



Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei



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PLAN YOUR TRIP

Welcome to Malaysia,
Singapore & Brunei 6

Malaysia, Singapore
& Brunei Map 8

Malaysia, Singapore
& Brunei's Top 20 10

Need to Know 20

If You Like..... 22

Month by Month..... 25

Itineraries 27

Outdoor Adventures. 31

Eat Like a Local 38

Regions at a Glance.... 45



FRESHWATER PRAWNS, ULU
ULU RESORT P486



PETRONAS TOWERS P57

ON THE ROAD

KUALA LUMPUR 50

**SELANGOR
& NEGERI
SEMBILAN 105**

Selangor..... 107

Batu Caves 107

Forestry Research
Institute of
Malaysia (FRIM) 108

Zoo Negara 109

Genting Highlands 109

Fraser's Hill
(Bukit Fraser) 110

Putrajaya 113

Petaling Jaya
& Shah Alam 114

Klang & Pelabuhan

Klang 115

Kuala Selangor 116

Negeri Sembilan..... 117

Seremban 117

Sri Menanti 120

Port Dickson 121

PERAK 123

Ipoh..... 125

Gopeng & Around..... 132

Cameron Highlands ... 134

Pulau Pangkor..... 141

Kuala Kangsar..... 147

Taiping 149

Bukit Larut 153

Kuala Sepetang 154

Belum-Temenggor

Rainforest 154

PENANG..... 156

George Town 158

Greater Penang..... 184

Batu Ferringhi..... 184

Teluk Bahang
& Around 186

Balik Pulau 188

Pulau Jerejak..... 188

Batu Maung..... 189

Kampung Pulau
Betong 189

Teluk Kumbar 189

**LANGKAWI, KEDAH
& PERLIS 190**

Kedah 191

Pulau Langkawi 192

Alor Setar 208

Around Alor Setar 212

Perlis 212

Kangar 212

Around Kangar 213

MELAKA..... 215

Melaka City 217

Around Melaka City... 233

Ayer Keroh..... 233

Pulau Besar..... 233

Alor Gajah 234

JOHOR 235

Johor Bahru 236

Muar 241

Mersing 242

Contents

Seribuat Archipelago	245
Endau-Rompin National Park	247

PAHANG & TIOMAN ISLAND 250

Pulau Tioman 251

The Coast 260

Endau	260
Pekan	260
Kuantan	262
Teluk Chempedak	265
Cherating	265

The Interior 268

Temerloh	268
Around Temerloh	269
Jerantut	269
Taman Negara	271
Kuala Lipis	277
Kenong Rimba State Park	278
Raub	279

EAST COAST ISLANDS, KELANTAN & TERENGGANU.... 281

Kelantan..... 284

Kota Bharu	284
Around Kota Bharu	291

East Coast Islands 292

Pulau Perhentian	292
Pulau Lang Tengah	301
Pulau Redang	301
Pulau Kapas	303

Coastal Terengganu ... 304

Kuala Terengganu	304
Around Kuala Terengganu	310
North of Kuala Terengganu	310
South of Kuala Terengganu	311

SABAH 314

Kota Kinabalu 316

Around Kota Kinabalu..... 330

Tunku Abdul Rahman National Park	330
--	-----

Northwestern Sabah 332

Mt Kinabalu & Kinabalu National Park	333
Around Mt Kinabalu	341
Northwest Coast	343
Offshore Islands	347

Eastern Sabah..... 349

Sandakan	349
Sepilok	355
Sandakan Archipelago	359
Sungai Kinabatangan	360
Lahad Datu	365
Danum Valley Conservation Area	366
Tabin Wildlife Reserve	369
Semporna	369
Semporna Archipelago	372
Tawau	378
Tawau Hills Park	381

Maliau Basin Conservation Area	382
--------------------------------------	-----

Southwestern Sabah 383

The Interior	384
Beaufort Division	386
Pulau Tiga National Park	388
Pulau Labuan	389

SARAWAK 393

Kuching 396

Western Sarawak 413

Bako National Park	413
Santubong Peninsula	417
Kuching Wetlands National Park	419
Semenggoh Nature Reserve	419
Kampung Benuk	420
Kampung Annah Rais	420
Kubah National Park	421
Bau & Around	424
Lundu	425
Gunung Gading National Park	426
Sematan	427

Tanjung Datu National Park	427
----------------------------------	-----

Talang-Satang National Park	428
-----------------------------------	-----

Batang Ai Region	429
------------------------	-----

Central Sarawak 430

Sibu	430
Batang Rejang	434

ON THE ROAD

Bintulu	439
Similajau National Park	441
Niah National Park.....	442
Lambir Hills National Park	444
Miri	445

Northeastern Sarawak 452

Gunung Mulu National Park	452
Kelabit Highlands.....	458
Limbang Division	465

BRUNEI 468

Bandar Seri Begawan..... 470

Tutong & Belait Districts..... 482

Tutong	482
Jalan Labi	482
Seria	483
Kuala Belait.....	483

Temburong District ... 484

Pulau Selirong	484
Bangar & Around	484
Batang Duri.....	485
Ulu Temburong National Park	486

Brunei Survival Guide..... 487

SINGAPORE 488

Singapore Survival Guide..... 553



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ORANGUTANS, SINGAPORE
ZOO P509

Contents

UNDERSTAND

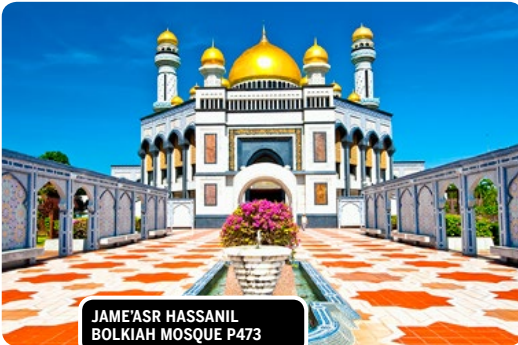
Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei Today	562
History	565
People, Culture & Politics	576
Religion	583
Arts & Media	587
Environment	592

SURVIVAL GUIDE

Directory A-Z	598
Transport	605
Health	610
Language	615
Index	625
Map Legend	638



BLUE MANSION, GEORGE TOWN P159



JAME'ASR HASSANIL BOLKIAH MOSQUE P473

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SPECIAL FEATURES

Outdoor Adventures ...	31
Eat Like a Local	38
Regional Specialities...	79
The Mega-Diversity Region	519

Itineraries



2
WEEKS

Essential Malaysia & Singapore

This itinerary cherry-picks the best of the two countries with a focus on urban adventures but also with the chance to experience the region's amazing biodiversity.

Spend your first three days in Malaysia's capital **Kuala Lumpur (KL)**, where you can explore cultural diversity in Chinatown, marvel at the soaring steel-clad Petronas Towers and discover the treasures of the Islamic Arts Museum.

Next head inland to **Taman Negara National Park**. Even on a two-day visit to this magnificent national park you can clamber across the canopy walkway and do some short jungle hikes. Return to KL and hop on a flight to Penang where three days will give you a good taste of the Unesco World Heritage districts of **George Town** and other island highlights such as Kek Lok Si Temple.

Historic **Melaka**, another Unesco World Heritage Site, deserves a couple of nights but visit midweek to avoid the crowds. Then head across the causeway to **Singapore** where you can spend your final four days enjoying everything from maxing out your credit card at glitzy shopping malls and sampling delicious hawker food to visiting the eye-boggling space age architecture of Marina Bay and the excellent zoo and night safari.



6
WEEKS

The Grand Tour

Starting on the Peninsula and finishing in the wilds of Borneo, this itinerary includes classic sights, some off-the-beaten-track gems and time to relax and take it all in.

Schedule a week in **KL** and surrounds for sightseeing and acclimatisation. Day trips could include Batu Caves and Putrajaya, a showcase of modern Malaysian architecture. The sleepy old royal capital of **Kuala Selangor**, near to which you can observe the dazzling natural display of fireflies, is also only a couple of hours' drive from KL.

After a pit stop in **Ipoh**, which has some great colonial-era architecture and places to eat, your second week is spent in the cooler climate of the **Cameron Highlands**, where you can take walks past verdant tea plantations. Return to the coast and hop across to **Pulau Pangkor**.

The urban delights of **George Town**, on Penang, are up next; the city's Unesco World Heritage district is packed with colourful, fascinating sights. This large island is also Malaysia's number-one food destination. A quick flight away are the resorts, gorgeous beaches and jungle hinterlands of **Pulau Langkawi**.

Into week four and it's time to cross the mountainous spine of the peninsula to **Kota Bharu**, a great place to encounter traditional Malay culture. Island- and beach-hop down the east coast, pausing at **Pulau Perhentian**, **Cherating** and **Pulau Tioman**. **Kenong Rimba State Park** offers jungle adventures without the crowds.

Singapore can easily swallow up a week of shopping, museum-viewing and world-class eating. From here you can fly to **Kuching** in Sarawak, a good base for a longhouse excursion or for arranging a trek in **Gunung Mulu National Park**. Rack up the visa stamps by taking the overland and river route from Sarawak to Sabah via Brunei, stopping in the capital **Bandar Seri Begawan**.

Having made it to Sabah's capital **Kota Kinabalu (KK)**, your final challenge, should you choose to accept it, is to climb **Mt Kinabalu**. Alternatively, it's difficult to resist the chance to eyeball close up the supercute ginger apes at **Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre**.



2 WEEKS

Sabah-Sarawak Sampler

This abridged itinerary for the time-challenged offers a sample of the best of Malaysian Borneo, including top national parks, snaking rivers and time spent lounging on longhouse verandahs.

Start in **KK**, which encapsulates South-east Asian city life on a manageable scale and where you'll be obliged to spend a day or two sorting permits to tackle Sabah's star attraction, **Mt Kinabalu**. Consider a day-trip cruise (including buffet dinner) down one of the tea-brown rivers in the **Beaufort Division**, or learn a little about the local culture at the **Mari Mari Cultural Village**.

Leapfrog by plane from **KK** to **Miri** and then on to **Gunung Mulu National Park**, home to the world's largest caves, and several challenging jungle treks, including the marathon Headhunters Trail. Pass through Miri once more for a flight down to **Kuching**. Sarawak's capital is a real charmer and will easily keep you occupied for several days. Break up your time in town with a visit to **Semenggoh Wildlife Centre**, **Bako National Park** and, if you have time, to a longhouse such as **Annah Rais Longhouse**.

4 WEEKS

Ultimate Borneo

On this grand tour of Borneo tackle the island's top five treks and enjoy some world-class diving and snorkelling plus encounters with endangered wildlife.

From **Kuching** explore the local longhouses and **Bako National Park**. Fly to **Miri**, which is the base for trips to the impressive **Niah National Park**; **Gunung Mulu National Park** for more caves, the heart-pumping trek to the Pinnacles and along the Headhunters Trail; and **Bario**, in the vine-draped Kelabit Highlands.

Travel overland to **Bandar Seri Begawan**, Brunei's friendly capital. Also schedule in the sultanate's **Ulu Temburong National Park**, a pristine sliver of primary rainforest.

Chill out in **KK** before setting your sights on **Mt Kinabalu**. Catch some ape love in **Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre**, followed by a layover in historic **Sandakan**. The mighty Sungai Kinabatangan offers wildlife enthusiasts plenty of photo fodder. If you've got the time trek through the **Danum Valley Conservation Area**. The magnificent dive sites of the **Semporna Archipelago** accessed from **Semporna** provide an ideal climax.

3
WEEKS

Jewels of the North

Idyllic islands, Malay culture, rainforests and hill stations all feature on this tour around the north of Peninsula Malaysia.

Explore **KL** for a few days before heading to the east coast resort of **Cherating**. Move on to **Kuala Terengganu**, with its pretty Chinatown and the Kompleks Museum Negeri Terengganu.

Next come the classic Perhentian islands, accessed from Kuala Besut. **Pulau Perhentian Besar** tends to be less crowded and just as gorgeous as its more popular twin, **Pulau Perhentian Kecil**. Back on the mainland, linger a day or two in **Kota Bharu**, for its museums, cultural events and night market, then head to the remote **Royal Belum State Park** in northern Perak.

Access more Malay culture in Kedah's capital **Alor Setar** before taking the ferry from Kuala Perlis to **Pulau Langkawi** for sunbathing, island-hopping and jungle exploration. Fly to **George Town**, the essential stop on Penang, then cool down in the hill station of **Fraser's Hill** (Bukit Fraser) before returning to KL.

3
WEEKS

Southern Comforts

The southern end of Peninsular Malaysia is no slouch in offering up a diverse range of travel experiences, plus there's easy access to and from **Singapore**, the logical start and finish to this trip.

Leave yourself several days to soak up the island state's manifold attractions. If you're strapped for cash then **Johor Bahru**, just across the causeway, is a cheaper base. It's a decent hangout, not least for street food and duty-free booze.

The lethargic riverside town of **Muar** has a colonial-era district that's worth a look, and can be used as a base for assaults on Gunung Ledang, Johor's highest mountain, located within the **Gunung Ledang National Park**. Recover in Unesco World Heritage-listed **Melaka**, where you can spend several days enjoying the enduring Portuguese and Dutch influence.

Explore the last-remaining stands of lowland forest on the peninsula in **Endau-Rompin National Park**. Stunning **Pulau Tioman** is the epitome of an island paradise. Alternatively, indulge in some island-hopping and diving around the 64 gems of the **Seribu Archipelago**.

Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Body surfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro/MRT/MTR station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Skytrain/Subway station
- Taxi
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



Austin Bush

Penang Austin came to Thailand in 1999 on a language scholarship, and has remained in Southeast Asia ever since. This is his second time contributing to *Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei*, a gig that is arguably Lonely Planet's most delicious. Austin is a native of Oregon and a writer and photographer who often focuses on food; samples of his work can be seen at www.austimbushphotography.com. Austin also wrote the Eat Like a Local and Regional Specialities features of this book.

Read more about Austin at: https://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/osten_th



Anita Isalska

Melaka, Perak Anita is a freelance travel journalist, editor and copywriter. Formerly a Lonely Planet digital editor, Anita surprised no one when she swapped office life for taste-testing street food and prowling beach resorts. Previous Malaysia travels took Anita from leechy Sabah hikes to Ipoh's red bean frappés. Returning to research her most-adored regions, Perak and Melaka, was a joy. Anita writes about travel, adventure, food and culture for a host of international publications;

check out some of her work at www.anitaisalska.com.

Read more about Anita at: <https://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/anitatravels>



Robert Scott Kelly

Selangor & Negeri Sembilan A resident of Kuala Lumpur since 2013, Robert enjoyed the opportunity to explore the states surrounding his home in more detail to update this guidebook. His favourite discoveries: the megaliths of Negeri Sembilan and the traditional wood houses of Kampung Pantai. Robert, a freelance writer, photographer, documentary filmmaker and, now, fledgling podcaster, has also contributed to Lonely Planet titles including Kuala Lumpur, Taiwan, China, Alaska, and Tibet. Check out his latest work on www.robertscottkelly.com.

Read more about Robert at: <https://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/RobertScottKelly>



Simon Richmond

Kuala Lumpur Simon first travelled in the region back in the early 1990s. A lot has changed since, but both Malaysia and Singapore remain among Simon's favourite destinations for their easily accessible mix of cultures, landscapes, adventures and, crucially, delicious food. This is the fifth time the award-winning travel writer and photographer has written for Lonely Planet's *Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei* guide. He's also the author of Lonely Planet's *Kuala Lumpur, Melaka & Penang*

guide as well as a shelf-load of other titles for this and other publishers. Read more about Simon's travels at www.simonrichmond.com and on Twitter and Instagram @simonrichmond. Simon also wrote most of the Plan Your Trip section and the Understand and Survival Guide sections of this book.

Read more about Simon at: <https://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/simonrichmond>



Richard Waters

Sabah Richard is an award-winning journalist and writes about travel for *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Independent* and *Sunday Times*, *Sunday Times Travel Magazine*, *Elle* and *National Geographic Traveller*. He lives with his family in the Cotswolds, UK, and when he's not travelling, loves surfing and diving. Exploring Sabah was an absolute joy, his favourite moments being watching sharks in Sipadan, and seeing the sun rise over the jungle in the Danum Valley. He also writes

a family wellbeing, adventure blog called Soul Tonic for Sanlam Bank. Check it out on: www.sanlam.co.uk/Media/Blogs/Soul-Tonic.asp



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Isabel Albiston

Langkawi, Kedah & Perlis; Sarawak; Brunei Since her first trip to Malaysia, travelling the length of the peninsula by train on an overland journey from Singapore to Nepal, Isabel has grown to love shimmying across rickety bamboo bridges on rainforest hikes. The pursuit of laksa keeps luring her back and she can now confirm Sarawak to be the clear winner in the countrywide contest for the best broth. Isabel is a journalist who has written for a number of newspapers and

magazines including the UK's *Daily Telegraph*.

Read more about Isabel at: <https://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/IsabelAlbiston>



Brett Atkinson

East Coast Islands, Kelantan & Terengganu Following past sojourns in the west of Malaysia, this was Brett's first exploration of the peninsula's eastern edge. Highlights included island hopping from the Perhentians to Pulau Kapas, the street food and night markets of Kota Bharu, and the compact heritage appeal of Chinatown in Kuala Terengganu. Brett is based in Auckland, New Zealand and has covered more than 50 countries as a guidebook author and travel and food

writer. See www.brett-atkinson.net for his most recent work and upcoming travels.

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Greg Benchwick

Johor, Pahang & Tioman Island Greg's been writing about travel both near and far for the better part of the past two decades. He's written dozens of travel guides for Lonely Planet, and is a recognised expert on sustainable tourism. For this edition, he jungle-boated down from Taman Negara, got nuclear drunk in his search for the perfect bar in Cherating and nearly fell off the planet in Tioman.

Read more about Greg at: <https://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/gregbenchwick>



Cristian Bonetto

Singapore Cristian has been chowing his way across Singapore for well over a decade. Countless calories later, the Australian-born writer remains deeply fascinated by the Little Red Dot's dramatic evolution. To date, Cristian has contributed to more than 30 Lonely Planet guides, including *New York City*, *Italy*, *Denmark* and both the Singapore city and pocket guides. His musings have also appeared in a string of publications, including Britain's *The Telegraph* and San Francisco's *7X7*. Follow Cristian on Twitter (@CristianBonetto) and Instagram (rexcat75).

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