



Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei



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PLAN YOUR TRIP

Welcome to Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei	6
Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei Maps	8
Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei's Top 21	10
Need to Know	20
First Time	22
What's New	24
If You Like	25
Month by Month	28
Itineraries	30
Outdoor Adventures	36
Eat & Drink Like a Local	44
Regions at a Glance	51

ON THE ROAD

KUALA LUMPUR	56	Klang & Pelabuhan Klang	118
SELANGOR & NEGERI SEMBILAN	108	Kuala Selangor	120
Selangor	110	Negeri Sembilan	121
Batu Caves	110	Seremban	121
Forest Research Institute Malaysia	111	Kuala Pilah	123
Genting Highlands	111	Sri Menanti	124
Bukit Fraser	112	Port Dickson	125
Putrajaya	115	PERAK	127
Petaling Jaya & Shah Alam	117	Ipoh	129
		Gopeng & Around	136
		Cameron Highlands	138
		Pulau Pangkor	145



MALAYAN TIGER P524



MAGGI GORENG P46



Contents

Kuala Kangsar	150
Taiping	153
Kuala Sepetang	157
Belum-Temenggor Rainforest	158

PENANG 160

George Town	162
Greater Penang	185
Air Itam & Penang Hill ..	185
Batu Ferringhi	186
Teluk Bahang & Around	188
Balik Pulau & Kampung Pulau Betong	190

Southeast Penang Island	192
----------------------------------	-----

LANGKAWI, KEDAH & PERLIS 193

Kedah	194
Pulau Langkawi	195
Alor Setar	211
Around Alor Setar	214
Kuala Kedah	214
Perlis	215
Kangar	215
Around Kangar	216

MELAKA 217

Melaka City	219
Ayer Keroh	237
Alor Gajah	238

JOHOR 239

Johor Bahru	240
Muar	246
Mersing	248
Seribu Archipelago	250
Endau-Rompin National Park	252

PAHANG & TIOMAN ISLAND .. 254

Pulau Tioman	255
The Coast	264
Tanjung Gemok	264
Pekan	264
Kuantan	265
Cherating	270
The Interior	273
Temerloh & Around	273
Jerantut	274

Taman Negara	276
Kuala Lipis	281
Raub	282

PENINSULAR MALAYSIA'S NORTHEAST 284

Kelantan	285
Kota Bharu	285
Around Kota Bharu	293
Terengganu	295
Pulau Perhentian	295
Pulau Redang	303
Pulau Kapas	306
Kuala Terengganu	307
North of Kuala Terengganu	314
South of Kuala Terengganu	315

SABAH 316

Kota Kinabalu	318
Tunku Abdul Rahman National Park	332
Pulau Manukan	332
Pulau Mamutik	332
Pulau Sapi	333
Pulau Gaya	333
Pulau Sulug	334
Northwestern Sabah	334
Mt Kinabalu & Kinabalu National Park	334
Around Mt Kinabalu	342
Northwest Coast	343
Island Getaways	346
Eastern Sabah	348
Sandakan	348
Sepilok	354



PETRONAS TOWERS P57

ON THE ROAD

Sandakan Archipelago	358	Talang-Satang National Park	430
Deramakot Forest Reserve	359	Batang Ai Region	431
Sungai Kinabatangan	360	Central Sarawak	432
Lahad Datu	365	Sibu	432
Danum Valley Conservation Area	367	Batang Rejang	436
Tabin Wildlife Reserve	369	Bintulu	440
Semporna	370	Similajau National Park	443
Semporna Archipelago	371	Niah National Park	445
Tawau	378	Lambir Hills National Park	447
Tawau Hills Park	381	Miri	448
Maliau Basin Conservation Area	382	Northeastern Sarawak	455
Southwestern Sabah	384	Gunung Mulu National Park	455
Interior Sabah	384	Kelabit Highlands	461
Beaufort Division	387	Limbang Division	468
Pulau Tiga National Park	389	BRUNEI DARUSSALAM	470
Pulau Labuan	390	Bandar Seri Begawan	472
SARAWAK	394	Tutong & Belait Districts	484
Kuching	395	Tutong	484
Western Sarawak	415	Jalan Labi	484
Bako National Park	416	Seria	485
Santubong Peninsula	419	Temburong District	485
Semenggoh Wildlife Centre	422	Bangar	486
Annah Rais Longhouse	422	Batang Duri	487
Kubah National Park	423	Ulu Temburong National Park	487
Bau & Around	425	Brunei Survival Guide	488
Lundu	426	SINGAPORE	490
Gunung Gading National Park	427	Singapore Survival Guide	559
Tanjung Datu National Park	429		



MARKET STALL, BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN P472

Contents

UNDERSTAND

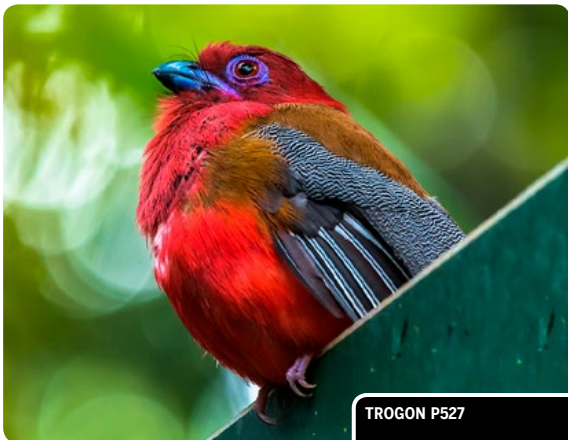
Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei Today	566
History	569
People, Culture & Politics	580
Religion	586
Arts, Architecture & Media	590
Environment	596

SURVIVAL GUIDE

Directory A–Z	602
Transport	610
Health	615
Language	620
Index	629
Map Legend	638



STILT HUTS, TAWAU P378



TROGON P527

SPECIAL FEATURES

Outdoor Adventures ...	36
Eat & Drink Like a Local	44
Regional Specialties ...	83
The Mega-Diversity Region	523

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**. 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 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 **Kuala Lumpur** 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 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 **Kota Kinabalu**, relax for a few days dipping into the art scene of Sabah's capital or heading to the nearby islands of the **Tunku Abdul Rahman National Park**. 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 **Kota Kinabalu (KK)**, which encapsulates Southeast 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** and **Bario** in the vine-draped Kelabit Highlands.

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

Chill out in **Kota Kinabalu** before setting off for **Mt Kinabalu**. Catch some ape love at the **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 (and the dime), head deep into Sabah's green interior for a 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 Peninsular Malaysia.

Explore **Kuala Lumpur** 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 Muzium 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 **Bukit Fraser** (Fraser's Hill) before returning to KL.

3
WEEKS

Southern Comforts

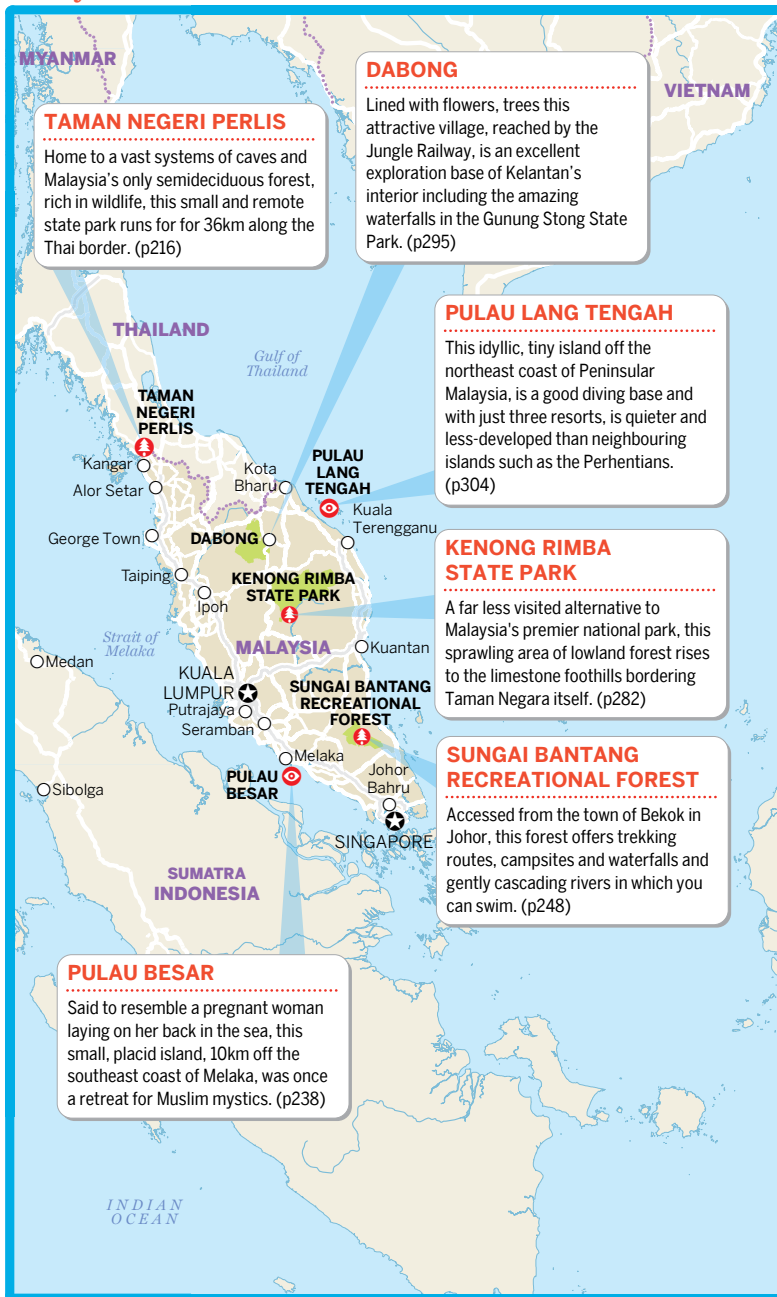
The southern end of Peninsular Malaysia is no slouch in offering up a diverse range of travel experiences, plus there's easy access to and from Singapore, the logical start and finish to this trip.

Leave yourself several days to soak up the island state of **Singapore'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 nearby Legoland.

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 Site-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**.

Malaysia & Brunei: Off the Beaten Track



TAMAN NEGERI PERLIS

Home to a vast systems of caves and Malaysia's only semideciduous forest, rich in wildlife, this small and remote state park runs for for 36km along the Thai border. (p216)

DABONG

Lined with flowers, trees this attractive village, reached by the Jungle Railway, is an excellent exploration base of Kelantan's interior including the amazing waterfalls in the Gunung Stong State Park. (p295)

PULAU LANG TENGAH

This idyllic, tiny island off the northeast coast of Peninsular Malaysia, is a good diving base and with just three resorts, is quieter and less-developed than neighbouring islands such as the Perhentians. (p304)

KENONG RIMBA STATE PARK

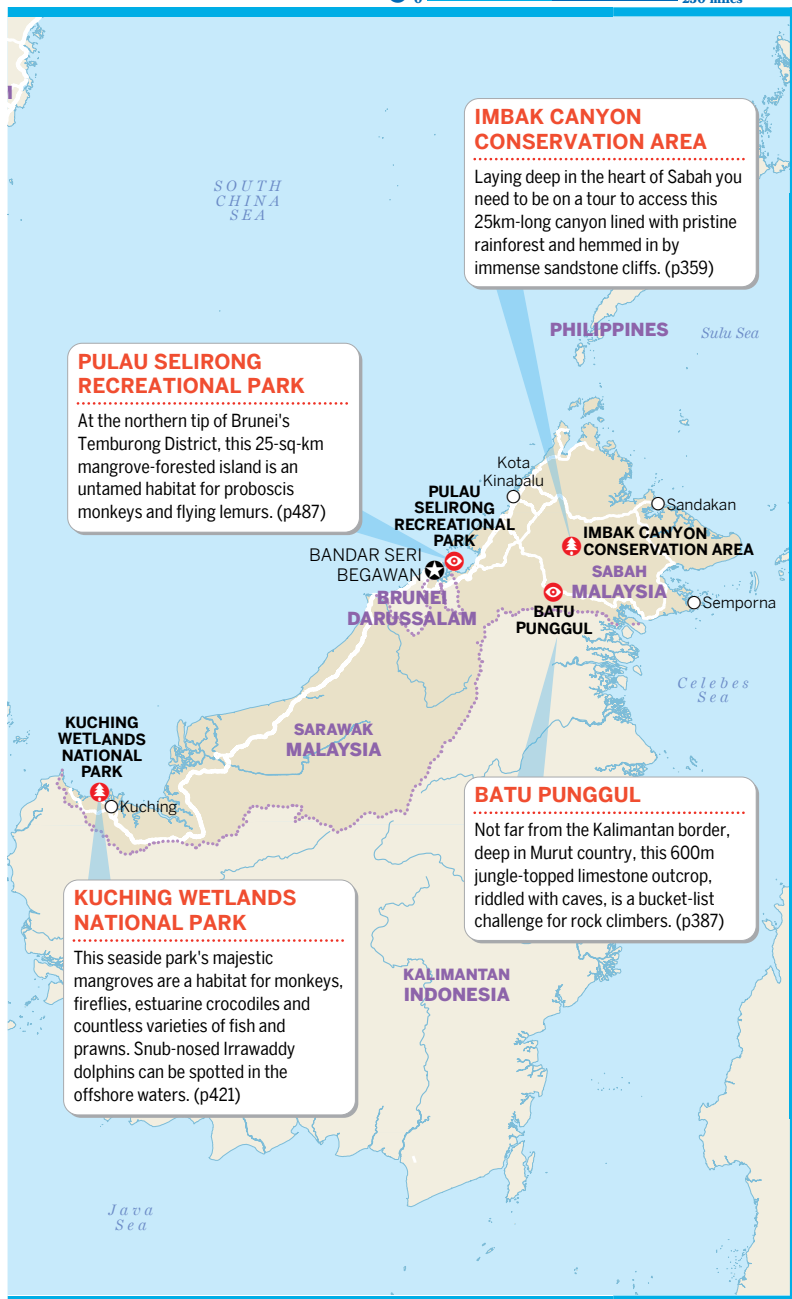
A far less visited alternative to Malaysia's premier national park, this sprawling area of lowland forest rises to the limestone foothills bordering Taman Negara itself. (p282)

SUNGAI BANTANG RECREATIONAL FOREST

Accessed from the town of Bekok in Johor, this forest offers trekking routes, campsites and waterfalls and gently cascading rivers in which you can swim. (p248)

PULAU BESAR

Said to resemble a pregnant woman laying on her back in the sea, this small, placid island, 10km off the southeast coast of Melaka, was once a retreat for Muslim mystics. (p238)



PULAU SELIRONG RECREATIONAL PARK

At the northern tip of Brunei's Temburong District, this 25-sq-km mangrove-forested island is an untamed habitat for proboscis monkeys and flying lemurs. (p487)

IMBAK CANYON CONSERVATION AREA

Laying deep in the heart of Sabah you need to be on a tour to access this 25km-long canyon lined with pristine rainforest and hemmed in by immense sandstone cliffs. (p359)

KUCHING WETLANDS NATIONAL PARK

This seaside park's majestic mangroves are a habitat for monkeys, fireflies, estuarine crocodiles and countless varieties of fish and prawns. Snub-nosed Irrawaddy dolphins can be spotted in the offshore waters. (p421)

BATU PUNGGUL

Not far from the Kalimantan border, deep in Murut country, this 600m jungle-topped limestone outcrop, riddled with caves, is a bucket-list challenge for rock climbers. (p387)

Behind the Scenes

SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK

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THIS BOOK

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Index

A

Abai 364-5
 accessible travel 602
 Singapore 559
 accommodation 22, 602-4,
 see also accommodation
 types individual locations
 booking 603
 budgeting 73, 604
 language , 620-1
 activities 36-43, *see also*
 individual activities
 adventure sports 519
 AIDS 616
 Air Itam 185-6
 air travel 610, 611-12
 airports 21
 Alor Gajah 238
 Alor Setar 211-14, **213**
 ambuyat 479
 amusement parks
 Escape 189
 Jerudong Park
 Playground 476
 Legoland 243
 Melaka Wonderland 237-8
 Skytrex Melaka 237
 Sunway Lagoon 117
 Universal Studios 517-18
 animals 27, 339, 523-32, *see*
 also individual animals
 animism 588
 Annah Rais Longhouse 422-3
 anti-Semitism 589
 apartments 603
 George Town 175
 Kuala Lumpur 77
 aquariums
 Aqaria KLCC 61
 SEA Aquarium 517
 Underwater World 195
 architecture 25, 594-5
 Minangkabau 124

Map Pages **000**
 Photo Pages **000**

area codes 21
 art galleries, *see* galleries,
 museums
 Art Printing Works 95
 arts 590-4, *see also* *individ-*
 ual art forms
asam laksa 46, **47, 83**
 ATMs 606
 ayam *percik* **88**
 Ayer Keroh 237-8

B

Ba Kelalan 467-8
 Badawi, Abdullah 577
 Bako National Park 416-19
 Bakun Dam 440
 Balik Pulau 190-2
 ballooning 116
 Bandar Labuan 390-3, **391**
 Bandar Seri Begawan 472-
 84, 474
 accommodation 477-8
 activities 477
 drinking & nightlife 480-1
 emergencies 481
 entertainment 481
 food 478-80
 internet access 481
 media 481
 medical services 482
 money 482
 postal services 482
 shopping 481
 sights 472-6
 telephone services 482
 tours 477
 travel to/from 482-3
 travel within 483-4
 Bangar 486-7
 bargaining 23
 Bario 462-4
 Bario rice 466
 Batang Ai 431-2
 Batang Duri 487
 Batang Rejang 436-40
 bathrooms 607-8

batik courses 71, 270, 288
 bats 446
 Batu Caves 17, 110-11, **17**
 Batu Gajah 137
 Batu Maung 192
 Batu Punggul 16, 387, **16**
 Bau 425-6
 Bawang Assan Longhouse
 Village 432
 beaches
 Batu Ferringhi 186-8
 Beserah Beach 266
 Pantai Cahaya Bulan 293-4
 Pantai Cenang 195
 Pantai Kok 197-8
 Pantai Pasir Hitam 199
 Pantai Pasir Tengkorak 198
 Pantai Seri Kenangan 484
 Pantai Tengah 196-7
 Perangan Pantai
 Muara 476
 Pulau Libaran 359
 Pulau Mamutik 332
 Pulau Manukan 332
 Pulau Perhentian 298
 Pulau Sapi 333
 Sentosa Island 517
 Tanjung Aru 322, 328
 Teluk Kumbar 192
 Tempurung 388
 Tip of Borneo 345
 bears 355
 Beaufort 387-8
 Beaufort Division 387-9
 bedbugs 616
 bees 618
belacan **87**
 Belaga 439-40
 Belait 484-5
 Belum-Temenggor
 Rainforest 158-9
 Besar 298-300
 bicycle travel 612, *see*
 also cycling
 Bidong Island 310, 314, **528**
 Bilit 363

Bintulu 440-3, **442**
 bird-watching 27
 Danum Valley
 Conservation Area 368
 Gunung Mulu
 National Park 455
 Jurong Bird Park 515
 KL Bird Park 63
 Labuan Bird Park 391
 Vale Eco Center 145
 birds 527
 birds nests 361
 boat cruises
 Kuching 404
 boat travel 611, 612
 boat trips 43
 Bako National Park 417-18
 Bandar Seri Begawan 477
 Kuching 404
 Sabah 361
 Similajau National
 Park 443
 Taman Negara 278
 books 566, 584, 586
 history 570, 571, 573, 575,
 577, 578
 border crossings
 Brunei Darussalam 393,
 454, 482, 483
 Indonesia 236, 245, 381,
 414, 467, 562
 Singapore 246
 Thailand 211, 214, 215, 293
 Brunei Darussalam 54,
 470-89, **471**
 accommodation 470, 489
 budgeting 488-9
 climate 470
 emergencies 489
 food 92, 470, 488
 highlights 471
 holidays 489
 legal issues 489
 LGBT+ travellers 489
 media 595
 money 488
 people 583

Brunei Darussalam
continued
 politics 585
 postal services 489
 telephone services 489
 time 489
 tourist information 489
 travel seasons 470
 visas 489
 weather 470
 women travellers 489

Buddhism 586-7
 Buddhist temples
 Buddha Tooth Relic Temple 501
 Dhammikarama Burmese Buddhist Temple 170
 Dharma Realm Guan Yin Sagely Monastery 62
 Kek Lok Si Temple 186
 Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery 514
 Puh Toh Tze Buddhist Temple 321-2
 Puu Jih Syh Temple 349
 Sam Poh Temple 139
 Sin Sze Si Ya Temple 63
 Thean Hou Temple 66-7
 Tumpat 294
 Wat Buppharam 171
 Wat Chayamangkalaram 169-70
 Wat Nikrodharam 212
 budgeting 21, 604, 605
 Brunei Darussalam 488-9
 Singapore 559, 560

Bukit Fraser 112-15, **113**
 Bukit Larut 158
 Bukit Tambun 191
bumiputra 576
 bus travel 610-11, 612
 business hours 21, 606
 Singapore 560
 butterflies 67, 190, 531
 Butterworth 185

C

Cameron Highlands 12, 138-45, **140, 12**
 accommodation 141-3
 drinking 143-5
 food 143-5
 information 144-5
 sights 139-41
 tours 141

Map Pages **000**
 Photo Pages **000**

travel to/from 145
 travel within 145

camping 603
 canopy walks 368
 car travel 612-13
 carbon emissions 598, 610
 cartoons 594
 cathedrals, *see* churches & cathedrals
 cats 403
 caves 27
 Agop Batu Tulug 360
 Batu Caves 17, 110-11, **17**
 Clearwater Cave 456
 Dabong 295
 Deer Cave 456, 531, **530**
 Fairy Cave 426
 Gomantong Caves 360-1
 Great Cave 445, 446
 Gua Charas 268
 Gua Kelam 216
 Gua Tempurung 136
 Kek Look Tong 130
 Lang Cave 456
 Langgah Cave 457
 Painted Cave 445
 Perak Tong 130, **26**
 Pungitong Caves 387
 Sam Poh Tong 130
 Sleeping Buddha Cave 268
 Taman Negeri Perlis 216
 Wind Cave (Bau) 425-6
 Wind Cave (Gunung Mulu National Park) 456

caving 40-1, 426, 457
 cell phones 20
 cemeteries
 Bukit China 226
 Chinese Cemetery (Sandakan) 349
 Japanese Cemetery (Sandakan) 349
 Labuan War Cemetery 391
 Protestant Cemetery 169

char kway teow **86**
 Cherating 270-2, **271**
 children, travel with 72, 604, 618-19
 Chiling Waterfalls 114
 China House 178
 Chinatown
 Kuala Lumpur 62-3, 73-6, 82-93, 98-9, 102
 Kuala Terengganu 309-10
 Kuching 401-2, 403
 Melaka City 224-5
 Chinese opera 592
 Chinese people 580

churches & cathedrals
 All Saints Church 153
 Christ Church 220
 St Andrew's Cathedral 498-9
 St Michael's & All Angels Church 349-50
 St Paul's Church 220-1
 St Peter's Church 226
 cinema 592-3, *see also* films
 clanhouses 163
 climate 20, 28-9, *see also individual regions*
 climate change 610
 clothing 22
 clouded leopards 524, **524-5**
 clubs 549
 coffin caves 360
 Confucianism 586-7
 conservation, *see* environmental issues
 consulates 604-5
 cooking courses 45, 71, 226-7, 288, 323
 Kuching 405
 Penang 171
 Singapore 522
 coral 528, **528-9**
 costs 21
 courses, *see also individual locations*
 batik 71, 270, 288
 cooking 45, 71, 171, 226-7, 288, 323, 405, 522
 crabs 547
 crafts 27, 594
Crazy Rich Asians 593
 credit cards 606
 Singapore 560
 crocodiles 443
 culture 580-5
 currency 20, 606
 Brunei Darussalam 488
 Singapore 560
 customs regulations 604
 Singapore 559
 cycling 37, 612
 Kuala Lumpur 70-1

D

Dabong 295
 dams 598-9
 dangers, *see* safety
 dance 591
 Danum Valley Conservation Area 367-9
 Darul Hana Bridge 395
 Dayak people 582-3
 deforestation 596-7

dengue fever 616
 departure tax 611
 diarrhoea 616-17
 disabilities, travellers with 602
 diving & snorkelling 11, 13, 41, 528
 Bandar Seri Begawan 477
 Kota Belud 344
 Labuan 391-2
 Miri 448
 Pulau Kapas 306
 Pulau Langkawi 202
 Pulau Perhentian 296-7
 responsible diving 43
 safety 617
 Semporna Archipelago 373
 Tanjung Datu National Park 429
 Tioman Island 257, 256-8
 Tip of Borneo 345
 tours 322-4
 drama 591
 drinking & nightlife *see individual locations*
 drinks, *see* food
 driving *see* car travel
 driving licences 613
 Singapore 563
 durian 49, **48**

E

East Coast Malaysia, *see* Peninsular Malaysia's Northeast, Pahang, Tioman Island
 economy 567
 ecosystems 532
 electricity 602, 604
 Singapore 559
 elephants 273, 527
 embassies 604-5
 Brunei Darussalam 489
 Singapore 559
 emergencies 21
 language 622
 Emergency 574
 Endau-Rompin National Park 252-3, **253**
 entertainment, *see individual locations*
 environmental issues 596-600, 610
 websites 597, 598, 600
 etiquette 23, 46
 Eurasian people 581-2
 events, *see* festivals & events
 exchange rates 21

F
 fasting 50
 festivals & events 17, 28-9,
see also music festivals,
individual locations,
individual festivals
 Islamic 587
 films 566, 577
 fireflies 120, 314
 fish 528
 flying foxes 527, **527**
 folk medicine 619
 food 23, 83-92, **10-11**,
23, 83-92, *see also*
cooking courses, *indi-*
vidual foods, *individual*
locations
 blogs 80
 budgeting 605
 Burmese 539
 etiquette 46
 food courts 545
 language 621-2
 street food 11, 45-50, 179
 Free Tree Society 96
 fruit 49

G
gado gado 380
 galleries 26-7, *see also*
 museums, street art
 Art Porters 503
 Bank Negara Malaysia
 Museum & Art
 Gallery 69
 Batik Painting Museum
 Penang 165-6
 Galeri Petronas 61
 Gillman Barracks 516
 Hin Bus Depot 169
 ILHAM 57
 Junglebluesdream Art
 Gallery 462
 Kampong Ayer Cultural
 & Tourism Gallery 473
 National Gallery Singa-
 pore 19, 497, **19**
 National Visual Arts
 Gallery 67-9
 Peranakan Photo
 Gallery 310
 Sabah Art Gallery 319
 Sekeping Tenggara 67
 Zheng He Duo Yun
 Xuan 225
 gardens, *see* parks &
 gardens
 Gardens by the Bay 491,
 496-7, **26**
 gay travellers, *see* LGBT+
 travellers

Genting Highlands 111-12
 geography 596
 geology 334-5
 George Town 12, 24, 162-
 85, **164-5**, **168**, **170**, **12**
 accommodation 173-6
 drinking & nightlife 180-1
 entertainment 181-2
 food 177-80
 internet access 183
 medical services 183
 money 183
 postal services 183
 shopping 182-3
 sights 162-71
 tourist information 183
 travel to/from 183-4
 travel within 184-5
 walking tour 168, **168**
 gibbons 524
 Gillman Barracks 516
 Golden Mile Complex 539
 golf 519
 Gopeng 136-8
 government 579
 guesthouses 603
 Gunung Bengoh 426
 Gunung Mulu National Park
 455-61, **39**

H
 Hari Raya Aidil Fitri 473
 hawkers stalls, *see* street
 food
 health 615-19
 websites 615
 heat 617
 hepatitis 616
 high tea 540
 hiking 15, 36-7, 38
 Bako National Park
 417-18
 Batang Ai National
 Park 431
 Bukit Fraser 112-13
 Cameron Highlands 139
 Danum Valley Conserva-
 tion Area 367-8
 guides 458, 464
 Gunung Gading National
 Park 427-8
 Gunung Mulu National
 Park 455-9
 Kelabit Highlands 466-7
 Kuala Lipis 281
 Kubah National Park 424
 Lambir Hills National
 Park 447
 Limbang Division 468

Maliu Basin Conserva-
 tion Area 382
 Matang Wildlife
 Centre 425
 Mt Kinabalu 335-9
 Niah National Park 445
 Penang National Park 189
 preparation 278
 Pulau Perhentian 297-8
 safety 38, 258, 278, 367
 Similajau National
 Park 443
 Sungai Kinabatangan 362
 Taman Negara 276-7
 Tanjung Datu National
 Park 429
 Tioman Island 258
 tours 322-4
 Ulu Temburong National
 Park 488
 Hindu temples
 Arulmigu Rajamariam-
 man Devasthanam 241
 Arulmigu Sri Rajakaliam-
 man 241
 Sri Mahamariamman
 Temple 63
 Sri Mariamman
 Temple 171
 Sri Poyatha Venayagar
 Moorthi Temple 225
 Sri Srinivasa Perumal
 Temple 505-6
 Sri Subramaniam
 Thuroopathai Amman
 Alayam 226
 Sri Vadapathira Kaliam-
 man Temple 504-5
 Sri Veeramakaliamman
 Temple 504
 Hinduism 587
 historic buildings & sites
 8 Heeren Street 225
 Astana 404
 Balai Besar 212
 Balai Nobat 212
 Batu Bersurat 147
 Blue Mansion 162-3
 Bukit Malawati 120
 Fort Cornwallis 167
 Hock Teik Cheng Sin
 Temple 166
 Kota Belanda 147
 Loke Mansion 69
 Master Mat's House 97
 Old Court House
 Complex 400
 Old KL Train Station 67
 Pinang Peranakan
 Mansion 163-4
 Porta de Santiago 224

Rumah Penghulu Abu
 Seman 61
 Sandakan Memorial
 Park 348-9
 St Francis' Institution
 Melaka 221
 Stadthuys 219-20
 Teck Soon Heritage
 House 309-10
 TT5 Tin Dredge 137
 Villa Sentosa 225
 history 569-79
 books 570, 571, 573, 575,
 577, 578
 Borneo 572
bumiputra 576
 Dutch rule 570-1
 East India Company 571
 Emergency 574
 ethnic tensions
 574, 575
 GE13 578
 Kedah 195
 Kuala Lumpur 57
 lost flights 578-9
 Melaka 218-19
 Melaka Empire 570
 Penang 161-2
 Perak 129
 Portuguese rule 570-1
 Sabah 334
 Sarawak 395
 Selangor & Negeri
 Sembilan 110
 Singapore 491
 websites 574, 576
 WWII 573
 hitching 613
 HIV 616
 holidays 606-7
 Brunei Darussalam 489
 Singapore 560-1
 homestays 364
 honey 140-1
hor fun **86**
 hornbills 527, **526**
 hostels 603
 hotels 603
I
 Ibrahim, Anwar 566, 577-8
ikan patin **88**
 Imbak Canyon Conserva-
 tion Area 359
 Indian people 581
 influenza 616
 insurance 605
 internet access 605
 Singapore 559

internet resources,
see websites

Ipoh 129-36, **132-3**
accommodation 131-3
activities 131
drinking & nightlife 135
food 133-5
shopping 135
sights 130
tours 131
travel to/from 135-6
travel within 136
Islam 567, 570, 586
Islamic festivals 587
islands 27, *see also Pulau*
entries
itineraries 30-5, **30, 31**,
32, 33, 34-5
Singapore 497

J

Jalan Labi 484-5
jellyfish 203
Jerantut 274-5, **275**
Jerudong 476
Johor 52, 239-53, **240**
accommodation 239
climate 239
food 89, 239
highlights 240
travel seasons 239
weather 239
Johor Bahru 24, 240-6, **242**
Jonker Walk Night Market
18, **18**
jungles 524

K

Kampong Ayer 17, 472-3, **17**
Kampung Air Batang
259, 260
Kampung Baru 97
Kampung Benuk 423
Kampung Genting 259, 262
Kampung Juara 259, 261
Kampung Kuala Tahan 278-9
Kampung Mukut 259, 262
Kampung Nipah 259, 262
Kampung Papan 137
Kampung Paya 259, 262
Kampung Pulau
Betong 190-2
Kampung Salang 259, 260-1
Kampung Tekek 259-60
Kangar 215-16

Kapit 437-9, **438**
kari kepala ikan **90**
kayaking 41-3
Kebun-Kebun Bangsar 96
Kecil 300-3
Kedah 52, 193-4, 194-215,
194
climate 193
food 87
highlights 194
history 195
travel seasons 193
weather 193
Kelabit Highlands 15,
461-8, **15**
Kelantan 285-94
Keningau 386
Kenong Rimba State
Park 282
kerangas 532
kidnappings 376
Kinabalu National
Park 334-42
Kinabatangan Orangutan
Conservation Project 361
Kinabatangan River 360-5
Kinta Valley 137
Klang 118-20
Kota Belud 344
Kota Bharu 19, 285-93,
289, 19
accommodation 288-90
courses 288
drinking & nightlife 292
festivals & events 288
food 290-2
information 292
shopping 292
sights 285-8
tours 288
travel to/from 292
travel within 293
Kota Kinabalu 318-31, **320**,
85, 92
accommodation 324-6
activities 322-4
cuisine 326
drinking & nightlife 328-9
emergencies 329
food 326-8
immigration 329
laundry 329
medical services 329
money 329
postal services 329
shopping 329
sights 318-22
tourist information
329-30
tours 322-4

travel to/from 330-1
travel within 331
Kota Tinggi 248
Kuala Besut 302
Kuala Kangsar 150-3, **152**
Kuala Kedah 214-15
Kuala Keniam 279
Kuala Kubu Bharu 114
Kuala Lipis 281-2
Kuala Lumpur 18, 51, 56-
107, **58-9, 60, 64-5, 68**,
70, 74-5, 78, 18, 90-1
accommodation 56,
72-9, 105
activities 69-71
climate 56
courses 71-2
drinking & nightlife 97
entertainment 100-1
festivals & events 72
food 56, 79-82, 91, 93-7
for children 72
highlights 58-9
history 57
immigration 104
internet access 104
itineraries 62
LGBT+ travellers 100
media 104
medical services 104
money 104
postal services 104
shopping 101-4
sights 57-69
tourist information 104
travel seasons 56
travel to/from 104-5
travel within 105-7
weather 56
Kuala Perak 279
Kuala Pilah 123-4
Kuala Selangor 120-1
Kuala Sepetang 157-8
Kuala Terengganu 307-
14, **308**
Kuantan 265-9, **266**
Kubah National Park 423-5
Kuching 14, 395-415,
398-9, 14
accommodation 406-8
activities 404-5
drinking & nightlife 411
embassies &
consulates 412
emergencies 412
festivals & events 405-6
food 408-11
laundry 412-13
medical services 413

money 413
police 413
postal services 413
safety 412
shopping 411-12
sights 395-404
tourist information 413
tours 405
travel to/from 413-14
travel within 415
history 415
visas 413
Kuching Wetlands National
Park 421
Kudat 344-5
kuih **85**

L

Lahad Datu 365-7
language 20, 23, 620-4
Layang Layang 347-8, **42**
Lee Kuan Yew 567
leeches 367, 617
legal matters 605
Brunei Darussalam 489
Singapore 559
legends 204
Legoland 243
Lenggong Valley 24, 151
leopards 524
lesbian travellers, *see*
LGBT+ travellers
LGBT+ travellers 100, 605-6
Brunei Darussalam 489
Singapore 551
libraries
National Library
(Singapore) 500
lice 617-18
Limbang Division 468-9
literature 590-1, *see*
also books
Long Pasia 385
longhouses 15, 583,
603-4, **15**
Annah Rais Longhouse
422-3
Bario Asal Longhouse 461
Batang Rejang basin 444
Bawang Assan Long-
house Village 432
Belaga 439
Labi Longhouses 484-5
Lundu 426-7

M

macaques 418
Mah Meri Cultural Village 119
malaria 616
Malay people 580

- Maliau Basin 383
 Maliau Basin Conservation Area 382-3
 mangroves 532
 maps 606
 Marang 315
 Marina Bay Sands 499
 markets 19, 102, **84-5, 86-7**
 Bangsar Sunday Market 93
 Bau 426
 Bazaar Baru Chow Kit 102
 Chinatown Wet Market 102
 George Town 176
 Jonker Walk Night Market 18, **18**
 Kapit 437
 Kota Kinabalu 318
 Kuala Terengganu 309
 Kuching 404, 410
 Masjid India Pasar Malam 93
 Melaka City 232
 Miri 448
 Pudu Market 102
 Pulau Langkawi 208
 Singapore 505, 511
 massage
 Singapore 519-21
 media 595
 medical services 615
 medicine, traditional 619
mee jawa 380
mee rebus **88-9**
 megaliths
 Bario 463
 Pengkalan Kempas Megalith Site 125
 Melaka 18, 52, 217-38, **218, 18**
 accommodation 217
 climate 217
 entertainment 24
 food 89, 217
 highlights 218
 history 218-19
 travel seasons 217
 weather 217
 Melaka City 219-37, **220, 222-3**
 accommodation 228-30
 activities 226
 drinking & nightlife 233-4
 entertainment 234
 festivals & events 227-8
 food 230-3
 information 236
 shopping 234-6
 sights 219-26
 tours 227
 travel to/from 236-7
 travel within 237
 memorials, *see* monuments & memorials, WWII sites & memorials
 Merang 314
 Mersing 248-50, **249**
 Minangkabau people 124
 Miri 448-55, **450**
 mobile phones 20
 Mohamad, Mahathir 566, 575-6, 579
 money 20, 21, 606
 bargaining 23
 Brunei Darussalam 488
 exchange rates 21
 Singapore 560
 tipping 23
 monkeys 356, 389, 418, 524, **525**
 monuments & memorials
 Billionth Barrel Monument 485
 German Girl Shrine 511
 Great Cat of Kuching 403
 Kota Mahsuri 199
 Kranji War Memorial 517
 Kucing Kucing 403
 Kudasang War Memorial 342
 Melaka Malay Sultanate Water Wheel 221
 Memorial Stone 388
 National Monument 66
 Pialungan Sandakan-Ranau Death March Memorial 342
 Sunsuron Guritom 385
 Tom Harrisson Monument 462
 mosques 25
 Abdul Gafoor Mosque 505
 City Mosque (Kota Kinabalu) 319-20
 Indian Mosque 402
 Masjid A R Rahman Pulau Perhentian 296
 Masjid Diraja Sultan Suleiman 118
 Masjid Jamek Sultan Abdul Samad 62
 Masjid Kampung Hulu 225
 Masjid Kampung Kling 225
 Masjid Kapitan Keeling 167-9
 Masjid Negara 67
 Masjid Negeri Sembilan 122
 Masjid Selat Melaka 219
 Masjid Sultan Ahmad Shah 265
 Masjid Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah 117
 Masjid Tengku Tengah Zaharah 310
 Masjid Ubudiah 151
 Masjid Zahir 211
 Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque 17, 472, **17, 589**
 Putra Mosque 115
 Semporna Mosque 370
 Sultan Abu Bakar Mosque 241
 Sultan Mosque 507
 Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin Mosque 115
 Zainal Abidin Mosque 310
 mosquitoes 280
 motorcycle travel 612-13
 mountain climbing 37-40, 335-9
 Mt Kinabalu 13, 334-42, 532, **337, 340, 13, 532**
 accommodation 339-41
 climbing 335-9
 flora & fauna 339
 food 341
 geology 334-5
 history 334
 planning 335
 travel to/from 341-2
 Mt Trusmadi 385-6
 Muar 246-8
 Muhammad V, Sultan 568
 multiculturalism 584
 murals 24, 247, 501, *see also* street art
 museums 26, *see also* galleries
 Agnes Keith House 348
 Art Museum 403
 Asia Camera Museum 166
 Asian Civilisations Museum 497-8
 Baba House 501
 Baba & Nyonya Heritage Museum 224-5
 Bank Negara Malaysia Museum & Art Gallery 69
 Battlebox 498
 Brunei Darussalam
 Maritime Museum 475
 Brunei Museum 474-5
 Cathay Gallery 509
 Changi Museum & Chapel 510
 Cheng Ho Cultural Museum 225
 Chetti Museum 226
 Chinatown Heritage Centre 501
 Chinese Heritage Museum 241
 Chinese History Museum 400
 Dusun Museum 385
 Forestry Museum 485
 Former Ford Factory 24, 513-14
 Fort Margherita 404
 Fort Siloso 517
 Fort Sylvia 437
 Galeri Diraja Sultan Abdul Aziz 118
 Galeri Sultan Abdul Halim 212
 Galeria Perdana 199
 House of Yeap Chor Ee 166
 Images of Singapore Live 518
 Indian Heritage Centre 503-4
 Interpretation Centre (Bako National Park) 416
 Interpretation Centre (Matang Wildlife Centre) 425
 Interpretation Centre (Similajau National Park) 443
 Islamic Arts Museum 63
 Islamic Heritage Museum 402
 Istana Batu 288
 Istana Heritage Gallery 509
 Istana Jahar 285
 Istana Kenangan 151-2
 Istana Lama 124
 Katong Antique House 511
 Klang Fire Station 118
 Komik Asia 169
 Kompleks Muzium Negeri Terengganu 310
 Labuan Marine Museum 390-1
 Labuan Museum 390
 Laman Padi 195
 Lau King Howe Memorial Museum 432
 Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum 515-16
 Lenggong Archaeological Gallery 151

museums *continued*

- Limbang Regional Museum 468
 Mahathir's Birthplace 212
 Malay Heritage Centre 507
 Malay Technology Museum 473-4
 Mari Mari Cultural Village 319
 Maritime Museum & Naval Museum 220
 Monsopiad Cultural Village 320-1
 Mulu Discovery Centre 455
 Museum of Islamic Civilisation 321
 Muzium Darul Ridzuan 130
 Muzium Diraja Kedah 212
 Muzium Islam 285
 Muzium Kota Kayang 215
 Muzium Negeri 212
 Muzium Negeri Kelanta 285
 Muzium Negeri Sembilan 121-2
 Muzium Padi 214
 Muzium Perak 153
 National Museum (Malaysia) 63
 National Museum of Singapore 498
 Natural History Museum 403
 Niah Archaeology Museum 445
 NUS Museum 515
 Oil & Gas Discovery Centre 485
 Pahang Art Museum 265
 Penang Museum 167
 Peranakan Museum 498
 Petroleum Museum (Miri) 448
 Petrosains 61
 Raneé Museum 24, 400
 Red Dot Design Museum 24, 499
 Royal Abu Bakar Museum 241
 Royal Museum 67
 Royal Regalia Museum 472
 Rungus Museum 345
 Sabah Museum 318-19
 SAM at 8Q 500

Map Pages **000**
 Photo Pages **000**

- Sarawak Cultural Village 419-20
 Sarawak Museum 402
 Sarawak Textile Museum 401
 Sibru Heritage Centre 432
 Singapore City Gallery 503
 Sultan Azlan Shah Gallery 151
 Sultanate Palace 224
 Teochew Puppet & Opera House 166
- music 591-2
 music festivals
 Borneo Jazz 449
 Penang Island Jazz Festival 187
 Rainforest World Music Festival 406

N

- nasi kerabu* **89**
nasi kuning 380
 National Gallery Singapore 19, **19**
 national parks & nature reserves 25, 27, 40
 Bako National Park 416-19
 Batang Ai National Park 431
 Bukit Gemok Forest Reserve 378
 Bukit Mas Nature Reserve 468
 Bukit Patoi Recreational Park 486
 Bukit Timah Nature Reserve 514
 Cape Rachado Forest Reserve 125
 Chek Jawa Wetlands 511
 Crocker Range National Park 384
 Danum Valley Conservation Area 367-9
 Deramakot Forest Reserve 359-60
 Endau-Rompin National Park 252-3
 Forest Research Institute Malaysia 111
 Gunung Gading National Park 427-9
 Gunung Ledang National Park 247
 Gunung Mulu National Park 455-61, **39**
 Gunung Stong State Park 295

- Habitat, the 186
 Imbak Canyon Conservation Area 359
 Kenong Rimba State Park 282
 Kilim Karst Geoforest Park 198-9
 Kinabalu National Park 334-42
 Kubah National Park 423-5
 Kuching Wetlands National Park 421
 Labrador Nature Reserve 516
 Labuan Marine Park 391
 Lambir Hills National Park 447
 Luagan Lalak Recreation Park 484
 MacRitchie Reservoir 514
 Maliau Basin Conservation Area 382-3
 Niah National Park 445-7
 Penang National Park 189
 Pulau Selirong Recreational Park 487
 Pulau Tiga National Park 389
 Rainforest Discovery Centre 355-6
 Royal Belum State Park 158-9
 Similajau National Park 443-5
 Soga Perdana Recreational Forest 248
 Southern Ridges 515
 Sungai Bantang Recreational Forest 248
 Talang-Satang National Park 430-1
 Taman Alam Kuala Selangor 120
 Taman Negara 276-81
 Taman Negeri Perlis 216
 Taman Tugu 24
 Tambunan Rafflesia Reserve 384-5
 Tampat Do Aman Nature Reserve 345
 Tanjung Datu National Park 429-30
 Tanjung Piai National Park 248
 Tawau Hills Park 381-2
 Teluk Bahang Forest Reserve 189-90
 Tunku Abdul Rahman National Park 332-4
 Ulu Temburong National Park 487-8
- Negeri Sembilan 51, 108-9, 121-6, **109**
 accommodation 108
 climate 108
 food 91, 108
 highlights 109
 history 110
 travel seasons 108
 weather 108
 newspapers 602
 Singapore 561
 notable buildings, see *also* historic buildings & sites
 Atkinson Clock Tower 318
 Bangunan Sultan Ibrahim 241
 Emerald Hill Road 507-9
 Heritage District (Johor Bahru) 241
 Istana Kehakiman 115-16
 Kampung Baru Gateway 69
 King George V School 122
 Kompleks Perpadanan Putrajaya 116
 Kuching North City Hall 404
 Menara Alor Setar 211
 Menara Kuala Lumpur 62
 Petronas Towers 57
 Putrajaya Convention Centre 116
 Raffles Hotel 498
 Sarawak State Assembly 404
 State Library (Seremban) 122
- O**
 Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque 17, 472, **17, 589**
 opening hours 21, 606
 Singapore 560
 Orang Asli people 582
 orangutans 14, 354, 355, 425, 524, **14, 524**
- P**
 Pahang 53, 254-83, **255**
 accommodation 254
 climate 254
 food 89, 254
 highlights 255
 travel seasons 254
 weather 254
 painting 593
 palaces
 Istana Besar 124-5

- Istana Iskandariah 152
Istana Kenangan 151-2
Istana Lama 124
Istana Maziah 311
Istana Nurul Iman 473, 475-6
- palm-oil plantations 597-8
Pa'Lungan 464-5
- pan mee* **90**
- Pangkor Laut 149
Pangkor Town 150
Pantai Cenang 195
Pantai Kok 197-8
Pantai Tengah 196-7
parks & gardens 27, see also national parks & nature reserves
Art & Garden by Fuan Wong 189
Botanical Garden (Kinabalu National Park) 342
Botanical Gardens (Penang) 186
Chestnut Park 514
China-Malaysia Friendship Garden 115
East Coast Park 510-11
Entopia by Penang Butterfly Farm 190
Fort Canning Park 499
Gardens by the Bay 491, 496-7, **26**
Kebun-Kebun Bangsar 96
KL Forest Eco Park 62
KLCC Park 57
Lake Gardens 122
Lake Gardens - Tun Abdul Razak Heritage Park 67
Marina Barrage 499-500
Melaka Botanical Garden 237
Miri City Fan 448
Monkeycup@Penang Hill 186
Orchid Garden 404
Perdana Botanical Garden 67
Rejang Esplanade 432
Singapore Botanic Gardens 509-10
Taman Botani 115
Taman Peranginan Tasek 476
Taman Tamadu Islam 310
Taman Tasik Taiping 153
Taman Tugu 63-6
Taman Wetland 115
Tanjung Emas Park 247
Titivangsa Lake Gardens 69
Tropical Spice Garden 189
- Pasir Bogak 148, 149-50
passports 608
Pekan 264-5, **265**
Pelabuhan Klang 118-20
Penang 52, 160-92, **161**, **86-7**
accommodation 160, 173-6
climate 160
courses 171
festivals & events 172-3
food 87, 160
highlights 161
history 161-2
tours 171-2
travel seasons 160
weather 160
Penang Hill 185-6
Penarik 314
Peninsular Malaysia's Northeast 53, 284-315, **286-7**
accommodation 284
climate 284
food 284
highlights 286-7
travel seasons 284
weather 284
people 580-5, see also individual peoples
Perak 51, 127-59, **128**
climate 127
food 87, 127
highlights 128
history 129
travel seasons 127
weather 127
Peranakan people 581
Perlis 52, 193-4, 215-16, **194**
climate 193
food 87
highlights 194
travel seasons 193
weather 193
Petaling Jaya 117-18
Petronas Towers 57
photography 606
pineapples 466
planning 22-3
budgeting 21
calendar of events 28-9
checklist 22
family travel 72, 604, 618-19
itineraries 30-5, **30, 31, 32, 33**
Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei basics 20-1
Malaysia, Singapore &
- Brunei regions 51-4
repeat visitors 24
travel seasons 20
websites 21
- plants 339
politics 566, 568, 585
pollution 617
population 567
Port Dickson 125-6
postal services 606
Brunei Darussalam 489
Singapore 560
proboscis monkeys 356, 389, 524
Pulau Aman 191
Pulau Aur 251-2
Pulau Banggai 347
Pulau Berhala 358
Pulau Besar 238, 250
Pulau Bidong 310, 314, **528**
Pulau Carey 119
Pulau Dayang 251-2
Pulau Duyung 310-11
Pulau Gaya 333
Pulau Kapalai 377
Pulau Kapas 306-7
Pulau Ketam 119
Pulau Labuan 390-3
Pulau Lang Tengah 304
Pulau Langkawi 18, 52, 193-4, 195-211, **194, 196-7, 200, 18**
accommodation 193, 202-6
activities 195-201
climate 193
drinking & nightlife 209
festivals & events 202
food 193, 206-9
highlights 194
internet access 210
legends 204
medical services 210
money 210
shopping 209-10
sights 195-201
tourist information 210
tours 201-2
travel seasons 193
travel to/from 210
travel within 210-11
weather 193
Pulau Lankayan 359
Pulau Libaran 359
Pulau Mabul 376
Pulau Mamutik 332-3
Pulau Mantanani 346-7
Pulau Manukan 332
Pulau Matakang 377-8
- Pulau Pangkor 24, 145-50, **146**
Pulau Pemanggil 251-2
Pulau Perhentian 13, 295-303, 528, **296, 13**
Pulau Pom Pom 378
Pulau Rawa 251
Pulau Redang 303-6, **528**
Pulau Sapi 333
Pulau Satang Besar 430
Pulau Selang 358
Pulau Sibul 250-1
Pulau Sipadan 11, **11**
Pulau Sulug 334
Pulau Talang-Talang 430
Pulau Tinggi 251
Pulau Tioman, see Tioman Island
Pulau Ubin 511
public holidays, see holidays
Putrajaya 115-17
pygmy elephants 527, **526**
-
- Q**
quays, Singapore 500
-
- R**
rabies 616
radio 602
Raffles, Stamford 571
rafflesia 384, 531, **530**
rafting, see white-water rafting
rainbow toads 531, **530-1**
Ramadan 50, 489
Ranau 342
Raub 282-3
Razak, Najib 577, 579
religion 586-9
resorts 131, 262-3
responsible travel 600
resthouses 604
rhinos 527
Riau Archipelago (Indonesia) 562
rice, Bario 466
River of Life project 63
rivers 599
road rules 613
rock climbing 37-40
Romol Eco Village 387
roti prata **91**
-
- S**
Sabah 53, 316-93, **317**
accommodation 316
art scene 319

- Sabah *continued*
 climate 316
 driving tour 332
 food 92, 316
 highlights 317
 history 334
 people 583
 travel seasons 316
 weather 316
 safety 607, 613
 crocodiles 443
 hiking 38, 258
 jellyfish 203
 Johor Bahru 244
 kidnappings 376
 mosquitoes 280
 Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre 354
 Tioman Island 258
 salt 466
 Sandakan 348-53, **350**
 accommodation 351
 drinking & nightlife 352-3
 food 351-2
 information 353
 sights 348-50
 tours 350-1
 travel to/from 353
 travel within 353
 Sandakan Archipelago 358-9
 Sandakan Death Marches 349
 Santubong Peninsula 419-22
 Sarawak 15, 53, 394-469, **396-7**
 accommodation 394
 climate 394
 food 92, 394
 highlights 396-7
 history 395
 people 583
 travel seasons 394
 weather 394
 Sarawak Cultural Village 419-20
 Sarawak Museum Campus 402
 scenery 25
 sculpture 593
 Selangor 51, 108-9, 110-21, **109**
 accommodation 108
 climate 108
 food 91, 108
 highlights 109
 history 110
 travel seasons 108
 weather 108
 Seletar Aerospace Park 24, 546
 Sematan 428
 Semporna 370-1, **372**
 Semporna Archipelago 371-8
 Sentosa Island 517-18, 538, 547-8, 553-4, **518**
 Sepilok 354-8, **356**
 Seremban 121-3, **123**
 Seria 485
 Seribuat Archipelago 250-2
 shadow puppets 591
 Shah Alam 117-18
 shopping 27, *see also individual locations*
 language 622
 Sibul 432-6, **435**
silat 25
 Singapore 54, 490-564, **492-3, 494-5, 502-3, 506, 508, 512, 518, 85**
 accessible travel 559
 accommodation 490, 533-8, 559
 airport hotels 537
 budgeting 559, 560
 business hours 560
 climate 490
 courses 522
 customs regulations 559
 discounts 559
 drinking & nightlife 548-54
 drinks 548
 electricity 559
 embassies & consulates 559
 entertainment 554-5
 environmental issues 600
 festivals & events 522-33
 food 91, 490, 538-48, 560
 highlights 492-3
 history 491
 holidays 560-1
 internet access 559
 itineraries 497
 language 623
 legal issues 559
 LGBT+ travellers 551
 magazines 561
 media 595
 medical services 560
 money 560
 newspapers 561
 opening hours 560
 politics 585
 postal services 560
 Quays 500
 shopping 555-9
 sights 491-518
 smoking 561
 telephone services 561
 time 561
 toilets 561
 tourist information 561
 tours 522
 travel seasons 490
 travel to/from 561
 travel within 562-4
 visas 561
 walking tour 520, **520**
 weather 490
 weights & measures 561
 Singsing 623
 Siniawan Night Market 410
 Sipadan 376, **528**
 skin protection 618
 snakes 618
 snorkelling, *see* diving & snorkelling
 soto *makassar* 380
 spas
 Gunung Mulu National Park 455
 Kinabalu National Park 342
 Kuala Lumpur 69-71
 Melaka City 226
 Penang 187
 Pulau Langkawi 195, 196-7, 199
 Singapore 519-21
 speakeasies 181, 550
 Sri Menanti 124-5
 statues, *see* monuments & memorials
 strawberries 141
 street art
 George Town 172
 Kota Bharu 288
 Kuala Lumpur 99
 Melaka 227
 Singapore 501
 street festivals 173
 street food 11, 45-50, 179
 Brickfields Street 94
 Jalan Alor 81
 Kota Kinabalu 327
 Pudu 82
 street names, George Town 184
 Sukau 362-3
 Sultan of Brunei 473
 sun bears 355
 sunburn 618
 Sungai Kinabatangan 360-5
 Sungai Klias 389
 Sungai Lembing 268
 Supertrees 491, 496-7, **26**
 surfing 43
 Cherating 270
 Sabah 345
 safety 617
 swiftlets 361, 446
 swimming
 Singapore 521
- T**
 Tabin Wildlife Reserve 369-70
 Taiping 153-7, **154**
 walking tour 156, **156**
 Taman Negara 16, 276-81, **277, 16**
 Taman Rekreasi Gunung Lang 131, **523**
 Tambunan 384-5
 Tanah Rata 141-4, **142**
 Tanjung Aru 328
 Tanjung Gemok 264
 Tanjung Rhu 198-9
 Tanjung Sipang Mengayu 345-6
 Taoism 586-7
 Taoist temples, *see* temples
 tapirs 527, **526**
 Tasik Chini 273, 599
 Tasik Kenyir 315
 Tawau 378-81, **379**
 taxes 556
 taxis 613
 taxis, long distance 614
 tea plantations
 Boh Sungei Palas Tea Estate 144
 Boh Tea Garden 141
 Gaharu Tea Valley 137
 Sabah Tea Garden 342
 Tekka Centre 543
 telephone services 607
 Brunei Darussalam 489
 Singapore 561
 television 602
 Teluk Bahang 188-90
 Teluk Datai 198
 Teluk Kumbar 192
 Teluk Nipah 147-8, 149
 Temburong 485-8
 Temerloh 273
 temple caves 130

temples 25, *see also*
 Buddhist temples,
 Hindu temples
 Cheng Hoon Teng
 Temple 225
 Foo Lin Kong 147
 Hiang Thian Siang
 Temple 402
 Hin Ho Bio 402
 Ho Ann Kiong 309
 Hock Teik Cheng Sin
 Temple 166
 Hong San Si Temple 401
 Johor Bahru Old Chinese
 Temple 241
 Kuan Yin Teng 169
 Lian Shan Shuang Lin
 Monastery 514
 Lin Je Kong Temple 147
 Sam Poh Footprint
 Temple 192
 San Ching Tian
 Temple 448
 Thian Hock Keng
 Temple 501
 Tiang Yun Dian Chinese
 Temple 473
 Tua Pek Kong Temple
 402, 432, 448
 Tempurung 388-9
 Tenom 386-7
 Terengganu 295-315
 Thaipusam 588
 theft 607
 ticks 618
 tigers 524, **525**
 time 20, 607
 Brunei Darussalam 489
 language 622
 Singapore 561
 Tioman Island 14, 53, 254-5,
 255-64, **255, 256, 14**
 accommodation 254
 climate 254
 food 254
 highlights 255
 travel seasons 254
 weather 254
 Tiong Bahru 505
 Tip of Borneo 345-6
 tipping 23
 toads **530-1**
 toilets 607-8
 tourist information 608, *see*
also individual locations
 tours, *see also individual*
locations
 adventure 322-4

diving 322-4
 wildlife-watching 324
 traditional medicine 619
 train travel 331, 614
 transit hotels 105, 537
 transport 610-14
 language 624
 travel advisories 607
 travel cards 107
 travel to/from Malaysia,
 Singapore & Brunei
 610-11
 travel within Malaysia,
 Singapore & Brunei 21,
 611-14
 trekking, *see* hiking
 Tringgus 426
 trishaws 25, 237, 564, 613-14
 Tuaran 343-4, **42**
 Tumpat 294
 Tunku Abdul Rahman
 National Park 332-4
 turtles 528, **528-9**
 Tutong 484
 TV 602
 typhoid 616

U

Ulu Temburong National
 Park 487-8
 Unesco World Heritage sites
 central George Town
 162-9, 169
 central Melaka 219-24
 Mt Kinabalu & Kinabalu
 National Park 334-42
 Singapore Botanic
 Gardens 509-10

V

vacation, *see* holidays
 vaccinations 615
 Vale Eco Center 145
 Via Ferrata 338
 viewpoints 25
 Menara Taming Sari 221-4
 Pinnacle@Duxton 501-3
 Signal Hill Observatory
 Platform 318
 Sky Tower Malacca 225-6
 Top at KOMTAR 171
 visas 20, 608
 Brunei Darussalam 489
 Singapore 561
 volunteering 258-9, 425,
 608-9
 East Coast islands 301

W

walking, *see* hiking
 walking tours
 George Town 168, **168**
 Singapore 520, **520**
 Taiping 156, **156**
 wasps 618
 water parks
 Adventure Cove
 Waterpark 521-2
 Singapore Wake Park 521
 Wave House 522
 water, tap 618
 waterfalls
 Chiling Waterfalls 114
 Durian Perangin 199
 Gunung Gading National
 Park 428
 Lata Iskandar 139
 Mahua Waterfall 385
 Takah Berangin Falls 253
 Takah Pandan Falls 253
 Telaga Tujuh 197
 Temurun Waterfall 198
 Upeh Guling Falls 252-3
 weather 20, 28-9
 Brunei Darussalam 479
 Singapore 490
 websites 21, 568, 590
 environmental issues
 597, 598, 600
 health 615
 history 574, 576
 weights & measures 602
 Singapore 561
 Weston 389
 White Rajas 572
 white-water rafting 41-3,
 323-4
 Beaufort 388
 Kuala Kubu Bharu 114
 wildlife reserves &
 sanctuaries
 Borneo Sun Bear Con-
 servation Centre 355
 Jurong Bird Park 515
 Kinta Nature Park 136
 KL Bird Park 63-82
 KL Butterfly Park 67
 Kota Kinabalu Wetland
 Centre 319
 Kudat Turtle Conserva-
 tion Society 345
 Labuk Bay Proboscis
 Monkey Sanctuary 356
 Matang Wildlife
 Centre 425
 National Elephant Con-
 servation Centre 273
 Penarik Firefly
 Sanctuary 314
 Semenggoh Wildlife
 Centre 422
 Sepilok Orangutan
 Rehabilitation Centre
 14, 354
 Sungei Buloh Wetland
 Reserve 516-17
 Tabin Wildlife Reserve
 369-70
 wildlife smuggling 597
 wildlife watching 27, 41, *see*
also bird-watching
 Bako National Park
 417, 418
 Cherating 270
 Kampung Kuantan 120
 Maliau Basin Conserva-
 tion Area 382
 Pulau Pangkor 148
 Softwoods Plantation
 24, 378
 tours 324
 Zoo Negara 111
 women in Malaysia,
 Singapore &
 Brunei 584-5
 women travellers 609
 Brunei Darussalam 489
 women's health 619
 work 609
 WWII 349
 WWII sites & memorials
 Battlebox 498
 Changi Museum &
 Chapel 510
 Kranji War Memorial 517
 Kundasang War
 Memorial 342
 Pialungan Sandakan-
 Ranau Death March
 Memorial 342
 Sandakan Memorial
 Park 348
 WWII Memorial (Labuan
 War Cemetery) 391

Z

Zhongshan building 103
 zoos
 Langkawi Wildlife
 Park 199
 Singapore Zoo 513
 Zoo Negara 111
 Zoo Taiping & Night
 Safari 153-4

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; Langkawi, Kedah & Perlis Austin originally went to Thailand in 1999 as part of a language study program hosted by Chiang Mai University. The lure of city life, employment and spicy food eventually led him to Bangkok and he has managed to keep him there since. He works as a writer and photographer, and in addition to having contributed to numerous books, magazines and websites, he has contributed text and photos to more than 20 Lonely Planet titles, with a

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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, Dublin, 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



Simon Richmond

Kuala Lumpur Journalist and photographer Simon Richmond has specialised as a travel writer since the early 1990s and first worked for Lonely Planet in 1999 on their Central Asia guide. He's long since stopped counting the number of guidebooks he's researched and written for the company, but countries covered include Australia, China, India, Iran, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar (Burma), Russia, Singapore, South Africa and Turkey. For Lonely Planet's website

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