

Meandering in Malaysia: Reasons why you should visit



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

8 Jul 2015

Malaysia has never been on my bucket list, but when you begin to research the destination, you'll be surprised at what you will find...

Imagine this: you've been given the opportunity to travel anywhere in the world and you really don't know where you want to go, so you find an atlas, close your eyes, circle your index finger and point to a spot. You open your eyes and discover that you are pointing at Malaysia. You then begin to ask yourself, what can I possibly do in the Southeast Asian country.

To break it down, Malaysia can be seen as having two parts - Peninsular Malaysia, and East Malaysia.

Peninsular (or West) Malaysia has coastlines on both the Straits of Melacca, and the South China Sea, and is connected by a bridge and a causeway to Singapore; this part of Malaysia shares a border with Thailand, and where the capital city of Kuala Lumpur is located.

East Malaysia shares borders with Indonesia and Brunei and is located in the northern half of the island of Borneo.

Here are just a few reasons why you should add Malaysia to your travel list.

Diversity and harmony

Malaysia is largely comprised of Chinese, Indian and indigenous local people making it a hub for culture and multiplicity. Experience a varied culture made up of numerous religions, such as Islam and Christianity, and ethnicities living together peacefully.



Get a real life experience by visiting the Sarawak Cultural Village, Sarawak. This living museum showcases Sarawak's rich cultural heritage. It displays the costumes, handicrafts, lifestyles and traditional dwellings of the state's major ethnic communities, with daily cultural performances.

Find out more at www.scv.com.my.

Cultural celebrations and festivals

There is an array of festivals and celebrations to experience the vibrant local culture. Newly promoted in 2015, the Malaysia Year of Festivals, the local government aims to create "endless celebrations" and acknowledge the diverse nation.



Some of the big celebrations to still take place in 2015 include:

- [Malaysia International Mask Festival](#) which will highlight the uniqueness of the performing arts that uses masks as a prop.
- [Malaysia Contemporary Art Festival](#), a collection of contemporary arts creations dedicated to the independence theme is portrayed during the festival.
- [Borneo International Kite Festival \(BIKF\)](#) is one of the major sports events that attracts overseas participation. This festival unites kite flying enthusiasts to enliven the three-day festival while promoting Bintulu as a tourist destination.
- [Lantern Festival](#) is celebrated on the 15th day of the eighth month of the Chinese calendar each year and is also known as the Mid-Autumn Festival and Moon Cake Festival, traditionally marking the end of the harvest season. Malaysian Chinese celebrate this festival by gathering at home with family while praying, and eating mooncakes, while children parade around with their latest designs of lanterns.
- [Malaysia International Gourmet Festival 2015](#) where you will be able to savour the delicious and diverse range of local cuisine while dining with the family. This programme showcases the diversity of Malaysian cuisine at its best.

For a full list of celebrations, go to www.myfest2015.com.my.

Exotic, local cuisine

Comprising a largely Chinese, Indian and indigenous population, you'll have the chance to experience delicious and exotic local cuisine, such as Acar - a tangy, pickled salad and condiment or ketupat dumplings. A favourite with the locals is the calamansi lime, which is generally used to sour food, giving it a pickled undertone and preserving its flavour. Another exotic fruit that's indigenous to the region is the durian, which is a bright purple or orange colour typically, and difficult to find in other parts of the world.



Outdoor activities

The Malaysian climate is fairly consistent, at approximately 30 degrees Celsius with short-lived showers happening throughout the year - leading to an abundant plant life.

- Kinabalu Park, Sabah. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Kinabalu Park is home to Malaysia's highest mountain and one of Southeast Asia's highest peaks, Mount Kinabalu. A favourite destination among adventurous souls keen to scale its heights, the view from Mount Kinabalu's summit is often described as second to none. The park is also a wonderland of ecological treasures filled with thousands of plant and animal species, including a large number of endemic species. Discover more at www.sabahparks.org.my.
- Kabili-Sepilok Nature Reserve, Sabah. Named after two rivers that flow through it, the Kabili-Sepilok Nature Reserve is home to an interesting and diverse array of wildlife and vegetation, consisting mainly of Dipterocarp and mangrove forests. There are several nature trails that lead through the forest, taking you from tropical highland forest to lowland mangrove swamps. The reserve is also home to the world-famous Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre, where you get to see this endearing species up close and learn more about them. For an overview, go to www.forest.sabah.gov.my.



- Sipadan Island. Rated as one of the world's top diving sites, Sipadan Island boasts a truly magical and breathtaking underwater experience. Situated at the heart of the Indo-Pacific Basin, the centre of the world's richest marine habitat, the oceanic island is surrounded by several exciting dive spots such as the Hanging Gardens, Barracuda Point and the Turtle Cavern. One of its most thrilling features (and certainly not for the faint-hearted) is the Drop Off, where knee-high water suddenly gives way to a 600m drop. Explore more at www.sabahparks.org.my.

While Thailand is best known for its amazing beaches, it's certainly not the only place in Malaysia that you'll find clear, long stretches of pristine beaches and ocean. Along the Kuala Terengganu coast, you'll find a number of protected beaches including Pulau Redang, with its two historic shipwrecks - a diver's paradise.

Natural wonders

Malaysia is home to incredible natural wonders like the world's largest cave chamber, which can be found at Mulu

National Park in Sarawak, where you'll also have the chance to experience a 480m canopy walk. Langwaki Island is another natural wonder for you to explore for an escape from modern civilization. Between the old cottages and 99 islands, you will experience a taste of Malaysia's country magic. You can also ride the cableway to the second largest mountain in Langwaki - Mount Mat Cincang.

Heritage

The colourful heritage of Malaysia can be seen in everything from its people, to its architecture and infrastructure. There are also various games and customs that locals take part in to pique your interest. Silat, for example, is a Malaysian martial art and traditional dance form that has been around for centuries. Today it is practised at weddings and other celebrations and continues to serve as a remnant and celebration of yesteryear.

If you love to shop...

If you love to shop, Kuala Lumpur is the place where a shopaholic must go, because it offers everything ranging from clothes to handmade products. There are several shopping centres, which allow you to shop for yourself, friends and family.



Have the urge? Check out BKLCC, the shoppers paradise stretches from Bukit Bintang to Kuala Lumpur City Centre and will leave you spoilt for choice. The shopping district is well-connected via a covered pedestrian walkway and an efficient network of public transportation. For more about the shopper's haven, go to www.bklccmalaysia.com.

A place for family

If you're looking for a fun-filled family holiday, Malaysia has many options that allows you to get away from your busy, hectic lives.

Sunway Lagoon is one of the good options for families. Just 15 minutes from Kuala Lumpur, here you'll find five different theme parks in one destination, with more than 80 rides and attractions to choose from. Park entertainment and wild encounters offer excitement, laughter and creates a special moment for everyone. Feel the fun at www.sunwaylagoon.com.



The first of its kind in Asia and the first international park in Malaysia, LEGOLAND offers a first-class park experience with

thrilling rides, interactive displays and themed areas.

The park's main attraction is MINILAND, where miniature replicas of Asia's popular landmarks made with more than 30 million LEGO bricks can be seen. Hello Kitty Town, the first Hello Kitty theme park outside Japan, is a must for fans of this popular character. The park's highlights include Black Wonder, a state-of-the-art interactive experience, and Kitty House, an iconic house filled with everything Hello Kitty from top to bottom. To plan your visit, go to www.legoland.com.my.

It's clear that Malaysia thrives with life, entertainment, enjoyment and natural beauty. In addition, the different cultures that merge in the Southeast Asian country is what make every effort to visit Malaysia so worth it.

Further information on Malaysia can be found at www.tourism.gov.my.

ABOUT EVAN-LEE COURIE

Group Editor: Retail and Lifestyle

- ONOMO Hotels - worth the stay - 26 Nov 2019
- There's more to 'sea' than whales in Hermanus - 29 Sep 2015
- [#WomenInBiz]: iGO Travel-ling with Ravelle Lambert - 24 Aug 2015
- Meandering in Malaysia: Reasons why you should visit - 8 Jul 2015
- A night at Premier Hotel Cape Manor - 29 Apr 2015

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>