Tour Code
**MA4**

ADVENTURESABROAD

# MALAYSIA & BRUNEI

## featuring Peninsular Malaysia, Borneo, Sarawak & The Kingdom of Brunei

**14 days**

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### Day 1 Arrival in Kuala Lumpur

Today we arrive in Kuala Lumpur, (Peninsular) Malaysia.

Malaysia's capital is a curious blend of the old and new. It is also a blend of cultures; the Malay capital has a vibrant Chinatown and an Indian quarter. Kuala Lumpur means "muddy confluence" which is an apt description of this town which grew up as a trading post and tin mining shanty town, and later became a modern cosmopolitan business hub.

Overnight in Kuala Lumpur.

Included Meal(s): Dinner, if required.

### Day 2 Kuala Lumpur: City Tour

Despite rapid development, Kuala Lumpur has managed to retain her charm, with a skyline that blends the Old World with the New. We start the day with a visit to the Menara Kuala Lumpur that offers a birds-eye view of the entire city and its surrounds. We will see the contrast of the distinctive Indo-Moorish architecture and the ultra modern edifices, the Petronas Twin Towers. Later we drive past the elegant Jamek Mosque, which occupies the symbolic birthplace of Kuala Lumpur and the bustling Chinatown at Petaling Street before a photo stop at the majestic Royal Palace.

After lunch we visit the National Museum where historical Malaysian artifacts and replicas among others are on display. Time permitting we will take a stroll at the beautiful Lake Gardens located within the vicinity of National Monument and Merdeka Square.

Overnight in Kuala Lumpur.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 3 Kuala Lumpur & Malacca

We depart after breakfast for a visit to the historic town of Malacca, founded by a fleeing prince from Sumatra in 14th century. Later it developed into a major trading port for ships from India and China. From its early days as a traders meeting point to the successive colonial occupation by the Portuguese, Dutch, English and Japanese, each culture left behind its mark or monument creating a historical showcase. Today you will find many remnants of the mixed history of this city dating back more than 500 years.

The oldest established town in Malaysia, Malacca is particularly famous for its Town Square and surrounding monuments. Our tour visits the red coloured Stadhuys, Cheng Hoon Teng, the oldest Chinese temple on the Malay peninsula, the Portuguese fortress Porta de Santiago built in 1511 and St Paul's Church where St Francis Xavier was buried.

Malacca is well-known for its eclectic food. Most notable of all is the Nyonya-Baba cuisine which is a mixture of Chinese (mostly southern Hokkien or Fujian influence), Portuguese, Dutch, Indian, British and Malay cooking with most dishes being spicy in nature.

DUE TO OUR (LIKELY) EARLY DEPARTURE tomorrow morning, we are including lunch today instead of dinner.

Overnight in Kuala Lumpur.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Lunch

### Day 4 Kuala Lumpur - Fly to Kuching, Sarawak (Borneo)

Today we fly to Kuching in Sarawak in northwestern Borneo. Upon arrival we will transfer to our hotel.

This afternoon we travel to the award winning "Sarawak Cultural Village". This living museum depicts the heritage of the major racial groups in Sarawak and conveniently portrays the respective lifestyle amidst 14 acres of equatorial vegetation. Here it is possible to see Sarawak's ethnic diversity at a glance.

We end the day at the Kuching waterfront. The river is important as a transport link in the past, is still a central feature of the city with a beautifully landscaped waterfront promenade providing a superb and relaxing venue for strolls any time of the day.

Overnight in Kuching.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

## Day 5 Kuching & Longhouse Visit

Early this morning we depart Kuching by road, passing pepper gardens, cocoa and rubber plantations. As we continue upcountry we make a few stops to see where a variety of jungle produce, such as edible ferns, bamboo shoots and unusual tropical fruit are on display. Our destination is a longhouse, which is, as its name suggests, an extended family environment where many families live out their existence under a single roof. The longhouse has an open verandah that offers a marvelous view of rural life in the form of paddy fields, rubber plantations and the like. Today in the more rural areas of Sarawak, there are longhouse dwellings where life is more simple, idyllic and nature-oriented.

We will be greeted with a welcome dance followed by a walk about during which we are treated to various cultural performances, including dancing and drumming.

Return to Kuching in the late afternoon.

Overnight in Kuching.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

## Day 6 Kuching: City Tour - Fly to Miri

This morning we embark on a tour of Kuching.

Arguably one of the most attractive cities in Southeast Asia, Kuching has adapted modern amenities without losing its old trading centre charm. Once the home of the Rajahs Brooke, their legacy is evident in the old buildings still in use today. Included on our tour: the Cat Monument, Sarawak's oldest Tua Pek Kong Taoist Temple, the Civic Center, the award winning Catholic Cathedral, and the the multi-purpose market where tin smiths, rattan workers, coffin makers, Chinese herbalists and gold smiths ply their specialised trades in a setting little changed from the 19th century. A highlight of the day is a visit to the Borneo Cultures Museum.

This afternoon, we fly to Miri (still in Sarawak, Borneo), an interesting place unto itself and the gateway for the neighbouring country of Brunei.

Overnight in Miri.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

## Day 7 Miri & Niah National Park and the Great Cave

This morning we drive 110 km to the world famous Niah National Park. Although one of Sarawak's smallest national parks, it is one of the most important and unusual with its main claim to fame being known as the birthplace of human civilization in the region. The oldest modern human remains in Southeast Asia along with many other relics of prehistoric man dating from 40,000 years ago were discovered here in 1958 making the park one of the most important archaeological sites in the world.

After registration at the park headquarters, and a brief look at the information centre we take a short boat to cross the river to visit Niah Museum. After our museum visit we walk 3 km along a level boardwalk to the main cave entrance.* The walk to the Grand Cave takes about 45 minutes and is fascinating in its own right as you pass close to giant Tapang trees (Koompassia excelsa) with their enormous buttressed roots, pandanus plants twice the size of a person and colourful orchids and tree fungi.

In the Painted Cave you see the prehistoric wall drawing as well as the preserved remains of stone age people dating back 40,000 years. The Great Cave as the name suggests, is an enormous cavern surrounded by dense primary rainforest. The Great Cave is not only important archaeological site, where it was inhabited by man for 40,000 years, but the cave is also full bats and birds, especially the Black-nest Swiftlets.

Return to Miri.

* Please note that this requires stamina and an ability to be steady on one's feet, to be able to navigate uneven, possibily wet/slippery surfaces, and to endure some heat over the course of several hours.

Overnight in Miri.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

## Day 8 Miri, Malaysia - Brunei Darussalam

A 2-hour drive this morning takes us to Brunei is a small oil rich country just 443 km (277 miles) north of the equator in the northwest corner of Borneo, bounded on all landward sides by Sarawak (Malaysia) which splits Brunei into two parts. The landscape is mainly equatorial jungle cut by rivers. It is a heavily forested state and most human activity is restricted either to coastal areas or estuaries.

Today our sightseeing tour will include the magnificent golden-domed Jame Asr Hassanil Bolkiah Mosque.* The mosque with its domes, mosaic patterns, surrounding gardens and imposing minarets plated with 24 carat gold, was built to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the King's reign.

In the afternoon we will take a cruise to visit the Kampung Ayer water village, said to be the largest water village in the world. This village has been in continuous habitation since 1521. Here we will witness a traditional way of life, with stilt houses built over the Brunei River (though today most of the inhabitants enjoy modern facilities).

Our tour of the city today will also include a view of the spectacular Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque and a visit to one of the local markets.

* Though unlikely, it is possible that mosques can be closed at any time without notice. This could be due to security concerns, maintenance, or for official visits by dignitaries or members of the royal family.

Overnight in Brunei.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

## Day 9 Brunei Darussalam Touring - Fly to Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia

We have most of the day in Brunei to continue with our sightseeing tour. Today we visit to the Royal Regalia Building, with its amazing array of chariots, weapons, crowns, thrones and other paraphenalia.

There will be a chance for a photo opportunity of the magnificent Istana Nurul Iman, the Sultan's Royal Palace for his first wife, and also the largest residential palace in the world.

Later this afternoon we fly back to Borneo and Kota Kinabalu, the main city in the Malaysian state of Sabah. Time-permitting we will have a brief city sightseeing drive tour including a visit to the excellent State Museum.

Overnight in Kota Kinabalu.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

## Day 10 Kota Kinabalu: Mt Kinabalu & Poring

Today we drive through paddy-fields and Dusun villages, over the ridges of the Crocker Range to the foothills of the 1500 m / 5,000 foot high Mt. Kinabalu. We arrive at the park headquarters at the Kundasang Visitor Centre and Mountain Garden, home to some of the 24 species of flowering rhododendrons, 10 species of carnivorous pitcher plants, an estimated 1,400 species of orchids, over 600 species of ferns, and more than 40 species of oak trees and over 300 species of birds.

We continue 40 km / 25 mi journey to Poring where we explore tropical rainforest on a treetop canopy walkway suspended 41 m / 135 ft above the forest floor. After our visit we return to Kota Kinabalu.

Overnight in Kota Kinabalu.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

## Day 11 Kota Kinabalu - Fly to Sandakan - Sepilok Orangutan Sanctuary - Sukau

A short flight takes us to Sandakan on the far northern tip of Borneo, from where we transfer to Sepilok, the largest orangutan sanctuary in the world.* The sanctuary was founded in 1964 to rehabilitate orphaned orangutans. The site is 43 sq km of protected land at the edge of Kabili Sepilok Forest Reserve, and today around 60 to 80 orangutans are living free in the reserve. The facility provides medical care for orphaned and confiscated orangutans as well as dozens of other wildlife species. Some of the other animals which have been treated at the centre include sun bears, gibbons, Sumatran rhinos, and elephants.

Later we continue by road to our rainforest lodge.

* Depending on our timing for today, we may visit the orangutans this afternoon or on the morning of Day 13.

Overnight in Sukau region.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

## Day 12 Oxbow Lakes & Sukau

Today we wake up to the calls of gibbons and hornbills. Early this morning we have a river cruise up the Kinabatangan River to view more birds and wildlife. We proceed to the Kelenanap ox-bow lake while searching for more wildlife. In the afternoon, we take a river cruise in search of wild proboscis monkeys as they settle down on treetops along the Kinabatangan River.

After dinner there is an optional night cruise for spotting nocturnal animals, crocodiles and birds.

Overnight in Sukau region.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

## Day 13 Sukau - Sandakan - Fly to Kota Kinabalu

Today we return to Sandakan and, time-permitting, have some sightseeing in Sandakan before catching our flight to Kota Kinabalu.

Sandakan's main attraction is its hot, steamy waterfront -- a teeming, chaotic multi-purpose place where the fish and central market, hawker stalls and transport all seem to combine a profusion of colour and activity. In the market's dark aisles can be found conches and fish bigger than shovels.

Later today we transfer to the airport for our flight to Kota Kinabalu.

Overnight in Kota Kinabalu.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

## Day 14 Departure

Today we transfer to Kota Kinabalu Airport for our flight home.

SELAMAT JALAN!

Included Meal(s): Breakfast