



Brunei Darussalam

📍 673 / POP 415,000

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Taman Selera (p56)
- ➔ Wisma Setia Food Court (p56)
- ➔ Tamu Kianggeh (p56)
- ➔ Lim Ah-Siaw Pork Market (p56)

Best Places to Stay

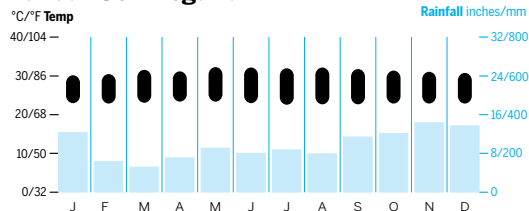
- ➔ Empire Hotel & Country Club (p56)
- ➔ KH Soon Resthouse (p55)
- ➔ Youth Hostel (p55)

Why Go?

The tiny sultanate of Brunei, last remnant of a naval empire that once ruled all of Borneo and much of the Philippines, is famous for its almost unimaginable oil wealth, but it should be no less renowned for having had the foresight and wisdom to preserve its rainforests. Today the country is blessed with some of the most pristine jungle habitats in all of Borneo – you can get a sense of their verdant vastness in Temburong District. And if you take the time to slow down and engage with the locals – in the mellow capital, Bandar Seri Begawan (BSB), as well as in outlying districts – you may find that there's more than first meets the eye in this quiet, verdant and remarkably welcoming *darussalam* (Arabic for 'abode of peace').

When to Go

Bandar Seri Begawan



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

Feb–Mar 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

Don't Miss

Spending time surrounded by the rustling, buzzing, chirping rainforests of Ulu Temburong National Park is one of the highlights of a visit to Brunei Darussalam. After whizzing along *nipa*- (traditional hut) and palm-lined waterways on a turbo-charged speedboat from BSB, you board a *temuai* (shallow-draft Iban longboat), dodging submerged boulders and hanging vines as you make your way upriver through the early morning mist. A steep, slippery climb through virgin jungle takes you to a towering wall of scaffolding: the park's famous canopy walk. Held steady by guy wires, the structure creaks as you make your way up into the jungle canopy, passing bird's nest ferns, orchids and (if you're lucky) the flash of a hornbill's plumage.

ITINERARIES

Two Days

Spend your first day exploring BSB: visit the water village of Kampung Ayer in the morning, learn about the sultanate's rich history and culture at the Brunei Museum, and then explore central BSB and the Royal Regalia Museum's regal bling. Take a water taxi excursion at sunset. Spend your second day on a tour of Ulu Temburong National Park.

Five Days

In addition to the two-day itinerary, spend another day in BSB visiting Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque and more excellent food stalls, followed by a day soaking up the gilded atmosphere of the Empire Hotel & Country Club; add a day relaxing at a beach (eg Muara) or exploring the Temburong District.

Essential Food & Drink

If there's one word you should learn during a visit to Brunei, it's *makan*, meaning 'eat' in Bahasa Malaysia. *Makan* isn't just a word, it's a way of life – because, the locals joke, there's nothing else to do!

BSB's hawker centres serve up some superb – and remarkably inexpensive – local dishes. In the city centre, Tamu Kianggeh has Malay-style chicken mains for just B\$1 as well as mouth-watering pastries, while in the evening you can't beat Taman Selera for BBQ specialities such as satay. Wisma Setia Food Court offers *ambuyat* (gooey sago paste), a local speciality, as well as scrumptious Thai and Indonesian dishes.

AT A GLANCE

- ➔ **Currencies** Brunei dollar (B\$), Singapore dollar (S\$)
- ➔ **Language** Bahasa Malaysia, Melayu Brunei (Brunei Malay), English
- ➔ **Money** ATMs easy to find in towns, but not in Temburong District
- ➔ **Visas** Available to most nationalities. Free for most nationalities, except Australians.
- ➔ **Mobile phones** Prepay local SIM B\$30

Fast Facts

- ➔ **Area** 5765 sq km
- ➔ **Capital** Bandar Seri Begawan (BSB)
- ➔ **Emergency** ambulance ☎991, police ☎993, fire ☎995

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	B\$1.15
Euro Zone	€1	B\$1.75
Malaysia	RM10	B\$3.85
Singapore	S\$1	B\$1.00
UK	UK£1	B\$2.10
USA	US\$1	B\$1.25

Set Your Budget

- ➔ **Dorm bed** B\$10–18
- ➔ **Food stall meal** from B\$1
- ➔ **Museum admission** free
- ➔ **Beer** Brunei is dry

Entering the Country

Daily buses link Sabah (KK) and Sarawak (Miri) with BSB. Ferries connect Pulau Labuan with Brunei (Muara).