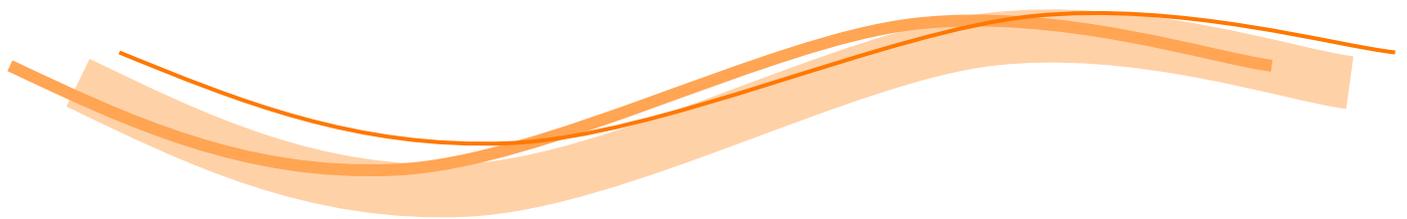




MALAYSIA & MALAYSIA AIRLINES





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| <p>MALAYSIA</p> | <p>Malaysia is one of Southeast Asia’s top travel destinations, possessing an endless range of attractions and activities that cater to the cosmopolitan shopper, cultural enthusiast, history buff, and nature-lover. It is a country of extreme yet fascinating contrasts, where ultra-modern skyscrapers in its capital city Kuala Lumpur stand in close proximity to quaint heritage structures, and five-star hotels sit several metres away from ancient coral reefs.</p> <p>Malaysia is a melting pot of Malay, Indian, Chinese, and indigenous tribal cultures, interwoven with European influences. Its multiculturalism has made the country a gastronomical paradise and host to hundreds of colorful festivals.</p> <p>In 2014, Malaysia will celebrate Visit Malaysia Year with the theme “Celebrating Malaysia - Truly Asia.” The Visit Malaysia Year promotional campaign kicked off this year with a series of year-long special events and activities through 2014.</p> <p>There is so much to do in Malaysia it is almost impossible to know where to begin. But here for starters is a top 10 things to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take a bird’s eye view of Kuala Lumpur from the Petronas Twin Towers 2. Dive in the world class Sipadan Island 3. Enjoy the tranquil beaches of Langkawi Island 4. Visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Melaka 5. Watch the sunrise from the top of Mount Kinabalu 6. Shop till you drop in Kuala Lumpur – one of the world’s best shopping cities 7. Treat your taste buds to the exotic Malaysian Cuisine 8. Join the celebration of diversity in the “Colours of Malaysia” festival 9. See the baby orang-utans at the Sepilok Orang Utan Sanctuary in Borneo 10. Go to Penang – the “Pearl of the Orient” <p>If you want to focus in on the extreme contrast that is Malaysia, twin a visit to the cosmopolitan, modern capital city of Kuala Lumpur with Sabah in Malaysian Borneo.</p> |
| <p>Location</p> | <p>In the bottom right hand corner of Asia, between 2° and 7° to the North of the Equator line, Peninsular Malaysia is separated from Sabah and Sarawak by the South China Sea.</p> <p>In the northern part of Peninsular Malaysia lies Thailand, and in the south, neighbouring Singapore. Sabah and Sarawak are bounded by Indonesia while Sarawak also shares borders with Brunei.</p> |

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| Geography | Geographically, Malaysia is almost as diverse as its culture. 11 states and 2 federal territories (Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya) form Peninsular Malaysia which is separated by the South China Sea from East Malaysia which includes the 2 states (Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo) and a third federal territory, the island of Labuan. Rugged mountains reach dramatically for the sky while their rainforest-clad slopes sweep down to floodplains teeming with forest life. Cool highland hideaways roll down to warm, sandy beaches and rich, humid mangroves. |
| Name | From the Malay people. |
| Population | The total population of the country is just a little less than Canada's at 28.3 million. |
| Language | Malays comprise 57% of the population, while the Chinese, Indian and Bumiputeras and other races make up the rest of the country's population. While Malay is the national language the many ethnic groups also converse in their various languages and dialects, but English is also widely spoken. Islam is the official religion of the country, but other religions such as Buddhism and Christianity are widely and freely practised. |
| Currency | The monetary unit of the country is Ringgit Malaysia and is written as RM or MYR. The exchange rate is valued at USD1 = RM3.15 and so this is almost the same for Canadian Dollars. Notes are available in RM1, RM5, RM10, RM20, RM50, and RM100 denominations, while coins are issued in 5, 10, 20 and 50 sen (cents) denominations. While credit cards are accepted in hotels and department stores, expect to pay in cash in rural areas. Hotels and restaurants add a government tax of 6% and a service charge of 10%. |
| Tipping | Tipping is not expected, but most will leave coins behind. For porters, give at least RM2 per bag or RM5 in a very expensive hotel or resort. |
| Government | Malaysia is a federal constitutional elective monarchy. The system of government is closely modelled on that of the Westminster parliamentary system, a legacy of British colonial rule. The head of state is the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, commonly referred to as the king. The King is elected to a five-year term by the nine hereditary rulers of the Malay states. |
| Documentation | Canadian visitors to Malaysia must hold a valid passport or travel document with a minimum validity of six months beyond the intended visiting period, but no visa is required. |
| Time zone | Malaysia is 13 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time in Canada. |
| Health | Generally, the level of food hygiene throughout the country is high. However, make sure your food and drinking water are safe. Food from street vendors should be treated with care. Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. |

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| | <p>Check the vaccines and medicines list and visit your doctor (ideally, 4-6 weeks) before your trip to get vaccines or medicines you may need. You should be up to date on routine vaccinations while travelling to any destination. Some vaccines may also be required for travel.</p> <p>Recommended vaccines: Poliomyelitis (childhood booster), Tetanus (childhood booster), Typhoid (food & water borne diseases), Hepatitis A (food & water borne diseases). For those visiting Sabah and Sarawak, Malaria prophylaxis is recommended.</p> |
| <p>Safety tips</p> | <p>Canadians can feel very safe in Malaysia. The Global Peace Index 2013 ranked Malaysia as the 29th most peaceful country in the world. To put that into perspective, the U.S. is ranked 99th. There is no nationwide advisory in effect for Malaysia on the Government of Canada website, so simply exercise normal security precautions. http://travel.gc.ca/destinations/malaysia</p> |
| <p>Local Etiquette</p> | <p>Malaysia is generally a laid back and relaxed place. However, they have their own customs and visitors should try to observe these practices when they arrive. Some common courtesies and customs are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although handshakes are generally acceptable for both men and women, some Muslim ladies may acknowledge introductions to gentlemen by merely nodding and smiling. A handshake should only be initiated by ladies. The traditional greeting or salam resembles a handshake with both hands but without the grasp. The man offers both hands, lightly touches his friend's outstretched hands, and then brings his hands to his chest to mean, "I greet you from my heart". The visitor should reciprocate the salam. - Shoes must always be removed when entering a Malaysian home. - Drinks are generally offered to guests. It is polite to accept. - The right hand is always used when eating with one's hand or giving and receiving objects. - The right forefinger is not used to point at places, objects or persons. Instead, the thumb of the right hand with four fingers folded under is the preferred usage. - Shoes must be removed when entering places of worship such as mosques and temples. Some mosques provide robes and scarves for female visitors. Taking photographs at places of worship is usually permitted but always ask permission beforehand. |

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| <p>CLIMATE</p> | |
| <p>General climate</p> | <p>The country experiences tropical weather year-round. Temperatures range from 21°C to 32°C. Higher elevations are much colder with temperatures between 15°C to 25°C. Annual rainfall varies from 2,000mm to 2,500mm. However, the wettest</p> |

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| | parts of Malaysia could well be the hill slopes of Sarawak's inland areas, which receive a mean annual rainfall exceeding 5,000mm. |
| Today's weather | Today (27 July 2013) it is 32C and sunny in Kuala Lumpur. |
| Best time to visit | Kuala Lumpur and the west coast are good destinations all year round but tend to be driest & sunniest between December and March. At any point there is the chance of a short, sharp downpour but these can be welcome as they reduce the humidity. Unusually for Asia, the east coast is best avoided between November and February when the heaviest rain falls and the sea can be quite choppy. It is at its best with dry sunny days during March to October. |

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| GETTING AROUND | |
| Getting There | Fly to Malaysia with Malaysia Airlines offering four flights per week from Los Angeles to Kuala Lumpur on the luxurious B-777 aircraft. Flight time from Los Angeles is 18 hours . Over 40 other international airlines serve the city's state-of-the art Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) at Sepang. In addition to Malaysia Airlines, domestic routes are also served by multiple airlines. |
| Cities | Kuala Lumpur Kuala Lumpur is delightful mix of cross-cultural influences and traditions, radiating an exciting, enticing charm. Tradition, culture and old world charm meet new world sophistication in this amazing cultural melting pot. Wander through communities of Chinese, Malays, South Indians, East Malaysian ethnic groups, Thais, Indonesians, Sikhs and a huge community of expats. Each community offering its own festivals, food, music, art and fashion while influencing each other's cultures. The architecture is somewhat unique - from hundred year old mansions to awe-inspiring sky scrapers, and all within metres of each other. Malaysia's history can be seen around Merdeka Square and you can take a free Heritage Guided Walking Tour. Within this one square you will visit ten heritage buildings from the late 1800's and early 1900's with a blend of old colonial, Moorish, Tudor, Neo-gothic and Islamic architectural styles. Kuala Lumpur has a lively nightlife scene and a fascinating art and performance culture, which blends contemporary and traditional styles from many backgrounds. There is the widest range of sporting activities available with state-of -the-art facilities. Treat your taste buds to Kuala Lumpur's extremely varied cuisine and street food, which is an adventure in itself! Above all else Kuala Lumpur is a shopping heaven, offering everything from street side trinkets to haute couture. http://www.visitkl.gov.my http://www.tourismmalaysia.ca/experience/destinations/kualalumpur |
| Distances | From Kuala Lumpur to: Johor Bahru (adjacent to Singapore): 368 kms |

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| | Padang Besar (on the Thailand border): 544 kms Port Klang (on the Strait of Melacca): 40 kms |
| Ferries | Modern ferry services are offered from the mainland to major islands such as Penang and Langkawi in Peninsular Malaysia. Regular boat services are also available to Pangkor Island and the Mersing-Tioman Island routes. In addition, longboat service is available from Labuan to mainland Sabah in Malaysian Borneo. |
| Trains | <p>The national railway network, Keretapi Tanah Melayu (KTM), provides train services that run from Singapore to the Thai border and along the East coast of Peninsular Malaysia. KTM Komuter also connects suburban districts to Kuala Lumpur. More than 200 trains run daily at a frequency of every 15 minutes. Malaysia Rail passes are available for periods of 5, 10 or 15 days.</p> <p>Situated on the main rail route with a daily train service from Bangkok, Padang Besar - in Malaysia's northernmost state of Perlis - is an entry point into the country. Keretapi Tanah Melayu (KTM) or Malayan Railway provides an international express from Butterworth to Haadyai in Thailand, and regular services from Padang Besar to Singapore (via Kuala Lumpur).</p> <p>The exclusive Eastern and Oriental Express also romances the route from Bangkok to Singapore via Kuala Lumpur. Covering the entire length of the Peninsular - over 2,000 km, this two-day journey has frequent stops at scenic locations. For more information, visit www.orient-express.com</p> |
| Car Rental | All major international car rental companies operate here. |
| Buses | KL City Buses offer several types of service in the city and the suburbs throughout most of the day. Public buses and interstate air-conditioned buses travel between most cities and towns in Malaysia. They are comfortable and the fares are reasonable. |
| Cruises | Port Klang, situated about 40kms from Kuala Lumpur, is the main port of call for cruise liners. Visitors can take a cruise and be enthralled with the host of fascinating destinations along the coastline. One can find some of the world's best cruise ships operating in Malaysian waters, all offering the comforts and facilities of a luxury hotel while traversing the sea. Tourists can immerse themselves in a variety of activities offered or just sit back, relax and absorb the serenity of Malaysia's waters. Parents can revel in peace and quiet, while the cruise liners entertain the children with a variety of fun activities. These reputable cruises ensure visitors a safe, comfortable and unforgettable journey. |
| ACCOMMODATION TYPES | Major hotel chains represented in Malaysia include Shangri-La (see our prize hotel section below), Four Seasons, Hilton, Hyatt, Holiday Inn, Le Meridien, Mandarin Oriental, Marriott, Melia, Mercure, Renaissance, Ritz Carlton, Sheraton, and Westin. KL has the highest concentration of |

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| | <p>international business hotels, but a few operate luxurious resorts in other parts of the country as well, most notably on Penang and Langkawi.</p> <p>Peak months of the year for hotels in western peninsular Malaysia are December through February and July through September. For the east coast, the busy times are July through September.</p> |
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| LIFESTYLES | |
| <p>Kids</p> | <p>Sunway Lagoon For some fun in the sun, head over to Sunway Lagoon, a multi-award winning theme park located just 15 minutes from Kuala Lumpur. Here you'll find five different theme parks in one amazing destination, with more than 80 rides and attractions to choose from.</p> <p>Legoland If you're looking for fun and adventure for the whole family, Johor's cutting-edge theme parks offer you just that. The first of its kind in Asia and the first international park in Malaysia, Legoland offers a first-class park experience with thrilling rides, interactive displays and themed areas. The park's main attraction is Miniland, where miniature replicas of Asia's popular landmarks made with more than 30 million LEGO bricks can be seen. Hello Kitty Town, the first Hello Kitty theme park outside Japan, is a must for fans of this popular Sanrio character. The park's highlights include Black Wonder, a state-of-the-art interactive experience, and Kitty House, an iconic house filled with everything Hello Kitty from top to bottom.</p> |
| <p>Teens</p> | <p>Malaysia is a terrific destination for families. It's safe, friendly, and free of some of the seedier trappings of tourism that can be seen in other parts of Asia. Here is an itinerary for families suggested by our friends at Frommer's including an equal mix of beach and culture - sightseeing in the mornings and fun in the afternoons - at a pace that allows for maximum flexibility.</p> <p>Days 1 & 2: Arrive in Kuala Lumpur After arriving in Malaysia's capital city, allow a full day to recover and just spend your time wandering through the city's streets. Start in Chinatown, where you'll find a street bazaar and the Sri Mahamariamman Hindu Temple, then cut through the bustling Central Market to Merdeka Square, the focal point of colonial KL. From the Jame Mosque, hop on the train to Jalan Imbi. Next to the station, you'll find Berjaya Times Square, KL's largest shopping mall, filled with tons of food and shopping, not to mention Berjaya Times Square Theme Park, the world's largest indoor amusement park.</p> |

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| | <p>Day 3: Penang Take an early-morning flight to Penang. Check into the Holiday Inn Resort Penang at Batu Feringgi, where they have special kids' suites. Have a ball at the beach! Don't forget to book watersports activities for the following days.</p> <p>Day 4: Georgetown Spend your morning in Georgetown. Hit the Penang Museum and Art Gallery at 9am, when it opens. Afterward, head over to the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion for the 11am tour. Afterward, wander free through the streets before heading back to your resort for an afternoon of relaxation at the beach.</p> <p>Day 5: Penang Hill The funicular train up the side of Penang Hill was built in 1923 to take British colonials up to the cooler climate of the hill, where they built lovely country homes and gardens. The new funicular railway reopened in 2011. At the top of the hill, you'll find restaurants, temples, and trails, one of which will lead you down to the botanical gardens. The trek lasts only an hour or two, so it should be a nice little adventure.</p> <p>Days 6 & 7: Back to KL Hop a flight back to KL to prepare for your return home. If you have time, you can stock up on gifts at Kompleks Kraf Kuala Lumpur - you'll find something for everyone on your list, in all price ranges, at this handicrafts showroom.</p> |
| Romance | To watch a tropical sunset together from the beach on Borneo or to wander, hand-in-hand down a jungle trail as the colourful birds of the forest cackle overhead, to see the lights of KL twinkle on in the evening from atop the Petronas Tower...all these experiences and many more will stay with you for the rest of your days. |
| Seniors | This is definitely a country to have on your bucket list! Malaysia also offers great incentives to lure potential retirees to the country under a program called Malaysia My Second Home; check out www.mm2h.com for incentives on purchasing a house, car, and education, as well as details on tax breaks. |

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| UNIQUES | <p>Batu Caves A limestone outcrop located just north of Kuala Lumpur, Batu Caves has three main caves featuring temples and Hindu shrines. Its main attraction is the large statue of the Hindu God at the entrance, besides a steep 272 climb up its steps to finally view the stunning skyline of the city centre. When I was there, monkeys frolicked around the caves, and it is a popular spot for rock climbing enthusiasts. Paintings and</p> |
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| | scenes of Hindu Gods can also be seen in the Ramayana Cave. |
| Surprising | Recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000, Mulu National Park in Sarawak is home to an impressive collection of natural treasures, including razor-sharp limestone spikes called The Pinnacles, and Sarawak Chamber, the world's largest cave chamber capable of accommodating 40 Boeing 747 aircraft. Meanwhile, the Deer Cave has the world's largest cave passage. |
| History | <p>Evidence of modern human habitation in Malaysia dates back 40,000 years. The first inhabitants are thought to be Negritos. Traders and settlers from India and China arrived as early as the 1st century AD, establishing trading ports and coastal towns in the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Their presence resulted in strong Indian and Chinese influence on the local cultures, and the people of the Malay Peninsula adopted the religions of Hinduism and Buddhism. Sanskrit inscriptions appear as early as the 4th or 5th century. The Kingdom of Langkasuka arose around the 2nd century in the northern area of the Malay Peninsula, lasting until about the 15th century. Between the 7th and 13th centuries, much of the southern Malay Peninsula was part of the maritime Srivijaya empire. After the fall of Srivijaya, the Majapahit empire had influence over most of Peninsular Malaysia and the Malay Archipelago. Islam began to spread among Malays in the 14th century. In the early 15th century, Parameswara, a prince of the former Srivijayan empire, founded the Malacca Sultanate, considered the first independent state in the peninsula. Malacca was an important commercial centre during this time, attracting trade from around the region. Parameswara became a Muslim, accelerating the spread of Islam.</p> <p>In 1511 Malacca was conquered by Portugal, after which it was taken by the Dutch in 1641. In 1786 the British Empire established a presence in Malaya, when the Sultan of Kedah leased Penang to the British East India Company. The British obtained the town of Singapore in 1819, and in 1824 took control of Malacca following the Anglo-Dutch Treaty. By 1826 the British directly controlled Penang, Malacca, Singapore, and the island of Labuan, which they established as the crown colony of the Straits Settlements.</p> <p>By the 20th century, the states of Pahang, Selangor, Perak, and Negeri Sembilan, known together as the Federated Malay States, had British Residents appointed to advise the Malay rulers, to whom the rulers were bound to defer by treaty. The remaining five states in the peninsula, known as the Unfederated Malay States, while not directly under British rule, also accepted British advisers around the turn of the 20th century.</p> <p>Development on the Peninsula and Borneo were generally separate until the 19th century. Under British rule the immigration of Chinese and</p> |

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| | <p>Indians to serve as labourers was encouraged. The area that is now Sabah came under British control as North Borneo when both the Sultan of Brunei and the Sultan of Sulu transferred their respective territorial rights of ownership, between 1877 and 1878. In 1842, Sarawak was ceded by the Sultan of Brunei to James Brooke, whose successors ruled as the White Rajahs over an independent kingdom until 1946, when it became a Crown colony.</p> <p>In the Second World War the Japanese army invaded and occupied Malaya, North Borneo, Sarawak, and Singapore for over three years. During this time, ethnic tensions were raised and nationalism grew. Popular support for independence increased after Malaya was reconquered by Allied Forces. Post-war British plans to unite the administration of Malaya under a single crown colony called the Malayan Union met with strong opposition from the Malays, who opposed the weakening of the Malay rulers and the granting of citizenship to the ethnic Chinese.</p> <p>The Malayan Union, established in 1946 and consisting of all the British possessions in the Malay Peninsula with the exception of Singapore, was quickly dissolved and replaced by the Federation of Malaya, which restored the autonomy of the rulers of the Malay states under British protection. During this time, mostly Chinese rebels under the leadership of the Malayan Communist Party launched guerrilla operations designed to force the British out of Malaya. The Malayan Emergency lasted from 1948 to 1960, and involved a long anti-insurgency campaign by Commonwealth troops in Malaya.</p> <p>After this a plan was put in place to federate Malaya with the crown colonies of North Borneo (which joined as Sabah), Sarawak, and Singapore in 1963.</p> <p>Federation brought heightened tensions including a conflict with Indonesia, Singapore's eventual exit in 1965, and racial strife. Under Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad there was a period of rapid economic growth and urbanisation beginning in the 1980s. The economy shifted from being agriculturally based to one based on manufacturing and industry. Numerous mega-projects were completed, such as the Petronas Towers, the North-South Expressway, the Multimedia Super Corridor, and the new federal administrative capital of Putrajaya.</p> |
| <p>Books</p> | <p>Frommer's Malaysia</p> |
| <p>1000 Places to See Before You Die</p> | <p>Sipidan Island – one of the diving world's greatest treasures Headhunters' Trail – see the longhouses of the Borneo tribesmen The Datai – rain forest resort on its own white sand beach on Langkawi Island Penang – The "Pearl of the Orient", history, jungle and beach</p> |

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| <p>Must Sees</p> | <p>Sabah Sabah in the north of the island of Borneo is also part of Malaysia. Often called the 'Land Below the Wind' because it lies below the typhoon belt, Sabah occupies the eastern part of North Borneo and is East Malaysia's second largest state with an area of 74,500 sq.km. Sabah has the South China Sea on the west and the Sulu and Celebes Seas on the east. Mountainous and largely carpeted by lush tropical rainforests, its population of nearly two million is made up of 32 colourful ethnic communities.</p> <p>Kota Kinabalu, the capital, lies in a fertile lowland plain on the west coast of Sabah where most commercial and administrative activities are concentrated. But the 'real' Sabah can best be found in its countryside. At the Sepilok Orang Utan Sanctuary, visitors can observe trainers teaching orphaned or displaced orang utan apes to climb in their natural habitat.</p> <p>Kinabalu Park in central Sabah has been listed as a UNESCO Heritage Site, due to its diversity of plant life and wildlife. It provides a challenging climb to the summit of Mount Kinabalu amidst a lush virgin rainforest, where you can find hidden hot springs in cool high altitudes. This is the highest mountain in South East Asia at nearly 14,000ft.</p> <p>Sipadan island off the south eastern coast of Sabah, has been one of the top five dive sites in the world for years. It has a unique underwater geography with a proliferation of wildlife. Leatherback turtles, barracuda and white tipped sharks are a common sight while diving in Sipadan.</p> <p>http://www.tourismmalaysia.ca/experience/destinations/sabah</p> |
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| <p>SPORTS ACTIVITIES</p> | |
| <p>Golf</p> | <p>The Kuala Lumpur Golf & Country Club, 10 Jalan 1/70D Off Jalan Bukit Kiara (www.klgcc.com), has two courses, 18 holes each, par 71 and 72, designed by R. Nelson and R. Wright. Greens fees are RM400 weekdays and RM600 weekends</p> <p>Saujana Golf & Country Club, Km 3, Jalan Lapangan Terbang Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah, 46783 Subang Selangor (www.saujana.com.my), has two 18-hole courses, each par 72, designed by Ronald Fream, with greens fees from RM280 weekdays and RM400 weekends and holidays.</p> |
| <p>Fishing</p> | <p>One of Malaysia's best kept secrets is that it is an anglers paradise. Indeed, the country is blessed with quality and abundance in terms of fishing with a great diversity of fishes and fishing environments, in both fresh water and salt water.</p> <p>In Malaysia you will find groupers, snappers, sailfish, the famous Black Marlin, mackerels, and dolphinfish to name only a few. For game fishing for example, Giant Trevally over 40kg, sailfish over 60 kg, Yellowfin</p> |

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| | <p>tuna over 100 kg and Black Marlin over 250 kg have been caught by game fishermen.</p> <p>The best period to go on a serious fishing expedition in the South China Sea is between the months of February and November, as the seasonal monsoons can make the fishing rough and not so enjoyable. In the Andaman Sea, off Langkawi, the best time for fishing trip would be between December and March.</p> |
| Horse riding | <p>Trail riding in Johor</p> <p>The jungle trail takes you into the adjacent oil palm plantation, where you can really relax and feel at ease with nature. The horses will take you through the jungle and with our trainer guiding you, geographical information of the area will be part of the commentary. Your journey goes through unspoiled beauty and serenity till you reach the coast of Pasir Gudang. From the beach, you can view the straits that separate Johor and Singapore and from here you will get views of the coast of Singapore and even as far as Pulau Ubin.</p> <p>http://www.discover-malaysia.com/Something-New/horse-riding-trail-riding-in-johor.html</p> |
| Hiking | <p>Jungle Trekking</p> <p>Straddling the Pahang/Johor border, the Endau Rompin National Park covers about 80,000 hectares of rich flora and fauna, many of which are endemic to the park. The name Endau Rompin comes from the names of the 2 rivers that converge at one point. This 3-day trip is suitable for those whom want to experience the wild jungle at a moderate level.</p> |
| Cycling | <p>Malaysia's major cities, towns and tourist venues usually have several bike shops. Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Melacca have shops on par with those anywhere in the developed world. Although some primarily sell bicycles, accessories and equipment, many rent bikes and gear to visitors. Tourists can consult the Malaysian National Cycling Federation (www.mncf.org.my) and the Malaysia Tourism Board (www.tourism.gov.my) for referral to legitimate, credible bike shops and tour operators.</p> <p>Best known for its adventure tourism, Borneo is home to some of the world's most accessible unspoilt tropical jungle. With miles of uncongested roads and a network of country routes that go past some of the most striking scenery in the region it is a perfect destination for cycling.</p> |
| Diving | <p>Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park, Sabah</p> <p>Named after Malaysia's first Prime Minister, this cluster of five islands – Gaya, Manukan, Mamutik, Sapi and Sulug – was gazetted as Sabah's second national park in 1974. Popular among divers and ecotourists, the park's relatively shallow waters are filled with an abundance of corals and aquatic species – perfect for snorkelling and diving for beginners. Each island features a different collection of flora and fauna,</p> |

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with Pulau Gaya being the largest and most colourful of the five.

Sipadan Island, Sabah

Rated as one of the world's top diving sites, Sipadan Island boasts a truly magical and breathtaking underwater experience. Situated at the heart of the Indo-Pacific Basin, the centre of the world's richest marine habitat, the oceanic island is surrounded by several exciting dive spots such as the Hanging Gardens, Barracuda Point and the Turtle Cavern. One of its most thrilling features (and certainly not for the faint-hearted) is the Drop Off, where knee-high water suddenly gives way to a 600m drop.

CULTURE

Malays, Chinese, Indians and many other ethnic groups have lived together in Malaysia for generations. All these cultures have influenced each other, creating a truly Malaysian culture. The largest ethnic groups in Malaysia are the Malays, Chinese and Indians. In Sabah and Sarawak, there are a myriad of indigenous ethnic groups with their own unique culture and heritage.

Malay

Today, the Malays, Malaysia's largest ethnic group, make up more than 50% of the population, although this drops to less than 25% in East Malaysia. In Malaysia, the term Malay refers to a person who practices Islam and Malay traditions, speaks the Malay language and whose ancestors are Malays. Their conversion to Islam from Hinduism and Theravada Buddhism began in the 1400s, largely influenced by the decision of the royal court of Melaka. The Malays are known for their gentle mannerisms and rich arts heritage.

Chinese

The second largest ethnic group, the Malaysian Chinese form about 25% of the population. Mostly descendants of Chinese immigrants during the 19th century, the Chinese are known for their diligence and keen business sense. The three sub-groups who speak a different dialect of the Chinese language are the Hokkien who live predominantly on the northern island of Penang; the Cantonese who live predominantly in the capital city Kuala Lumpur; and the Mandarin speaking group who live predominantly in the southern state of Johor.

Indians

The smallest of three main ethnic groups, the Malaysian Indians form about 10% of the population. Most are descendants of Tamil-speaking South Indian immigrants who came to the country during the British colonial rule. Lured by the prospect of breaking out of the Indian caste system, they came to Malaysia to build a better life. Predominantly Hindus, they brought with them their colourful culture such as ornate temples, spicy cuisine and exquisite sarees.

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Indigenous Ethnic Groups

Peninsula Malaysia

The general term used for any of the indigenous groups that are found in Peninsular Malaysia is 'Orang Asli' which literally translates as the 'original people'. They are divided into three main tribal groups: Negrito, Senoi and Proto-Malay. The Negrito usually live in the north, the Senoi in the middle and the Proto-Malay in the south. Each group or sub-group has its own language and culture. Some are fishermen, some farmers and some are semi-nomadic.

Sabah

The largest indigenous ethnic groups of Sabah's population are the Kadazan Dusun, the Bajau and the Murut.

Kadazan Dusun

The largest ethnic group of Sabah, the Kadazan Dusuns form about 30% of the state's population. Actually consisting of two tribes; the Kadazan and the Dusun, they were grouped together as they both share the same language and culture. However, the Kadazan are mainly inhabitants of flat valley deltas, which are conducive to paddy field farming, while the Dusun traditionally lived in the hilly and mountainous regions of interior Sabah.

Bajau

The second largest ethnic group in Sabah, the Bajaus make up about 15% of the state's population. Historically a nomadic sea-faring people that worshipped the Omboh Dilaut or God of the Sea, they are sometimes referred to as the Sea Gypsies. Those who chose to leave their sea-faring ways became farmers and cattle-breeders. These land Bajaus are nicknamed 'Cowboys of the East' in tribute to their impressive equestrian skills, which are publicly displayed in the annual Tamu Besar festival at Kota Belud.

Murut

The third largest ethnic group in Sabah the Muruts make up about 3% of the state's population. Traditionally inhabiting the northern inland regions of Borneo, they were the last of Sabah's ethnic groups to renounce headhunting. Now, they are mostly shifting cultivators of hill paddy and tapioca, supplementing their diet with blowpipe hunting and fishing. Like most indigenous tribes in Sabah, their traditional clothing is decorated with distinctive beadwork.

Sarawak

Collectively known as Dayaks, the Iban, Bidayuh and Orang Ulu are the major ethnic groups in the state of Sarawak. Typically, they live in longhouses, traditional community homes that can house 20 to 100 families.

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| | <p>Iban The largest of Sarawak's ethnic groups, the Ibans form 30% of the State's population of 2.5 million. Sometimes erroneously referred to as the Sea Dayaks because of their skill with boats, they are actually an upriver tribe from the heart of Kalimantan. In the past, they were a fearsome warrior race renowned for headhunting and piracy. Traditionally, they worship a triumvirate of gods under the authority of Singalang Burung, the bird-god of war. Although now mostly Christians, many traditional customs are still practised.</p> <p>Bidayuh Peace-loving and easy-going, the gentle Bidayuh are famous for their hospitality and tuak or rice wine. Making their homes in Sarawak's southern regions, they are mostly farmers and hunters. In their past headhunting days their prized skulls were stored in a 'baruk', a roundhouse that rises about 1.5 metres above the ground. Originally animists, now most of the 200,000 strong population have converted to Christianity.</p> <p>Melanau Some 130,000 or 6% of the population of Sarawak are Melanau, believed to be among the original people to settle in Sarawak. Their language has different origins to the other ethnic groups of the state and today they are found mainly along the rivers and coastal plains of central Sarawak. Originally animists most have converted to Islam although some of the inland communities are Christian.</p> <p>Orang Ulu 27 of the inland tribal groups of Sarawak are collectively called Orang Ulu or upriver people. A total estimated population of around 100,000 people belong to tribes varied in size from 300 to 25,000 individuals. Arguably Borneo's most artistic people, their large longhouses are ornately decorated with murals and superb woodcarvings; their utensils are embellished with intricate beadwork. Traditional tattoos are a very important part of their culture; aristocratic Orang Ulu ladies also cover their arms and legs with finely detailed tattoos. The aboriginal Penan people are also included as Orang Ulu by government census but the Penan are traditionally nomadic people living in small family groups constantly moving from place to place within the rainforest. Today most of the estimated 16,000 Penan people have settled in longhouse communities where their children have the chance to go to school. Like the Iban and Bidayuh, most of the Orang Ulu have converted from animism to Christianity or Islam.</p> |
| Arts | Malaysia boasts a delightful variety of traditional arts and handicrafts. Choices range from priceless authentic antiques to exquisite modern hand-made crafts. As most artisans are Muslims, Malaysian handicraft designs are heavily influenced by Islam. The religion prohibits the |

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depiction of the human form in art. Hence, most designs are based on natural elements such as the interlacing of leaves or vines, flowers and animals.

Earthenware

Popular items of traditional design include Perak's labu sayong, geluk, belanga, Chinese dragon kiln ceramics and Sarawakian tribal motif pottery. Contemporary items include vases, flower pots, decorative pottery, sculpture and kitchenware.

Wood Crafts

Blessed with an abundance of timber in boundless tropical forests, Malaysia is renowned for an assortment of distinctive wood crafts. Traditionally, whole houses were built from elaborate hand-carved timber. Today, antique Malay-styled engraved panels, keris dagger handles, Chinese containers, unique Orang Asli spirit sculptures, intricate walking sticks, kitchen utensils and carved scented woods are among the wide range of exotic decorative items found in Malaysia.

Metal Crafts

Popular since the early days, traditional brass casting and bronze working are still used to make an array of utensils. More recently in the 19th century, with the discovery of tin in Malaysia, pewter has become increasingly popular. Metal craft products include modern decorative items, kitchen ware and traditional artifacts like tepak sireh sets, rose-water instruments and keris blades.

Hand-woven Crafts

Marvel at the creative hand-woven crafts of Malaysia. Local plant fibres and parts from bamboo, rattan, pandan and mengkuang leaves are coiled, plaited, twined and woven to produce items such as bags, baskets, mats, hats, tudung saji and sepak raga balls.

Textiles

Colourful and captivating, Malaysia's traditional textiles are much sought after worldwide. Varieties include batik, songket, pua kumbu and tekat. These textiles are made into all sorts of decorative items, from haute couture clothes to shoes, colourful curtains and delicate bed linen. Batik refers to the process of dyeing fabric by making use of a resistant technique; covering areas of cloth with wax to prevent it absorbing colours. The colours in batik are much more resistant to wear than those of painted or printed fabrics because the cloth is completely immersed in dye.

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| <p>Music</p> | <p>Malaysia's multi-cultural and multi-racial heritage is most prominently exhibited in its diverse music and dance forms. The dances of the indigenous Malay, Orang Asli and different ethnic peoples of Sabah and Sarawak are truly exotic and enchanting. As the Chinese, Indians and Portuguese settled in Malaysia, the traditional dances of their homelands became a part of Malaysia's culture and heritage. Malaysia has two traditional orchestras: the gamelan and the nobat. Originally from Indonesia, the gamelan is a traditional orchestra that plays ethereal lilting melodies using an ensemble of gongpercussion and stringed instruments. The nobat is a royal orchestra that plays more solemn music for the courts using serunai and nafiriwind instruments.</p> |
| <p>Films</p> | <p>Anna and the King (1999). A Hollywood blockbuster, this remake starring Chow Yun Fatt and Jodie Foster was filmed on Langkawi, after the Thai government refused to let them film in Thailand. The Thais are not fans of the Western fairytale that claims that one of their most revered monarchs was "civilized" by a simple English teacher.</p> <p>Entrapment (1999). This thriller starring Sean Connery and Catherine Zeta-Jones has its climax in Kuala Lumpur, with a stunt-filled heist at the top of the Petronas Twin Towers.</p> <p>Sandokan (1976). Based on the epic novels of Emilio Salgari, this miniseries captures the danger and mystery of colonial Malaya.</p> <p>South Pacific (1958). Bali Hai is Tioman Island, at least for the cast and crew of South Pacific, who shot parts of the film there in the 1950s, most notably the scenes that accompany the song "Happy Talk."</p> |
| <p>Museums</p> | <p>The Sarawak Cultural Village in Sarawak, known as the "Living Museum," sprawls across 17 acres at the foothills of Mount Santubong, minutes away from Kuching. Built to preserve and showcase Sarawak's cultural heritage, it is the perfect place for visitors to get introduced to the culture and customs of Malaysian Borneo's tribes. It displays the costumes, handicrafts, lifestyles and traditional dwellings of the state's major ethnic communities, with a twice-daily cultural performance. Among the unique handicrafts that can be found here are Sarawak beads and Pua Kumbu (traditional Ibanese textile). This cultural village is also the venue for exciting international events such as the Rainforest World Music Festival and the World Harvest Festival.</p> <p>National Museum (Muzim Negara) Built in the style of a grand Malay palace, the National Museum in KL traces the nation's history from prehistoric times through today, with exhibits on ancient Malay kingdoms and the Colonial era, among others. This museum offers a good overview of Malaysian history and culture.</p> <p>Islamic Arts Museum The seat of Islamic learning in Kuala Lumpur, the centre has over 7,000 displays of Islamic texts, artifacts, porcelain, textiles, and weaponry in</p> |

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| | <p>local and visiting exhibits. The architecture of blue-and-white domes is reason enough to visit. There is a fine Middle Eastern restaurant and an excellent book and souvenir shop here.</p> |
| <p>Festivals</p> | <p>Hari Raya Aidilfitri Each year, during the holy month of Ramadan, Muslims in Malaysia prepare for one of the holiest celebrations in the Islamic calendar, the Hari Raya Aidilfitri. Hari Raya, as it is locally known, means a 'day of celebration,' while 'Aidilfitri' gives meaning to 'festival of fast-breaking.' Muslims usher in Hari Raya with morning prayers followed by visits to the graves of the departed. They also gather to bake cakes and cookies. As the fasting month begins, stalls and bazaars sprout around the city, offering an array of delicious fare for Muslims to break their fast.</p> <p>Thaipusam This spectacular festival occurs in late January or early February and is a celebration of Lord Subramaniam. On the eve of the festival, a statue of the Lord is taken on procession in a chariot drawn by bullocks. The next day, devotees carry 'kavadis' through Hindu temples amidst chanting and drumming. A kavadi is a metal or wooden arch with elaborate decorations, which is placed on the devotee's shoulders. Hooks or spikes from the kavadi are pierced into parts of the devotee's body. The festival is celebrated on a large scale in Penang, Selangor and Perak.</p> <p>Colours of Malaysia Every year around the month of May, tourists and locals can enjoy a one-day festival called Colours of Malaysia. The event takes place at Merdeka Square. During this festival over 7,000 participants showcase everything Malaysia has to offer. The festival attracts around 100,000 spectators.</p> <p>Malaysia celebrates Bon Odori every July. A festival is held every summer as a reminder of the gratefulness one should feel towards one's ancestors. One of the largest Bon Odori celebrations outside Japan, this joyous event is also a showcase of Japanese art, dance, food and drinks.</p> |

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| <p>ATTRACTIONS</p> | |
| <p>Beaches</p> | <p>Some of Malaysia's best, untouched beaches:</p> <p>Off the coast of Kedah is Langkawi, a cluster of 99 islands, offering the best of many worlds: beautiful beaches, world-class infrastructure, mangroves rich in flora and fauna, ultra-cheap duty-free shopping and fascinating legends.</p> |

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| | <p>Off the coast of Pahang lies Tioman Island, an alluring holiday paradise in the South China Sea. Picturesque with towering twin volcanic peaks, soft golden sands, cool mountain streams and refreshing waterfalls amidst a lush tropical rainforest, the island's waters are filled with a diverse range of aquatic species, colourful corals and mesmerising dive sites. Here you can discover astounding sights such as colorful Gorgonian sea fans, Staghorn corals, nudibranchs and beautifully sculptured sea sponges.</p> <p>Situated off the coast of Terengganu, Pulau Perhentian consists of the islands of Pulau Perhentian Besar and Pulau Perhentian Kecil. Covered by unspoilt jungle, windswept palms, powdery white beaches and surrounded by sapphire blue waters, Pulau Perhentian is a sanctuary for discerning holidaymakers.</p> <p>Most recently, the beaches of Tanjung Rhu in Langkawi, Juara Beach in Tioman Island, and Perhentian Kecil Island, were among the top 50 of the World's 100 best beaches, according to a survey conducted by CNN.</p> |
| <p>Wildlife</p> | <p>At the Sepilok Orang Utan Sanctuary, in Sabah on the island of Borneo, visitors can observe trainers teaching orphaned or displaced orang utan apes to climb in their natural habitat. At this rehabilitation centre you can enjoy a fascinating close-up view of these arboreal creatures as captive animals are retrained for life in the jungle. The best time to visit is at 10.00 am and again at 2.30 pm when the primates emerge from the forest for their daily ration of bananas and milk. You can see the orang utans being fed from a platform in the centre. Nicknamed the "Wild Man of Borneo" you will feel a definite fellow feeling as you gaze into the eyes of your near relative. The orang utans are returned to the forest when they can fend for themselves.</p> |
| <p>Parks</p> | <p>There are several national parks and reserves throughout the country that offer a large range of outside activities, from activities as challenging as rock climbing and white water rafting to pastimes as calm as bird watching and river cruising. Outdoor professionals, who are equipped with the newest gear, can guide you through all of these activities.</p> <p>A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Kinabalu Park is home to Malaysia's highest mountain and one of Southeast Asia's highest peaks, Mount Kinabalu. A favourite destination among adventurous souls keen to scale its heights, the view from Mount Kinabalu's summit is second to none. The park is also a wonderland of ecological treasures filled with thousands of plant and animal species, including a large number of endemic species. Catch the sunrise on Mount Kinabalu, take a</p> |

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refreshing break at the nearby Poring Hot Springs, or go mountain biking or jungle trekking.

Walk through prehistoric rainforests in Taman Negara, Pahang

Estimated to be over 130 million years old, Taman Negara is Malaysia's premier national park and one of the world's oldest rainforests. Home to a vast diversity of flora and fauna, as well as amazing natural landscapes, this virgin rainforest is also the location of Mount Tahan, the highest mountain in Peninsular Malaysia. Get an overhead view of the forest via the world's longest canopy walkway, or take part in the different activities and attractions available at each of the park's four entry points.

Take an unforgettable walk in **Bako National Park, Sarawak**

Situated a mere 37km from Kuching, Sarawak's oldest national park offers an excellent introduction to Sarawak's rainforest. Home to a thriving ecosystem, it is one of the most interesting parks in Malaysia with almost every plant species in Borneo available here as well as a panoramic rocky shoreline filled with beautiful natural formations. Its well-maintained network of nature trails allow visitors to explore its attractions with ease.

Gunung Mulu National Park, situated in the Malaysian State of Sarawak on the island of Borneo, is outstanding both for its high biodiversity and for its karst features. The park is dominated by Gunung Mulu, a 2,376 m-high sandstone pinnacle and the property is the most studied tropical karst area in the world. The geological Melinau Formation contains a remarkable concentration of caves, revealing a geological history of over more than 1.5 million years. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

High in endemism, it provides significant natural habitat for a wide range of plant and animal species, both above and below ground. The 52,865 ha park contains seventeen vegetation zones, exhibiting some 3,500 species of vascular plants. Its palm species are exceptionally rich, with 109 species in twenty genera recorded, making it one of the worlds richest sites for palm species. Providing protection for a substantial area of Borneo's primary tropical forest and a home for a high diversity of species, including many endemics and threatened species, the large cave passages and chambers provide a major wildlife spectacle in terms of millions of cave swiftlets and bats.

The Park is home to one of the world's finest examples of the collapse process in karstic terrain and provides outstanding scientific opportunities to study theories on the origins of cave faunas. The deeply-incised canyons, wild rivers, rainforest-covered mountains,

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| | <p>spectacular limestone pinnacles, cave passages and decorations found within the property produce dramatic landscapes and breathtaking scenery that is without rival.</p> <p>Important both for its high biodiversity and for its karst features, the park is dominated by Gunung Mulu, a 2,377 m-high sandstone pinnacle. At least 295 km of explored caves provide a spectacular sight and are home to millions of cave swiftlets and bats. The Sarawak Chamber, 600 m by 415 m and 80 m high, is the largest known cave chamber in the world.</p> |
| <p>Gardens & Nature</p> | <p>Malaysia is an amazing country with countless abundance of biodiversity. It is not surprising to find that 75 percent of Malaysia’s land area remains forested, with 60 percent virgin rainforest, unchanged for millions of years. The country is bestowed with numerous natural attractions such as amazing and diverse flora and fauna, white sandy beaches, exotic marine aqua life, dense rainforests and the oldest and largest caves in the world.</p> <p>The states of Sabah and Sarawak in Malaysian Borneo offer several attractions and activities. Catch a glimpse of the largest flower in the world, Rafflesia, play with the endangered orang utans, or visit the world’s largest single cave passage discovered at Mulu National Park. In Peninsular Malaysia, travelers will also find great options to explore nature and wildlife. Taman Negara, Malaysia’s first national park, is situated at the centre of the peninsula and has the longest canopy walkway in the world.</p> |
| <p>Historical Sites</p> | <p>Melaka and George Town, historic cities of the Straits of Malacca have developed over 500 years of trading and cultural exchanges between East and West in the Straits of Malacca. The influences of Asia and Europe have endowed the towns with a specific multicultural heritage that is both tangible and intangible. With its government buildings, churches, squares and fortifications, Melaka demonstrates the early stages of this history originating in the 15th-century Malay sultanate and the Portuguese and Dutch periods beginning in the early 16th century. Featuring residential and commercial buildings, George Town represents the British era from the end of the 18th century. The two towns constitute a unique architectural and cultural townscape without parallel anywhere in East and Southeast Asia and are one of Malaysia’s four UNESCO World Heritage Sites.</p> <p>Another UNESCO World Heritage Site is The Lenggong Valley archaeological site in northern Peninsula Malaya. Situated in the lush Lenggong Valley, the property includes four archaeological sites in two clusters which span close to 2 million years, one of the longest records of early man in a single locality, and the oldest outside the African continent. It features open-air and cave sites with Palaeolithic tool</p> |

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| | workshops, evidence of early technology. The number of sites found in the relatively contained area suggests the presence of a fairly large, semi-sedentary population with cultural remains from the Palaeolithic, Neolithic and Metal ages. |
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| OTHER ACTIVITIES | |
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| Shopping | <p>Malaysia is a great shopping destination in Southeast Asia. Malaysians love shopping, which explains the huge number of luxury malls, street-side stalls and stores in the capital, Kuala Lumpur. If you are a shopaholic, the best time of the year to visit is during The Malaysia Mega Sale Carnival, around August through September when the entire country offers large discounts.</p> <p>The exemption of duty on a number of items has resulted in more competitive pricing and makes shopping in Malaysia an even more attractive option. Malaysian duty-free zones are on the islands of Labuan and Langkawi. There are also some duty-free shops in Kuala Lumpur and Penang, international airports and city centres. Duty-free items like cameras, watches, pens, cosmetics, perfumes, mobile phones, computers, cigarettes and liquor are among the most inexpensive in the world. Cash is accepted at night markets while major credit cards are accepted in most shops in the malls and shopping complexes.</p> <p>For light, casual shopping, there are bazaars, roadside stalls and night markets in towns throughout the country. A major attraction is the colourful, bustling night market or 'pasar malam' - found in most neighbourhoods on certain days of the week - which stock a bewildering variety of goods, local foods and fruits. Shopping at one is a fun experience. Despite the low prices, bargaining at night markets is workable. It can be quite a humorous exercise as the traders are generally friendly and enthusiastic. The rule of thumb is that anything with a price tag on it cannot be bargained, and generally street stalls are meant for fierce haggling.</p> |
| Markets | <p>Every Malaysian town and city has its market. It is the hub of the community and the best place to soak up the multicultural vibe of the country. In KL, the huge Central Market, on Jalan Benteng (tel. 03/2274-6542), offers a wide array of Malaysian handicrafts, but the market has become more gentrified in recent years and, as a result, now offers fewer bargains.</p> <p>Pasar malam (night markets) are very popular evening activities in KL. Whole blocks are taken up with these brightly lit and bustling markets packed with stalls selling almost everything you can dream of. Two good bets for catching one: on Saturday nights, head for Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman, while the Bangsar Night Market starts at dusk and is</p> |

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| | <p>popular with trendy residents. Another shopping haunt in KL is Chinatown, along Petaling Street, but for me, this place is more circus than anything else. Day or night, it's an interesting wander past stalls of knockoff designer clothing and accessories, sunglasses, T-shirts, souvenirs, fake watches, and pirated CDs and DVDs.</p> |
| <p>Nightlife</p> | <p>There's nightlife to spare in KL, from fashionable lounges to cavernous discos, to casual pubs. There are several hot areas for nightlife in the city. Along Jalan P. Ramlee, near the corner of Jalan Sultan Ismail, you'll find mostly tiki bars with Polynesian thatched roofs and live music. Changkat Bukit Bintang has a good selection of restaurants and bars for almost any taste and budget. In recent years, Jalan Bukit Bintang has become a trendy spot for clubs, bars, and late-night cafes - it's also a great people-watching spot. Bangsar, just outside the city limits, is 2 or 3 blocks of bars, cafes, and restaurants that cater to a variety of tastes (in fact, so many expatriates hang out there that they call it Kweiloh Lumpur, "Foreigner Lumpur" in Mandarin). Every taxi driver knows where it is.</p> <p>Bars, Pubs & Clubs Stop for a sunset cocktail at SkyBar (tel. 03/2332-9888), the alfresco rooftop lounge at Traders Hotel, which by day serves as the hotel's pool and spa facility. The sleek lounge offers the best view of the Petronas Twin Towers in town. What city doesn't have a Hard Rock Cafe? KL's is on Jalan Sultan Ismail next to Concorde Hotel (tel. 03/2715-5555), where you can see local bands playing evergreen rock and blues. No Black Tie (17 Jalan Mesui, off Jalan Nagasari; tel. 03/2142-3737) is a cool jazz club that offers live jazz music, a laid-back atmosphere, and a decent Japanese menu. By far the biggest dance club in town is Zouk (113 Jalan Ampang; tel. 03/2171-1997), which is fashioned after the ultrasuccessful Zouk in Singapore.</p> <p>The Performing Arts The Malaysian Tourist Centre (109 Jalan Ampang; tel. 03/9235-4900) has an auditorium where Malaysian traditional dance shows are staged every Tuesday to Thursday at 3pm and every Saturday at 8:30pm. Cultural performances like traditional Malay dance and martial arts demonstrations are held on Friday and Saturday nights at the Central Market, but it's best to call ahead to make sure there's a show www.centralmarket.com.my</p> |
| <p>Casinos</p> | <p>Entertainment that never stops in the Genting Highlands, Pahang. It's visible from Kuala Lumpur as a bright light atop a faraway hill: Genting</p> |

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| | Highlands beckons visitors with its cool climate, theme parks, casino, and nightly live performances. |
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| CUISINE | |
| Food | <p>Malaysian food is a varied culinary spectrum originating from Malaysia's multi-ethnic population that has melted together sampling tastes, ingredients and cooking methods from all over. Malaysians relish and celebrate their diverse food. It is not uncommon to drive for hours to eat a good bowl of noodles. As you can imagine, eatery standards are very competitive all over the country.</p> <p>Kuala Lumpur has the most diverse offering of foods from all over the world. Indulge in gourmet cuisine created by amazing chefs in designer restaurants, or sample an endless amount of treats found practically bursting out of malls, store fronts and side-street hawker stalls.</p> <p>Penang is a hawker stall haven, where the most delicious food requires you to wait for al fresco tables and costs as little as RM3.50 per dish.</p> <p>Melaka is a home to delicious Baba Nyonya food, much of which is served in quaint cafes in historical shop houses.</p> <p>When trying to decide on what stall or restaurant to visit, the rule of thumb is that the most popular place, especially among the locals, is normally the best.</p> |
| Restaurants | <p>Seri Angkasa Revolving Restaurant, KL Located at the top of the KL Tower, 282m (925 ft.) above the city, this revolving restaurant's views are the main attraction here. A large buffet spread of local Malay favorites includes some familiar Western choices as well.</p> <p>Top Hat Restaurant Top Hat in KL has a unique atmosphere. In a 1930s bungalow that was once a school, the place winds through room after room, its walls painted in bright hues and furnished with an assortment of mixed-and-matched teak tables, chairs, and antiques. The menu is fabulous. While a la carte is available, Top Hat puts together set meals featuring Nyonya, Melaka (Malacca), Portuguese, traditional Malay, Thai, Western, and even vegetarian recipes. They're all brilliant. Desserts are huge and sinful. There's a sampler dish for those who can't decide.</p> <p>Kota Kinabalu in Sabah is known for its fresh seafood, and there are a lot of places to choose from, but the locals and expatriates agree that Port View Seafood Restaurant, Lot 18, Ground Floor, Anjung Samudera, Jalan Tun Fuad Stephens, along the waterfront (tel. 088/252-813), is best. It's a very typical Chinese seafood joint, not much for ambience, with walls of aquariums and a very long menu. Dishes are</p> |

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| | <p>prepared primarily in Chinese and Malay styles, are moderately priced, and are always succulent.</p> <p>Hands down, the city's most romantic dining spot is @tmosphere, on the 18th floor of Menara Tun Mustapha about 20 minutes south of the city centre. The menu is contemporary Pacific Rim cuisine, a mix of local and Western, with seafood dishes highlighted. Expect to pay about RM50 or so per person. Plan to arrive in time for a sunset.</p> <p>www.atmosphererestaurant.com</p> |
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| MORE INFO | |
| Brochures | For packages to Malaysia take a look here: http://www.tourismmalaysia.ca/plan-your-trip/2013-packages |
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| HOTEL PRIZE PARTNER | Stay at the Shangri La Hotels in Malaysia. Shangri-La Hotels are Asia Pacific's leading luxury hotel group and renowned worldwide for serenity and service. |
| Shangri-La Hotel – Kuala Lumpur | <p>Nestled amidst lush gardens in the heart of the city, the Shangri-La Hotel, Kuala Lumpur sits just 45 minutes from the international airport and five minutes from key business and shopping areas.</p> <p>The hotel's guestrooms including 101 custom-crafted suites are appointed with modern amenities to offer only the very best in comfort. Shangri-La Hotel, Kuala Lumpur has the most number of suites of any hotel in the city.</p> <p>Shangri-La Hotel, Kuala Lumpur features an impressive selection of international and local cuisines from award-winning restaurants. The wide selection of dining options makes the hotel a central location for travelers who enjoy fine cuisine, in addition to being a popular choice for local high society social events, major international conferences and business meetings.</p> <p>http://www.shangri-la.com/kualalumpur/shangrila</p> |
| Shangri-La's Rasa Ria Resort | <p>Situated amid the lush tropical vegetation and crystal clear seas of Pantai Dalit, the resort is just 40 minutes from Kota Kinabalu International Airport and 35 minutes from the city's shopping and commercial district.</p> <p>Rasa Ria's setting consists of a glorious long white sandy beach fringing the South China Sea and cradled by a jungle headland with a backdrop of Sabah's icon, Mount Kinabalu. The peace and beauty of Rasa Ria, where the chorus of birds mingles with the soothing sounds</p> |

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| | <p>of the sea, exert their magic on visitors. The temptation to do nothing more than laze about the pool vies with the desire to go horseback riding, play golf at Dalit Bay Golf and Country Club, cruise to the nearby islands on the Rasa Ria catamaran, bump along the great outdoors on the resort's organized all-terrain vehicle (ATV) safari, windsurf or hike on a trail through the secondary forest of the Nature Reserve. All this ensures your enjoyment, while the well-appointed and recently refurbished Garden Wing rooms, most with great sea views, complement the many activities available.</p> <p>http://www.shangri-la.com/kotakinabalu/rasariaresort</p> |
| <p>Shangri-La's Tanjung Aru Resort & Spa</p> | <p>Shangri-La's Tanjung Aru Resort and Spa is located in Kota Kinabalu. Set amidst 25 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens on a peninsula surrounded by the waters of the South China Sea, the deluxe property is one of Asia's most exotic retreats, yet only 10 minutes from the sprawling capital of Kota Kinabalu and the Kota Kinabalu International Airport. Facing the resort and minutes away by speedboat are five tropical islands and in the distance looms Southeast Asia's highest peak, the 4,101 meter Mount Kinabalu, one of UNESCO's world heritage sites.</p> <p>http://www.shangri-la.com/kotakinabalu/tanjungaruresort</p> |
| <p>AIRLINE PRIZE PARTNER</p> | <p>Malaysia Airlines See special section below</p> |
| <p>Flight details</p> | <p>Malaysia Airlines flies four times per week from Los Angeles to Kuala Lumpur on the luxurious B-777 aircraft. Flight time is approximately 18 hours.</p> |
| <p>CURRENT DEALS</p> | <p>Currently Malaysia Airlines has a great deal on offer for return flights from Los Angeles to Kuala Lumpur: from \$1154 US if booked by July 31, 2013 for travel by October 31, 2013 with all taxes included.</p> |
| <p>PERSONAL EXPERIENCES</p> | <p>I spent two weeks exploring Kuala Lumpur, and Kota Kinabalu and Sandakan in Borneo. I climbed Mt Kinabalu and visited the Orang Utan sanctuary. Check out my photos on Pinterest at: http://pinterest.com/TravelShow/malaysia-borneo/</p> |

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| <p>MALAYSIA AIRLINES</p> | <p>Fly to Malaysia with Malaysia Airlines offering four flights per week from Los Angeles to Kuala Lumpur on the luxurious B-777 aircraft. Flight time is approximately 18 hours.</p> <p>Malaysia Airlines is the national carrier of Malaysia serving Peninsular and Borneo Malaysia for over 60 years. Relax on this 5 star airline with your own personal entertainment monitor, enjoying exceptional meals, served by a globally recognized award winning cabin staff. Recent awards for Malaysia Airlines also include Best Signature Dish.</p> <p>Malaysia Airlines' hub is the KLIA airport in Kuala Lumpur - a modern airport that has been recognized with Best Airport Staff and Best Immigration Service awards.</p> <p>In addition to over 35 fantastic Malaysian destinations, Malaysia Airlines has one of the strongest route networks in the South East Asia region flying to exciting cities in Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Indonesia.</p> <p>Malaysia Airlines is also a member of oneworld, offering great opportunities for creative round the world routings together with top class airlines such as Cathay Pacific and British Airways - plus a great frequent flier program that rewards your travel choices.</p> <p>Malaysia Airlines offer a number of value packed Stopover Holidays catering to specific interests, such as Golf, Family Fun, Adventure, Music, Nature, Romantic Getaways and more.</p> |
| <p>History</p> | <p>The story of Malaysia Airlines started in the golden age of commercial air travel. A joint initiative of the Ocean Steamship Company of Liverpool, the Straits Steamship of Singapore and Imperial Airways led to a proposal to the Colonial Straits Settlement government to run an air service between Penang and Singapore. The result was the incorporation of Malayan Airways Limited (MAL) on 12 October 1937. On 2 April 1947, MAL took to the skies with its first commercial flight as the national airline. Fuelled by a young and dynamic team of visionaries, the domestic carrier turned into an international airline in less than a decade.</p> <p>With the formation of Malaysia in 1963, the airline changed its name to Malaysian Airlines Limited. Soon after, Borneo Airways was incorporated into MAL. Within 20 years, MAL grew from a single aircraft operator into a company with 2,400 employees and a fleet operator using the then latest Comet IV jet aircraft, six F27s, eight DCs and two</p> |

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| | <p>Pioneers.</p> <p>In 1965, with the separation of Singapore from Malaysia, MAL became a bi-national airline and was renamed Malaysia-Singapore Airlines (MSA). A new logo was introduced and the airline grew exponentially with new services to Perth, Taipei, Rome and London. However, in 1972, the partners went separate ways. Malaysia introduced Malaysian Airline Limited, which was subsequently renamed Malaysian Airline System and took to the skies on 1 October 1972. It was later branded Malaysia Airlines and continues to be the country's national flag carrier. Malaysia Airlines achieved a significant milestone in 2012 when it received its first Airbus A380-800 followed by a historic Malaysian record on 1 July 2012 with the launch of its A380 scheduled service between KL International Airport and London Heathrow.</p> <p>On 1 February 2013, Malaysia Airlines became a full-fledged member of oneworld alliance and is now connected to some 850 destinations in 150 countries across the oneworld alliance network.</p> |
| <p>Oneworld</p> | <p>Malaysia Airlines is a member of oneworld, one of the world's largest networks of airlines with a frequent flier program that rewards your travel choices. oneworld is an alliance of the world's leading airlines committed to providing the highest level of service and convenience to frequent international travellers. oneworld member airlines include airberlin, American Airlines, British Airways, Cathay Pacific, Finnair, Iberia, Japan Airlines, LAN, Malaysia Airlines, Qantas, Royal Jordanian and S7 Airlines, and around 30 affiliates.</p> <p>Between them, these airlines serve more than 900 airports in almost 160 countries, with nearly 12,500 daily departures and carry some more than 440 million passengers a year on a combined fleet of almost 3,250 aircraft.</p> <p>Oneworld was recently awarded best alliance with on-time flights. Its members collectively maintained a more punctual operation in 2012 than their counterparts in the other global airline groups, according to the independent FlightStats organisation, which presented oneworld with Airline Alliance On-Time Performance Award for 2012 - which is believed to be the first time a punctuality award has been presented to any global airline alliance.</p> |
| <p>Packages</p> | <p>Choose from a number of value packed Stopover Holidays from Malaysia Airlines catering to your interests, such as Golf, Family Fun, Adventure, Music, Nature, Romantic Getaways and more.</p> |
| <p>Cabin Service</p> | <p>Malaysian Airlines has a well-deserved reputation as one of the most luxurious airlines in the world. It has recently been anointed World's Best Cabin Staff and Best Signature Dish for its food. Relax with your own personal entertainment monitors while enjoying exceptional inflight meals and being cared for by highly attentive cabin staff.</p> <p>The entertainment monitor will help make your long trip seem even</p> |

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| | shorter with over 90 movies, 70 TV programmes, 400 music albums, as well as games to keep you entertained. |
| KLIA Airport | Malaysia Airline's hub is in Kuala Lumpur, a modern, award-winning airport. Awards include Best Airport Staff and Best Immigration Service by Skytrax. You can see all the details at the airport website: http://www.klia.com.my . |
| Frequent Flyer Programme | Enrich is Malaysia Airlines Frequent Flyer Programme and it aims to recognise and reward frequent flyers with travel and special benefits. The easiest way to join is to sign up online. Membership is free and as soon as you enrol you will be eligible to participate in Enrich. If you enrol online you will receive your membership number within 24 hours. You will receive your membership number and a printable membership card by email within 24 hours of your enrolment. Your permanent plastic membership card will be sent to you after you make your first qualifying activity. Enrich membership is open to individuals in Canada and there is no annual fee. |
| Families | Malaysia Airlines looks after children on their flights so that parents can have a more relaxed flight experience: Priority boarding Families with infants and children are invited to board the aircraft first. This allows parents more time to stow away their luggage and ensure that their kids are seated comfortably without having to worry about disturbing the flow of passengers boarding. Entertainment on board There's lots to see and do on board an MH flight. The Audio Video On Demand (AVOD) system, available on selected aircrafts, offers a selection of movies, cartoons and games that will keep your kids busy and entertained. For those who love to read, complimentary Care Bears storybooks or activity books are also given to those aged between three to 10. Food If you are travelling on a flight that has a meal service, their special Child's Meal is nutritionally designed for children aged 2 to 12. The exact meal served depends on the flight sector, so do call in advance to make a request. This service must be requested through the Reservations/Ticket Counter/Call Centre at least 24 hours before departure. Childcare facilities at the airport Malaysia Airlines provides a Child's Play Room at selected airports. These are equipped with a television and DVD player, kid-sized writing tables, chairs, toys, comics and colouring books. For the convenience of nursing mothers, they also have a Baby Changing Facility and Feeding |

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| | Room at these airports, complete with cradle, high chair, diaper-changing table, and basic toiletries such as baby soap, talcum powder and nappies. |
| Fun! | Here's a bit of fun from the airline: passengers arriving at Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) on a Saturday last year were greeted with a flash mob that included the talents Malaysia Airlines staff & family as they made their way out of the Arrival Hall. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9YaFR5-MUPQ |
| Awards | <p>Malaysia Airlines is one of the most decorated airlines in the world! Here is a selection of their latest awards:</p> <p>Skytrax World Airline Awards 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The World's 5-Star Airline Award - World's Best Cabin Staff 2012 - Best Airline Signature Dish 2013 <p>Cellars In The Sky 2012 Awards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Best First Class Cellar - Best First Class Red Wine - 2nd in Best First Class Sparkling <p>Gold Award for Transportation, Travel & Tourism Category</p> <p>Putra Brand Awards 2012</p> <p>The Most Promising Brand Award (Firefly)</p> <p>Putra Brand Awards 2012</p> <p>World's Leading Airline to Asia</p> <p>World Travel Awards (WTA) 2011</p> <p>And here is a link to the Skytrax rating for MH: www.airlinequality.com/Airlines/MH.htm</p> |
| Deals | Currently there is a great deal on offer for return flights from Los Angeles to Kuala Lumpur: from \$1154 US if booked by July 31, 2013 for travel by October 31, 2013 with all taxes included. |
| Contacts | You can book online at: www.malaysiaairlines.com Tel: 1-800-552-9264 Ask for more information here: malaysiaairlines@discovertheworld.ca You can also use your mobile phone to book your next flight. There's no application to download – all you need is secure Internet access. Type flymas.mobi on your phone browser. |

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