



Sabah

POP 3.12 MILLION / AREA 76,115 SQ KM

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Kohinoor (p52)
- ➔ Sim Sim Seafood Restaurant (p79)
- ➔ Alu-Alu Cafe (p51)
- ➔ KK Night Market (p326)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Shangri-La's Tanjung Aru Resort & Spa (p50)
- ➔ Mañana (p71)
- ➔ Lupa Masa (p68)
- ➔ Tampat Do Aman (p73)
- ➔ Orou Sapulut (p112)

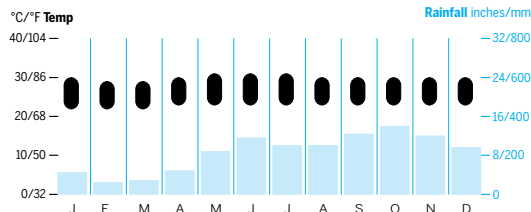
Why Go?

Pint-sized Sabah occupies a relatively small chunk of the world's third largest island, yet what a colourful punch it packs: the treasure of turquoise-fringed desert islands with coral reefs swarming with marine biodiversity; trekkers' paradise Mt Kinabalu reaching 4095m into the clouds; and jungles pulsing with a menagerie of bug-eyed tarsiers, gibbons, pythons, clouded leopards and huge crocs. Around 55% of Sabah is forest, and protected areas like the Maliau Basin and the Danum Valley Conservation Area are more accessible than ever.

Given its compact size, getting from one of Sabah's highlights to the next is eminently doable, plus as a former British colony, English is commonly spoken here, making it extremely traveller friendly. Whether it's pearl hunting in Kota Kinabalu, watching baby orangutans learning to climb at Sepilok, beach flopping on the northern Tip of Borneo, or diving or trekking, your time here will feel like five holidays condensed into one.

When to Go

Kota Kinabalu



Jan–Apr A dry, pleasant time, exploding with celebrations for Chinese New Year.

Mar–Jul The water calms; this is the best time for diving.

Jun–Sep Hot and often (but definitely not always) rainy.



Sabah Highlights

- 1 Diving among wild sea turtles and sharks on the multicoloured reefs of the **Semporna Archipelago** (p98).
- 2 Exploring the misty wilderness of the **Danum Valley Conservation Area** (p92), between scouting for tarsiers, clouded leopards and orangutans.
- 3 Hoofing it over granite moonscapes for the ultimate Bornean sunrise atop **Mt Kinabalu** (p59).
- 4 Breathing in the air of an actual virgin rainforest in the **Maliau Basin Conservation Area** (p108).
- 5 Watching rescued orangutans and sun bears in **Sepilok** (p81).
- 6 Floating down a river through primary jungle to the Batu Punggul rock formation in **Sapulot** (p112).
- 7 Enjoying the thriving art scene of **Kota Kinabalu** (p42).
- 8 Facing off with very large crocs while cruising in a little tin boat down the **Sungai Kinabatangan** (p86).