

# Selangor



Surrounding KL, Selangor has developed rapidly into Malaysia's most urbanised, industrialised and prosperous state. Here you'll find great day trips such as those to the Batu Caves and the Forestry Research Institute of Malaysia, as well as rewarding stopovers, including the pleasantly cool hill station of Fraser's Hill (Bukit Fraser) and the old royal capital of Kuala Selangor, with its wildlife-watching and *kampung* (village) atmosphere.

Cutting a broad commercial swathe west from KL to the coast is Klang Valley, featuring the sprawling commuter residences of Petaling Jaya, which is also home to gargantuan shopping malls, the vast Sunway Pyramid and the enormous wave pool at Sunway Lagoon. Fast-flowing freeways and railways will speed you into Selangor's state capital, Shah Alam, notable for its beautiful blue mosque, and Klang, with its reminders of the old sultanate and vibrant Little India – a gourmand's mecca. On the coast discover the Hma' Meri villages of Pulau Carey hidden amid vast palm-oil plantations or take a ferry to the sleepy fishing community of Pulau Ketam.

South of KL, Malaysia's administrative capital of Putrajaya, less than two decades in the making, is packed with striking architecture and makes for a fascinating day trip. Heading northeast up into the highlands of the Banjaran Titiwangsa mountain range, there are the contrasting delights of Genting Highlands, a purpose-built gambling resort that has its moments, and Kuala Kubu Bharu (KKB), one of the most charming small towns in Malaysia and a great base for trekking and river rafting adventures. For more ideas check out the state's tourism website ([www.tourismselangor.org](http://www.tourismselangor.org)).

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Hiking and bird-spotting in the cool of **Fraser's Hill** (p134)
- Tucking into delicious Indian and Chinese food in historic **Klang** (p139)
- Splashing around in the pools at **Sunway Lagoon** (p138)
- Viewing the impressive new Malaysian architecture of **Putrajaya** (p136) from a boat on its central lake
- Getting a treetop perspective on KL from the thrilling canopy walkway at the **Forestry Research Institute of Malaysia** (p132)
- Climbing the 272 steps to the psychedelic Hindu galleries of **Batu Caves** (p131)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 03, 09

■ POPULATION: 4.74 MILLION

■ AREA: 7960 SQ KM

## History

In the 15th century, Selangor was under the control of Melaka's great *bendahara* (chief minister), Tun Perak. Once Melaka fell to the Portuguese, control of Selangor was hotly contested, partly because of its rich tin reserves. The Minangkabau settlers, who had migrated from Sumatra 100 years earlier, were displaced by Buginese immigrants from Celebes (present-day Sulawesi), who aided Dutch colonisation by hiring themselves out as mercenaries. By the middle of the 18th century, the Buginese had established the current sultanate, based at Kuala Selangor.

A century later the success of the tin trade and the growing wealth of the Chinese communities in the fledgling city of Kuala Lumpur

led to conflicts both among and between the Selangor chiefs and the miners. The outcome was a prolonged civil war, which slashed tin production and saw the destruction of KL. In 1874, with the civil war over, the British made their move to take control. The sultan was forced to accede to the installation of a British Resident at Klang, and for the next 25 years the state prospered, largely on the back of another boom in tin prices.

The most famous of all of the British Residents was Frank Swettenham who, evincing more tolerance and cultural insight than his colleagues, smoothed relations between the sultan and the local chiefs. He cajoled the sultans of four states (Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang) into an alliance

