



Brunei

POP 410,000 / AREA 5765 SQ KM

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Best Places to Eat

- » Taman Selera (p463)
- » Lim Ah Siaw Pork Market (p462)
- » Pondok Sari Wangi (p462)

Best Places to Stay

- » Ulu-Ulu Resort (p472)
- » Brunei Hotel (p461)
- » Pusat Belia (p461)

Why Go?

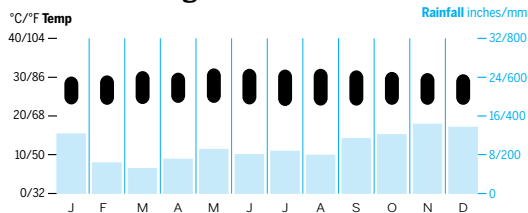
The small sultanate of Brunei almost looks like a geographic comma plunked between Sarawak and Sabah. It certainly forms a conceptual one, because unless you're a petroleum engineer, when folks ask 'Why go to Brunei?' the answer is usually the travelling equivalent of a pause: transfer or stopover.

But there's more here than passport queues. This quiet *darussalam* (Arabic for 'abode of peace') has the largest oilfields in Southeast Asia, and because oil generates money, Brunei hasn't turned its rainforests into palm plantations. Old-growth greenery abounds, especially in verdant Ulu Temburong National Park. Because booze is banned, the citizens of the capital, Bandar Seri Begawan (BSB), are mad for food and shopping.

This tranquil (sometimes somnolent) nation is the realisation of a particular vision: a strict, socially controlled religious state where happiness is found in pious worship and mass consumption. Visit and judge the results for yourself.

When to Go

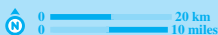
Bandar Seri Begawan



Oct–Dec The rainiest, if coolest, months of the year.

Jan–May February and March are the driest months. National Day is celebrated on 23 February.

Jun–Aug It's hot. The sultan's birthday (15 July) is marked with festivities around the country.



To Pulau
Labuan (35km);
Menumbok,
Sabah (45km)

SOUTH CHINA SEA



Brunei Highlights

- 1 Climbing high into the rainforest canopy and swimming in a cool jungle river at **Ulu Temburong National Park** (p470)
- 2 Tearing along mangrove-lined waterways on a **speedboat** (p00) from BSB to Bangar
- 3 Taking a water taxi to the water village of **Kampung**

Ayer (p456) and then indulging in a boardwalk stroll

- 4 Walking along BSB's newly refurbished **waterfront promenade** (p456)
- 5 Visiting BSB's opulent **mosques** (p456)
- 6 Marvelling at the **Empire Hotel & Country Club** (p461),

a sparkling monument to world-class profligacy

- 7 Relaxing amid rural greenery at **Sumbiling Eco Village** (p470) in Temburong District
- 8 Gorging yourself on the culinary delights of the many restaurants of **BSB** (p462)