Southeast Asia at 736m (17 miles) long, with an underground river and a maze of tunnels. A new, hinged tunnel down to it is the Cave of the Winds, including a chamber of stalagmites resembling a throne and other human shapes, known as the King's Chamber. All four caves have steps, paths, and plankwalks to allow visitors to explore in safety. For the more adventurous traveller, it is possible to explore deeper into the Clearwater Cave with a guide, but be prepared to wade chest deep through reed-ground streams, and crawl through small, tunnels in pitch dark with only a low light to guide you. It is not recommended for those who are not fit or who suffer from claustrophobia. The Sarawak Chamber is the largest known cave chamber in the world, which could easily accommodate 10747 people! It is open only to experienced spelunkers on permitted expeditions. Trips through the Malaya caves have to be accompanied by a park guide.



**Opposite:** *Look to the right of the cave entrance, North Sarawak, at the deep, dark, but not too deep, tunnel, lined at least 1000m to 1200.*

**Below:** *The Deer Cave, or Caving Walk, at the Cave of the Winds, Lang's Cave, Sarawak.*



## Sarawak at a Glance

## BEST TIMES TO VISIT

The dry season (July to early September) is the most ideal time to visit Sarawak. The weather is generally sunny and hot, with a low chance of rain. The best time to visit is during the dry season (July to early September) when the weather is generally sunny and hot, with a low chance of rain.

## GETTING THERE

There are two main airports in Sarawak: Kuching International Airport and Miri International Airport. Both airports are well served by airlines. The best time to visit is during the dry season (July to early September) when the weather is generally sunny and hot, with a low chance of rain.

## GETTING AROUND

**Buses and taxis** operate from Kuching and Miri to other parts of Sarawak. **River boats** are also available. **Bako** is a national park in Sarawak. **Bako** is a national park in Sarawak. **Bako** is a national park in Sarawak. **Bako** is a national park in Sarawak.

**Express boat services**  
Concorde Pertama Union Express, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

**Hiap Tai Express**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Car hire

**Petra Jaya Car Rental Travel & Tours**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

**Saga Servis**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## WHERE TO STAY

## Kuching

## Luxury

**Holiday Inn**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Crowne Plaza Riverside

**Majestic**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Holiday Inn Resort Damai

**Beach**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

**Batang Ai**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Miri

**Borneo Hotel**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

**Telang Usan Hotel**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Bintulu

**Fata Hotel**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

**Longhouse Hotel**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

**Orchid Inn**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

**Camp Permai**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Miri

## Luxury

**Holiday Inn**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

**Rigra Royal Hotel**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Miri

## Gloria Hotel

**Harbour View Inn**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Bintulu

**Brooke Inn**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

**Gaya Inn**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Sibu

## Miri

**Li Hua Hotel**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Bintulu

**Capital Hotel**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Mulu

## Luxury

**Royal Mulu Resort**  
Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel, Telok Ayer Stempel.

## Sarawak at a Glance

### Bupit

**Alo Dada Inn** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Benarat Inn** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

### WHERE TO EAT

#### Kuching

**Bea Kuching** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

#### Bangkok Thai Seafood

**Restaurant** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**The Steak House** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Koreana** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Lau Ya Keng** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Lok Thian Restaurant** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Thompson's Corner** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Centre** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Toh Yuen** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

### Miri

**Apollo Seafood Centre** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

### Sibu

**See Jing Restaurant** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

### Damari

**Buntal Seafood Village** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Hock Ann** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

### TOURS AND EXCURSIONS

**Semenggoh** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Mulu** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Mulu** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Mulu** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Mulu** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Mulu** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

### Local Tour Companies

**Borneo Adventure** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**CPH Travel Agencies** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Borneo Transverse Tours & Travel** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Asia Overland Services** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Tropical Adventure** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Transworld Travel Services** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Sazhong Trading & Travel Service** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

### USEFUL CONTACTS

**Sarawak Tourist Information Centre** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

**Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board** (Telok Anson, 082-222-1111)

* KUCHING	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
AVERAGE TEMP. °C	25	26	26	27	28	28	28	27	27	27	27	27
AVERAGE TEMP. °C	25	26	27	27	28	28	28	27	27	27	27	27
45% REL. HUMIDITY	4	4	4	5	6	6	6	5	5	5	4	4
RAINFALL, mm	27	32	38	38	32	28	28	27	27	27	27	27
RAINFALL, mm	282	292	330	266	259	199	199	211	271	326	343	405
DAYS OF RAINFALL	16	17	18	22	21	16	15	17	26	30	24	27



## 8 Sabah

Sabah, 'the Land below the Wind', lies in the north-eastern part of the island of Borneo. It has a coastline of 1440km (712 miles) with fine beaches on the west coast, mainly mangrove swamps on the east coast, and 38 reef islands. Like Sarawak, it has a strong ethnic background with some 32 indigenous communities, each with its own cultural heritage. These include Kadazan, Dusun and Bajau plus recent owners like the Chinese, Indonesians and Filipinos.

Up to the 15th century, Sabah consisted of autonomous communities and various clans ruled by chieftains, all owing allegiance to the Sultan of Brunei. Later, areas east of Marudu Bay were ceded to the Sultan of Sulu in return for his help in settling a succession dispute. In 1881, an English businessman called Alfred Dent obtained a lease on the land from the Sultans of Brunei and Sulu and established the Chartered Company of **British North Borneo**. Like most of Southeast Asia, it was occupied by the Japanese during World War II. At the end of the Japanese occupation in 1945, the Chartered Company gave up its rights to the British Government and Sabah became a British Crown Colony. In 1963, together with Sarawak, it became part of Malaysia.

Sabah is especially appealing for adventure and ecotourism. These natural attractions include coral islands, rainforests, mountains and unique wildlife. Much of this formed the backdrop for the exciting Eco-Challenge 2000.



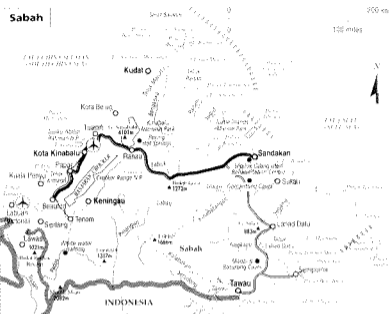
### CLIMATE

The equatorial equator region is blessed by the rain forest and the equator line. The equator line is the place where a year has 12 months of the equatorial climate. The equatorial climate is a hot and wet climate with high humidity. The equatorial climate is a hot and wet climate with high humidity. The equatorial climate is a hot and wet climate with high humidity.

**Opposite:** *Leaves and mosses testify to the track through the montane forest at about 2100m (7000ft) on Mount Kinabalu.*



## Sabah



### Kota Kinabalu \*

Known locally as KK, the capital city is a busy port and the international gateway to Sabah. There are no grand colonial buildings here, as most of the town, then known as Jesselton, was destroyed during World War II. Half a day is sufficient to cover the main places of interest like the **State Mosque**, a majestic structure adorned with domes decorated with gold inlay motifs. It is located at Jalan Sembulan. The **State Museum** at Jalan Muzium gives a picture of Sabah, with its extensive collection of ethnological, archaeological and natural history exhibits. (Open 10:00-18:00 Monday to Thursday, 09:30-18:00 Saturday and Sunday, closed Friday). A trip up to the exclusive area of Signal Hill, with its fine houses, and the **Istana**, gives a panoramic view of the town. You may also like to stroll through the **Central Market** and the market stalls at the waterfront. Here you will find an array of local food, traditional artefacts and forest produce amongst the usual hustle and bustle.

#### Don't Miss

- \*\*\* **Kinabalu National Park** Unparalleled variety of plants, including the world's largest banyan.
- \*\*\* **Mount Kinabalu** experience a tropical climate at the summit of one of Southeast Asia's highest mountains.
- \*\*\* **Pulau Sipadan** one of the world's best dive sites.
- \*\*\* **Sepilok** a sanctuary for the threatened orang-utan.
- \*\* **White-water rafting** enjoy the cascading waters of Sabah's beautiful rivers.



*Left: A peaceful scene by the waterfront in Kota Kinabalu, with Mount Kinabalu towering in the background.*

### Kinabalu National Park \*\*\*

A scenic two-hour drive from Kota Kinabalu takes you to this nature reserve which covers an area of some 734km<sup>2</sup> (291sq miles). It is the first UNESCO World Heritage Site to be proclaimed in Malaysia. The park's flora and fauna varies according to altitude, ranging from lowland forest reaching 1300m (4270ft) to alpine vegetation at the summit above 3300m (11,000ft). At the Park Headquarters, about 1524m (5000ft) above sea level, there are several miles of easy, graded walking trails leading to scenic viewpoints and mountain streams. The cool temperature is conducive to exploring these trails. Visitors can admire the plantlife diversity including wild orchids and pitcher plants. This is the home of the world's largest flower, the parasitic *Rafflesia*, which can measure up to 45cm (18ins) in diameter, though it can only be seen in selected areas of the park. There are daily guided tours of some of the trails (check in the Park Headquarters for departure times). Approximately 43km (27 miles) from the Park Headquarters is **Poring Hot Springs** which has open-air sulphur baths immersed in a beautiful landscaped garden. There is accommodation available in chalets and hostels for those who want to savour the mountain air overnight. There is also an elevated canopy walk.

#### THE RICHES OF THE FOREST

Chinese trade with the people of Borneo is of very long standing, and as well as gold, the island's exports have included some more unusual items.

- **Camphor** best quality Bornean camphor was used in Chinese medicine to stimulate the heart and in embalming preparations.
- **Gaharu** the local name for greswood or eagle's wood, a rare and costly fragrant resin.
- **Damar** another resin, sometimes named as a light soap.
- **Bezoar stones** found in the gall bladders of leaf monkeys, and used in various medicines and as an aphrodisiac.
- **Illipe nuts** Borneans use illipe oil for cooking, or to scrape it with marble into candles and is now an ingredient in good quality hairdies.

### A SACRED RESTING-PLACE IN THE CLOUDS

Mount Kinabalu is a sacred resting-place for the spirits of the dead. The mountain is believed to be the abode of the spirits of the dead, and the mountain is considered a sacred resting-place for the spirits of the dead. The mountain is considered a sacred resting-place for the spirits of the dead.

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### Mount Kinabalu \*\*\*

The highlight of the park is the climb to the summit of Mount Kinabalu, where awesome granite massifs dominate the horizon. No mountaineering skills are necessary, but you must be physically fit to attempt the strenuous hike to the peak. To enjoy the scenery *en route*, and to ease the journey to the top, a two-days, one-night trip is recommended.

To reach the start of the summit trail, you can be bussed or walk from the Park Headquarters on the Kamborongoh Road for 4km (2.5 miles) to the Lower Station at 18,290m (60,000ft). The trail follows a narrow ridge and dips into the main slope of Mount Kinabalu forest. A little further away is Carson's Falls, after which the trail begins to climb steeply to the first summit tree shelter at 19,510m (64,000ft). The second shelter is found at 21,340m (70,000ft) where the path climbs a steep narrow ridge before dipping into a mossy forest. Low's pitcher plants are found here, named after Hugh Low, who in 1857 was the first man to record his ascent of the mountain (though he failed to reach the summit).

The trail continues, offering shelters at various elevations. At 23,530m (77,000ft) is the Lajun Kava rest-house



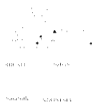
**Right:** The jagged granite peaks of Mount Kinabalu seen from Lajun Kava, where climbers are often caught when climbing to the summit to watch the sunset.

Here, the first explorers stopped to sacrifice a white cock and seven eggs to appease the mountain spirits. Today, the ritual is carried out once a year. Most people stay here overnight before their hike up to the summit in the early hours of the morning. From Laban Rata the path climbs up a gully to the last shelters at **Savat-Savat**, where white mountain rock and orchids grow among the rocks. Here begins the vast expanse of grey granite which forms the summit plateau. **Tow's Peak**, the summit itself, is not very safe at this point. Most ascents are planned in time to see the sunrise. On a good clear day, much of Sarawak is visible. Before the climb, ascend the mountain, usually at 06:00 or 07:00. From here you can see the awesome **Tow's Gully**, a 1.7 km (1 mile) deep chasm.

All climbers should respect the mountain and be prepared for its unpredictable weather. Make sure you bring some warm and waterproof clothing, packed in plastic bags to keep it dry. Stewakers are adequate for climbing. Gloves, hats, water bottle, torch/light, a few headache tablets and high energy snacks are essential. All climbers to the summit must be accompanied by a registered guide. Familiarize yourself with the naturalist programmes at Park Headquarters before you set out. The challenge of the trail is made to kindle the fire by Anthony Phillips and Francis Howie.

### Tunku Abdul Rahman Park \*\*\*

Only 20 minutes by boat from Kota Kinabalu is a cluster of five islands, gazetted as a State Park in 1971. **Pulau Sulug** is the furthest away from the city and has a small beach on its eastern side. It has good net patches at the southern end of the island. There is no accommodation on the island but changing rooms, toilets and picnic shelters are provided. **Pulau Mamutik**, the smallest of the group, is the nearest to Kota Kinabalu and hence very popular. It has excellent beaches with rich coral life surrounding the whole island and a rest house for overnight stays. A nature trail leading to the top of the island gives a good view of the reefs. **Pulau Mamukan** has stretches of good beach especially at its eastern tip. The beautiful coral



*Above: Dendrochilum species growing at Mamutik, Kinabalu*

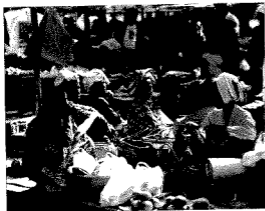
*Above: Dendrochilum species growing at Mamutik, Kinabalu*

*Top: Rhytidolobos species growing at Mamutik, Kinabalu*

### THE BAJAU OF KOTA BELUD

The Bajau came from the Philippines in the 18th and 19th centuries, and are quite skilled around Kota Belud where they live on lantern, raising buffaloes, which they can sell to great profit and selling of the Kota Belud betelnut on Saturday. They are skilled fishermen, often catching the head of the cod. On domestic occasions they like to drink in a traditional gambel ceremony.

*Below: Bajau women come to sell their wares and catch up with the week's news at the large tamm held every Sunday in Kota Belud, in the foothills of Mount Kinabalu*



reef makes it an excellent spot for snorkelling and scuba diving. The Park Headquarters is located here, and there are chalets, a swimming pool, restaurants and a diving centre. **Pulau Sapi** is connected by a sand bar to Pulau Gaya. This island has one of the best beaches in the Park, and a good coral reef. There is no accommodation but picnic tables, shelters, changing rooms and toilets are available. Camping is allowed with permission from the Park Warden or Sabah Parks Office in Kota Kinabalu. **Pulau Gaya**, the largest of the islands, is rich in flora and fauna, including hornbills, sea eagles, macaques, pangolin, wild pigs and reptiles. It has 26km (16 miles) of shoreline on which the most popular beach is at Buljong Bay, known as Pofier Beach. There is no accommodation but the usual day facilities are available. There are regular boat and ferry services to the islands.

### Tuaran \*

This small town, about 35km (22 miles) from Kota Kinabalu, has lovely beaches fringed with casuarina trees. Every Sunday morning, the local people flock to its weekly market, or *tamm*. Traders and buyers come from far and wide to exchange goods ranging from livestock to traditional medicine, jungle produce, cakes, handicrafts, dried fish and spices, which are displayed on the ground or on small stalls.

Against this beautiful setting is the Shangri-La Rasa Ria Resort and nearby golf course. The resort is very popular for family holidays. There is a good beach, a pool, and nature walks to see relocated orang-utans. The championship golf course has extensive views of Mount Kinabalu.

### Pulau Sipadan \*\*\*

When the naturalist and diver, Jacques Cousteau, visited Sipadan in 1988, he remarked, 'I have seen other places like Sipadan 15 years ago - but now no more. Now we have found again an untouched piece of art.' Sipadan is undoubtedly one of the best dive sites in the world. About three hours by boat from



*Above: A palm fringed island surrounded by clear shallow sea off the east coast of Sabah near Semporna*

Semporna, on the southeast tip of Sabah, Sipadan is an underwater heaven. It is Malaysia's only oceanic island, mushrooming 600m (1970ft) from the bed of the Celebes Sea. It is a treasure trove of the underwater world with its wide variety of marine life, soft corals, sharks, turtles, fish of every size and colour, lobsters and barracudas. The shallow water around the island provides an ideal snorkelling ground while the excellent white coral sand and the small forested central core of the island offer non-divers opportunities for beachcombing and nature studies. It is also a bird sanctuary with frigate birds, sea eagles and terns.

### Sandakan \*\*

The former British North Borneo capital, Sandakan was repeatedly bombed by the Allied Forces after the 1941 Japanese invasion. In 1945 the Japanese burned it to the ground and the capital moved to Jesselton (now Kota Kinabalu). Today, Sandakan is a bustling fishing port and its restaurants serve some of Malaysia's best seafood. The interesting daily fish market is the biggest in Sabah. The Japanese Cemetery and the Australian Memorial are grim reminders of the Japanese occupation. The memorial marks the site of the prison camp from which the infamous Death March of 1945 began: 1800 Australian and 600 British prisoners of war were forced to walk 227km (141 miles) through the jungle to Ranau. Only six survived to reach Ranau a year later.

#### THE BAJAU OF KOTA BELU

The Bajau come from the Philippines in the 15th and 16th centuries, and have long settled around the coast where they live as fishermen, using hulls, logs which they can drill the same way as a log along of the Kuala Belian mangrove stand. They are skilled swimmers, often performing the 'crawling of the sea'. One of their skills is to dive. They take lunch in plastic plastic containers, carrying spades.

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*Below: Bajau women come to sell their wares and catch up with the week's news at the large tamu held every Sunday in Kota Belud, in the foothills of Mount Kinabalu.*

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*Above: A palm fringed island surrounded by clear shallow sea off the east coast of Sabah near Semporna.*

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## Sabah at a Glance

### BEST TIMES TO VISIT

The best time to visit Sabah is between March and October. Dry season (November to March) is the best time to visit.

**Mount Kinabalu** February-April is the best time to visit.

**Sabah Fest** is held in May, with a week-long celebration of Sabah's rich culture. Best time to visit is during the festival. **Pesta Kaamatan** is held in late August or early September.

### GETTING THERE

Sabah is served by 10 international airlines, with direct flights from Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Medan, Bangkok, Denpasar, Toronto, Seoul, Taipei, Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Hanoi. Sabah is also served by 10 domestic airlines, with flights to Kota Kinabalu, Jesselton, Kudat, and Tawau. Sabah is also served by 10 regional airlines, with flights to Kota Kinabalu, Jesselton, Kudat, and Tawau. Sabah is also served by 10 regional airlines, with flights to Kota Kinabalu, Jesselton, Kudat, and Tawau.

### GETTING AROUND

Bus and taxi services are available in Sabah. Sabah is also served by 10 regional airlines, with flights to Kota Kinabalu, Jesselton, Kudat, and Tawau.

**Tunku Abdul Rahman Park** is a national park in Sabah.

**Tg. Aru** and **Tenom** are the only two towns in Sabah that have a railway station. Sabah is also served by 10 regional airlines, with flights to Kota Kinabalu, Jesselton, Kudat, and Tawau.

### Bus companies

**Labuk Road Bus Co.** 18 Pagar Road, Jesselton, Tel: 089-214142

**Leila Road Bus Co.** 18 Pagar Road, Jesselton, Tel: 089-214142  
**Harau** is a town in Sabah, with a population of 10,000. It is a major center for the rubber and palm oil industries.

### Car Hire

**Ais Rent-A-Car** 10000 A, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**Borneo Car Rental** 10000 B, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142

**Kinabalu Rent A Car** 10000 C, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**Kinabalu Rent A Car** 10000 D, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142

### WHERE TO STAY

#### Kota Kinabalu

##### Luxury

**Shangri-la's Tanjung Aru Resort** 10000 E, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**Hyatt Kinabalu Hotel** 10000 F, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**Pacific Sutera Hotel and Spa** 10000 G, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**Magellan Sutera Hotel and Spa** 10000 H, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142

**Mid-RANGE**  
**Hotel Jesselton** 10000 I, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**Budget**  
**Ang's Hotel** 10000 J, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**City Inn** 10000 K, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**Sandakan**  
**Luxury**  
**Sandakan Renaissance Hotel** 10000 L, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**Mid-RANGE**  
**Sanbay Hotel** 10000 M, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**City View Hotel** 10000 N, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**Budget**  
**May Fair Hotel** 10000 O, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142  
**Tuaran**  
**Shangri-La Rasa Ria Resort** 10000 P, 1st Floor, Jesselton Hwy, Jesselton, Sabah, Tel: 089-214142

### WHERE TO EAT

Sabah is a great place to eat. There are many restaurants and cafes in Sabah. Sabah is also served by 10 regional airlines, with flights to Kota Kinabalu, Jesselton, Kudat, and Tawau.

## Sabah at a Glance

the major beds. It also features a large phalaenopsis orchid garden with 100 species.

### Kota Kinabalu

**Endangered Species Café.** Maseluan, Teluk Gading, Tel. 0886-418-888. Sample eating and drinking local animals while, thankfully, do not feed on them.

### Port View Seafood

**Restaurant.** 1, Hajj Street  
**100% Seafood Restaurant**  
Empire Arcade

### Windbell Seafood

**Restaurant.** 8, Sandakan, Tera  
Street, Tel. 0886-227-907

**Restaurant Sri Melaka.** 11, B  
Lementau, Tel. 0886-224-  
177. (Empire Arcade)

### Sandakan

**Penang Food Centre.** 4  
Kampung, Tel. 0886-431-028

**Canny Seafood Restaurant**  
Semporna, Tel. 0886-431-028

**Golden Palace Restaurant.**  
Tamparuli, Tel. 0886-211-828  
(Empire Arcade)

## TOURS AND EXCURSIONS

**Mount Kinabalu.** Reserve  
fees for parking, porter and  
accommodation are paid for  
members of the Park. Contact  
SPTA or Sabah Ecotourism at  
the base. Transport to the Park  
by air is the fastest, but the  
Borneo Borneo Air Package  
at Kota Kinabalu, at Borneo  
Tour. Arrangements also can  
be made by air through a local  
tour operator.

**Wildlife Expeditions.** Wildlife  
Society, Kota Kinabalu, Tel.  
0886-211-888, Fax: 0886-211-  
216. Tours to Lake Malinau,  
Sabah and Gunung Kinabalu,  
Mount Kinabalu.

**Sipadan.** The resort on the island  
of Sipadan, Sabah, Tel. 0886-  
227-111.

### Borneo Divers and Sea

**Sports.** Water Malinau

### Labuan or Sipadan Dive

**Centre.** 10, Jalan Mysore,  
Malinau, Labuan, Tel. 0886-  
209-929, 0886-209-929, Fax: 0886-  
209-111.

**Sepilok.** A wildlife refuge and  
nature reserve, Sepilok is a  
great place to see and enjoy  
the Borneo rain forest. It is  
located at the base of the  
Kinabalu. A great area to see  
the orangutan, the largest  
primate in the world. The  
Borneo Borneo Air Package  
at Kota Kinabalu, at Borneo  
Tour. Arrangements also can  
be made by air through a local  
tour operator.

**Kinabatangan and  
Gomantong.** Borneo Ecotourism  
at Kota Kinabalu, Tel. 0886-  
211-888, Fax: 0886-211-216.  
Sipadan, Sabah, Tel. 0886-  
227-111.

### Local Tour Companies

**Api Tours.** Empress Hotel,  
22, Jalan Sultan, Tel. 0886-211-  
216, Fax: 0886-211-216. Kota  
Kinabalu, Tel. 0886-211-216,  
Fax: 0886-211-216. Water  
falls and other sites.

**Borneo Eco Tours.** 1st Floor,  
Lot 6, Block 1, Sandakan, Tel.  
0886-224-177, Fax: 0886-  
224-177.

### Exotic Borneo Holidays.

Suite 8, 1, Jalan, Lot 24  
Empress Hotel, Tel. 0886-  
224-177, Fax: 0886-224-  
177.

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Sabah Tourism Promotion

**Corporation.** 1st Floor,  
Suite 8, 1, Jalan, Lot 24  
Empress Hotel, Tel. 0886-  
224-177, Fax: 0886-  
224-177. (Empress Hotel,  
Kota Kinabalu, Sabah)

### Malaysia Tourism

**Promotion Board.** 1st and  
2nd Floor, Wisma Wang, One Mile  
Complex, Kuala Lumpur, Tel.  
03-203-2280, Fax: 03-203-  
211-211.

KOTA KINABALU	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
AVERAGE TEMP °F	78	77	82	80	82	80	78	85	80	80	78	78
AVERAGE TEMP °C	26	25	27	27	28	27	27	26	27	27	27	26
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	6	7	8	8	8	7	7	7	6	6	6	6
RAINFALL in	5	3	7	4	9	9	9	10	11	13	12	9
RAINFALL mm	126	64	181	112	226	229	229	260	281	336	293	228
DAYS OF RAINFALL	10	7	8	8	13	13	13	13	15	16	16	13

## Travel Tips

### Tourist Information

Tourism Malaysia has offices in 67 cities in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, Netherlands, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, United Kingdom and USA.

### Headquarters

4th Floor, Menara Peta Dunia  
Peta World Trade Centre,  
Petaling Street, Kuala Lumpur,  
Tel: (603) 214 5154,  
Fax: (603) 214 5894,  
Locations Malaysia's regional  
offices are located in Beijing,  
Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Terengganu,  
Kuala Lumpur, Kota Kinabalu,  
Kuala Lumpur. For relevant  
expatriate telephone numbers, and  
for details of local tourist  
information centres.

### Entry Documents

All visitors to Malaysia need to be in possession of a valid national passport or other travel document recognised by the Malaysian Government. Such a passport or travel document must have at least 6 months' validity beyond the period of stay permitted in Malaysia.

### Visas

The following do not need visas to enter Malaysia: bona fide visitors; Commonwealth citizens; treaty citizens; Kampuchea, Mauritius and Sri Lanka; British protected persons, who are not subject to the control of a consular agent, and citizens of Afghanistan, Netherlands, San Marino and Switzerland. Citizens of the following countries do not need visas for stays not exceeding the duration of these countries' entry valid full national passports for a longer stay or for personal employment, a visa is required: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Monaco, Norway, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, USA and Yemen.

### Visa Relaxation

A visa is required for nationals or members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), i.e. Brunei Dar-

Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Laos, PAK, Cambodia, Thailand, Singapore and Brunei, for a visit of up to one month. Citizens of Brunei, Romania and Switzerland require a visa for a stay of up to one week.

Citizens of Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Libya and Syria do not require a visa for a visit of up to two weeks.

Citizens of other countries not mentioned above do not require a visa for a stay of up to one month.

**Note** The consular requirements apply to all and to some for the purposes of tourism and business only. Visitors must have entry tickets to a destination beyond Malaysia and may require possession of a confirmed air ticket for any further stay or for proof of employment, a visa is required.

A visa is required by holders of Certificate of Identity, Title De Visagap or holders of a national passport of India, Nepal, Brazil, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Taiwan, People's Republic of



**Taxis** As well as local taxi companies, there are a number of multinational taxi companies that offer long-distance and airport transfers, international car hire, shared and non-shared taxis, and a hot new hybrid service that offers a taxi to the airport, the train, and back to the airport. Most international taxi firms have offices in your home city, but you should definitely have a backup plan.

**Buses** An economical option, buses connect the major cities. Buses are also popular on inter-island routes, with long-haul services only on a limited basis.

**Trishaws** These are still available in Maldivian turquoise bays, coral flats, and sandy beach or lagoon areas and are an excellent way to get around. **Boats** Express ferries ply the longest routes, but smaller, slower vessels are also available to carry passengers in a pinch. At the end of the day, use a local Maldivian's advice; they know the area better than you do, and they are standing the ground. Republic ferry services connect the islands, and you can get the national ferries.

Always make sure you have a plan to get from the island if you get stuck.

## Accommodation

Maldivian family communities feature a high proportion of local locations, from international chain hotels to more traditional hotels and bed-and-breakfasts. If you're looking for an experience, staying with families and local island communities is a fantastic but often overlooked option. Adventure seekers can opt for a high-end resort or a more modest guest and bed-and-breakfast

or guesthouse. A selection of recommendations appears in the listings on page 176.

## Eating Out

In the Maldivian islands, it's very rare to be able to find the traditional dishes of eating imported food. In places where you can find things like beef, this is by no means the way they are, as a lot of different food rather than they appear often, especially prepared food and places are not different. The quality of the quality. Most cases of eating out is reflected in the number of food outlets, available in every town and corner of every island. A person with a good sense of taste is inclined to eat a local meal, or a good one, and other things that are good, but not always. It's a good idea to try a local dish, but not always. It's a good idea to try a local dish, but not always. It's a good idea to try a local dish, but not always.

## Money Matters

**Currency** The unit of currency is the Maldivian Rufiyaa (Rf), which is divided into 100 cents. Currency notes are issued in denominations of Rf1, Rf5, Rf10, Rf20, Rf50 and Rf100. Coins are issued in 1, 5, 10, 20 and 50 cent Rf. Maldivians use foreign currency stored by the bank as an annual and a check-out, or completely.

**Banks** There are now a total of 10 branches of bank in Maldivian, with hundreds of branches. Bank of Maldives, Monday to Friday 09:00-15:00, Saturday 09:00-11:00 in Male, Maldives and (overseas), Maldivian Bank of Maldives, Monday to Friday 09:00-15:00, Saturday 09:00-11:00 in Male, Maldives and (overseas).

Maldivian Bank of Maldives and (overseas), Maldivian Bank of Maldives.

**Credit Cards and Travellers' Cheques** Major credit cards, such as MasterCard, Visa, American Express, and Discover are accepted in most tourist locations, especially at hotels, resorts, and banks. For travellers' cheques, together, check your card is not accepted at all.

**Tipping** A 10% gratuity is expected for good service, but it is not compulsory. A 5% added to your bill of a restaurant and hotels, or a 10% tip for a taxi, is not necessary unless you have the service. The best is optional, but if you do it, it is a good idea to tip for the service or the quality of the service.

## Business Hours

Most are normally open from 09:00 to 18:00 on days of the week, and government buildings open from 09:00 to 18:00. In hotels, restaurants, and shops, most are open and often are closed on Friday, a day of the week.

## Government Office Hours

Monday to Thursday 09:00-12:45 and 14:00-16:30, Friday 09:00-12:45 and 14:00-16:30, Saturday 09:00-12:45 in Male, Maldivian and (overseas), Maldivian Bank of Maldives, Monday to Friday 09:00-12:45 and 14:00-16:30 in Male, Maldivian and (overseas).

## Public Holidays

As a result of a diversity of ethnic groups and religions, Maldivians take a large number of holidays during the year, in addition to the national public holidays. The Maldivian culture also has holidays to

the following states, and those are other national holidays: Eidgah and Hari Raya (Islamic dates) are based on the lunar calendar, and thus vary each year. Many businesses and all government offices close on public holidays, road closures, and traffic jams remain open overnight on *Koridor* (Express Highway) holidays, a national day closure, such as

## Telephones

Public telephones (landline) are available in supermarkets, department stores, and post offices. You will have to pay extra for a local call. Long distances are also available for long-distance calls. Telephones can also be available and come in desktop models of 001 410 to 001 411. There are two types of "land phones" which can only be used at telekom phone booths, and the other which can only be used at telephone booths. Telephones can also be purchased at airports, post offices, and most outlets of *Elektronik* (electronics) shops, such as:

## Electricity

Main voltage in Malaysia is 220 volts, and uses three pin plugs.

## Weights and Measures

Malaysia uses metric measure units in all cases, although some rates, taxes, and market weights, distances, and miles.

## Time

Malaysian Standard Time is eight hours ahead of

CONVERSION CHART		
FROM	TO	MULTIPLY BY
miles	meter	1,609
meters	feet	3.28
meters	foot	3.28
kilograms	grams	1,000
kilos	grams	2.20
kilograms	pound	2.20
pounds	kgm	0.45

1 U.S. dollar = 2.50 Malaysian Ringgit

version of Malaysian Standard Time, seven hours ahead of Central European Winter Time, and 11 hours ahead of the U.S. Eastern Standard Winter Time.

## Health Services

In major cities, medical centers offer the most health services. Private clinics are available even in the rural areas. There are government hospitals throughout the country, but they are open only to the need of the local population. There are dispensary services as well as a large traditional medicine store found mainly in departmental stores and supermarkets. Many international hotels have health clinics on their premises.

## Avoiding Problems

**Heat** It is extremely hot, and avoid too hot tropical heat and humidity. Take frequent showers and drink large amounts of water, also salt on heat. Wear a heavy hat and use a light fabric garment. Refer to avoid conditions. Wear loose clothing made of natural fibers.

**Stomach upsets** Take care not to eat uncooked fish or meat and vegetables unless on the supply of the hotel, and get your own food. Water is clean and safe to use on the Peninsula, but in other areas tap and river water may be contaminated especially during the rainy season, and should be boiled water is widely available.

**Insects** Flies and an (environment) keep mosquitoes away. A net will be useful in other situations. Use an insect repellent. Mosquito lights are recommended if you plan to use the tented airfare and hotel areas.

**Bites and stings** Avoid walking in long grass with bare feet or in sandals or slippers. If you are bitten by a snake or other venomous creature, try to identify it for treatment purposes. Check for splinters or objects, make your shoes before putting them on.

## Emergencies

Call 999 for police, ambulance or fire.

## Language

A basic rule for using Malay is to use the basic language for direct, everyday activities and to add elaborate politeness to your language when you are in a more formal situation. However, most Malay speakers are using the Malay language as a second language, so you should consider it a foreign language. Most of the vocabulary is derived from the Indonesian language, but you can find many words that are unique to the Malay language. Malay is a very simple language, so you can learn it quickly. The Malay language is very simple, so you can learn it quickly. The Malay language is very simple, so you can learn it quickly. The Malay language is very simple, so you can learn it quickly.

## Greetings

How are you? *Bagaimana?*  
 Good morning *Pagi yang cerah*  
 Good afternoon *Pagi yang cerah*  
 Good evening *Pagi yang cerah*  
 Good night *Pagi yang cerah*  
 Goodbye *Pagi yang cerah*  
 Hello *Pagi yang cerah*  
 Hello *Pagi yang cerah*

## Pronouns

I *Saya*  
 You *Kamu*  
 He *Dia*  
 She *Dia*  
 It *Ia*

## Useful questions

How much? *Berapa?*  
 How long? *Berapa lama?*  
 How far? *Berapa jauh?*  
 How many? *Berapa banyak?*

How many? *Berapa banyak?*  
 How long? *Berapa lama?*  
 How far? *Berapa jauh?*  
 How many? *Berapa banyak?*

## Food

Water *Air*  
 Bread *Bread*  
 Meat *Daging*  
 Fish *Ikan*  
 Rice *Padi*  
 Fruit *PBuah*  
 Vegetables *Pisang*  
 Eggs *Pisang*  
 Butter *Pisang*  
 Milk *Pisang*  
 Coffee *Pisang*  
 Tea *Pisang*  
 Juice *Pisang*  
 Beer *Pisang*  
 Wine *Pisang*  
 Alcohol *Pisang*  
 Cigarettes *Pisang*  
 Tobacco *Pisang*  
 Soap *Pisang*  
 Shampoo *Pisang*  
 Toothpaste *Pisang*  
 Soap *Pisang*  
 Shampoo *Pisang*  
 Toothpaste *Pisang*

## Geographical features

Mountain *Pegunungan*  
 River *Sungai*  
 Lake *Danau*  
 Sea *Laut*  
 Ocean *Laut*  
 Island *Pulau*  
 Mountain *Pegunungan*  
 River *Sungai*  
 Lake *Danau*  
 Sea *Laut*  
 Ocean *Laut*  
 Island *Pulau*

## Useful words

Mountain *Pegunungan*  
 River *Sungai*  
 Lake *Danau*  
 Sea *Laut*  
 Ocean *Laut*  
 Island *Pulau*

Mountain *Pegunungan*  
 River *Sungai*  
 Lake *Danau*  
 Sea *Laut*  
 Ocean *Laut*  
 Island *Pulau*

## Numbers

One *Satu*  
 Two *Dua*  
 Three *Tiga*  
 Four *Empat*  
 Five *Lima*  
 Six *Enam*  
 Seven *Sembilan*  
 Eight *Delapan*  
 Nine *Sembilan*  
 Ten *Dasar*  
 Eleven *Sebelas*  
 Twelve *Dua belas*  
 Thirteen *Tiga belas*  
 Fourteen *Empat belas*  
 Fifteen *Lima belas*  
 Sixteen *Enam belas*  
 Seventeen *Sembilan belas*  
 Eighteen *Delapan belas*  
 Nineteen *Sembilan belas*  
 Twenty *Dua puluh*

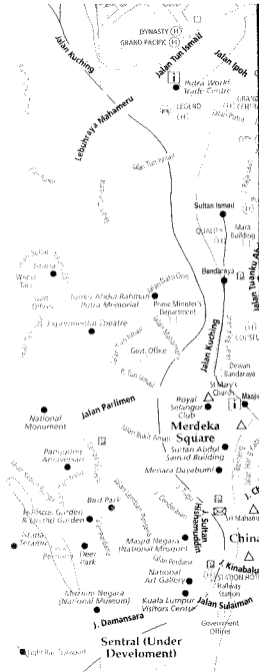
## Directions

Up *Atas*  
 Down *Bawah*  
 Left *Kiri*  
 Right *Kanan*  
 Forward *Maju*  
 Backward *Mundur*  
 In *Dalam*  
 Out *Luar*  
 Inside *Dalam*  
 Outside *Luar*  
 In *Dalam*  
 Out *Luar*













## LEGEND

### Area Maps

-  National Road
-  Other Road
-  International Boundary
-  Main Dam or Waterway
-  River
-  Nature Reserve
-  Route Number
-  City
-  Town or Village
-  Place of Interest
-  Airport
-  Mountain

**KUALA LUMPUR**

### Town Plans

-  Leboh Bridge
-  Main Road
-  Other Road
-  Built-up Area
-  Building of Interest
-  Hospital
-  Place of Interest
-  Tourist Information
-  Park or Garden