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UPDATED ON OCTOBER 28, 2021

25 Most Incredible Places to Visit in Malaysia

Planning a Malaysia itinerary and wondering where to go? Fuel your wanderlust with these 25 most beautiful places to visit in Malaysia!

Malaysia is one country that simply has to be on your destination hit-list! Diverse in all senses imaginable, it is a beautiful country full of gorgeous scenery, history, delicious food, and some of the most **incredible landmarks in Asia**.

But with all the culture to experience, history to uncover, fascinating cities to visit, and gorgeous beaches to kick-back on, choosing where to go in Malaysia can be a tricky task. That's where this guide comes in! We cover everything from must-go places, like **Kuala Lumpur**, Georgetown, Ipoh, Melaka, and Sipadan Island to lesser-known gems like Kapas Island, Port Dickson, the gorgeous Perhentian Islands, Danum Valley, and more!

Ready to spend less time planning and more time discovering all of Malaysia's best bits? Read along to find the very best places to visit in Malaysia!



Mariza is a South African who ditched her job in Advertising to teach English in Taiwan. Ten years later, she now calls Taiwan home but still visits South Africa whenever she can. She shares in-depth destination guides and all her insider tips on traveling in Taiwan & Asia [here](#).

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There are so many incredible places to visit in Malaysia – stopping by the markets are a huge must.

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Before you visit these places in Malaysia



If this is your first visit to Malaysia, it's important to know that the "Land of Mountains" is huge! The country is divided into two main islands – West and East Malaysia. West Malaysia, also known as Peninsular Malaysia, is probably the most popular side for mainstream tourism. In contrast, East Malaysia is famous for Borneo's lush jungles full of diverse wildlife, fantastic hikes, and off-the-beaten-path islands.

So, how to decide where to go and what to see in Malaysia? Well, that will ultimately depend on your interests and what you'd like to get out of your Malaysia itinerary.

However, since we've included ALL the best places to visit and different trip suggestions, this Malaysia travel guide can easily be tailored to match your needs, interests, and budget – whether you have **1 week in Malaysia** or more!

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Before choosing which where to go and what to do, these handy **Malaysian travel tips** will also come in handy.

In a rush? Pin The Best Places to Visit in Malaysia for later.



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The Best Places to Visit in Malaysia Quick Overview

Malaysia packs the perfect mix of lush jungles, jaw-dropping islands, bustling cities, and charming little towns! All in all, there's something for everyone in Malaysia!

However, since there is so much to do and see, I reached out to fellow blogging friends to compile this epic list of *Best Places to Visit in Malaysia*! Here's a quick look at which places are covered in this guide:



Peninsular Malaysia:

- Kuala Lumpur
- Port Dickson
- Melaka
- Johor Bahru
- Tioman Island
- Kapas Island
- Taman Negara National Park
- Cameron Highlands
- Ipoh
- Penang
- Georgetown
- Langkawi
- Perhentian Islands
- Sungai Lembing

West Malaysia:

- Tawau
- Sipadan Island
- Semporna
- Danum Valley
- Kinabatangan River Valley
- Sandakan
- Kota Kinabalu
- Kampung Meritam's Mud Volcanoes
- Mulu National Park
- Niah National Park
- Kuching

Without further ado, here are the 25 best places to visit in Malaysia plus all our PRO tips on where to go and what to do to help you plan the perfect Malaysia itinerary.

Places to Visit in Malaysia Peninsular / East Malaysia

Kuala Lumpur



Petronas Towers | Places to Visit in Malaysia



Malaysia's capital hub, Kuala Lumpur, is a melting pot of cultures, cuisines, and colorful architecture.

The **perfect KL travel itinerary** starts with a visit to the most iconic landmark – **Petronas Twin Towers** – towering above the city at 451.9m. After getting a bird's-eye view of the cityscape, drop by the Thean Hou Temple, the National Mosque of Malaysia, and the famed **Batu Caves**.







Central Market is another must-visit spot full of traditional handmade arts and crafts. Nearby, Petaling Street Market's bustling alleyways also offer the chance to bargain for cheap knockoffs and local souvenirs.



Another great draw to Kuala Lumpur, apart from its scenic streets and loads of places to explore, is that **nature is within easy reach**. Some of the best green spaces to explore include the Botanic Gardens and the KL Forest Eco Park, where you can wander through a rainforest on a forest canopy walkway. *Right in the heart of the city!*

If it's delicious food you're after, KL has a booming street food scene, and one of the easiest ways to sample the city's eclectic local fare is on a **street food tour**. Alternatively, head straight to one of the bustling street markets, where you'll find everything from Malay to Chinese and Indian to Western cuisines!

Pro Tips: Since there are so many **things to do in KL**, spend at least 3-4 days here to get a real feel of what the city has on offer. It's also good to know that KL has a comprehensive subway system. However, we found taking the **Hop On Hop Off bus** and

Grab Taxi cheap and quick modes of transport. More adventurous travelers looking to explore the area in an entirely unique way, could also consider [cycling in Malaysia](#).

 Kuala Lumpur
 Petronas Twin Towers and Batu Caves Full Day
 Tour




 4.6
(60 Reviews)
£ 44.75


ALSO READ: [The Best Layover Cities in Asia](#)

Port Dickson



Recommended by *Karolina* | *Lazy Travel Blog*

Port Dickson is one of the best places to visit in Malaysia. This haven for nature lovers lies just south of [Kuala Lumpur](#).

The town has a long coastline dotted with beaches that lead to Tanjung Tuan, one of the country's biggest wildlife reserves. You will also find a 16th-century lighthouse, a 14th-century Islamic tomb, and megaliths in this beautiful area for a dash of history. To add a bit contemporary flare, there's also a 3D art gallery that will literally take you to another world.

Port Dickson can be reached from Mainland Malaysia or **Singapore**. The best way to get there is by car, as it allows the flexibility to explore the area. By taking the Seremban-Port Dickson Causeway (E29), which connects to the North-South Expressway (E2) from Kuala Lumpur, it will take around 1h30 to reach the destination. A drive from the Lion City through the Causeway will take 3 hours and 45 minutes.

A cheaper option is to take the bus to Port Dickson. Hop on a bus to Seremban and there, change buses to Port Dickson. The trip will take around an hour and will set you back RM4, which is less than a US Dollar.



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Ads by Amazon

Malaka



Recommended by Campbell & Alya | Stingy Nomads

The small and cozy town of Malaka is a great place to come for a weekend from bustling Kuala Lumpur. Located just 150km from the Malaysian capital Malaka is easily accessed by bus. It takes about 2 hours, and the ticket costs US\$3. The town looks very different from other places in Malaysia with its canals, boats, bridges, colorful houses, and many cafés.



There are many **things to do in Malacca** like visiting the city's attractions, wandering around the Dutch Square, going on a boat along the canals, enjoying the city view from the Menara Taming Sari Tower, and of course, tasting and trying local delicacies at the Night Market on Jonker Street. The main tourist attractions in Malaka are the Dutch square, Kampung Kling mosque, St.Paul's Church, Maritime Museum of Melaka, Stadhuys, and the Botanical Garden.

You can easily move around on foot, or if you get tired, hire one of the famous trishaws. It's a local version of a rickshaw with three wheels. Carts are richly decorated with flowers and lights, and riding these at night is an exciting activity. Another option to move around the town is by bike. There are several cycling routes and tours in the city.

The best area to stay in Malaka is at the Malacca River. Here you will find many hostels, hotels, and guesthouses. Some of them are located close to Jonker Street, which guarantees a stay right in the town's busiest nightlife area. For a quiet holiday, rather choose one of the places on the other side of the river.

Melaka
 Historical Melaka Tour with Lunch from Kuala Lumpur

4.7

(298 Reviews)

£ 24.69



Johor Bahru



Recommended by Noel Cabacungan | Ten Thousand Strangers

Johor Bahru doesn't really have many unique points of interest that are not in other places in Malaysia. However, the presence of **Legoland Malaysia** and Sanrio Hello Kitty Town turned Johor Bahru into a popular tourist destination among families, especially those traveling from Singapore.

Johor Bahru is easily accessible from Singapore by private vehicle or public bus. **Crossing the border from Singapore** to Malaysia will take less than an hour, including border controls. Because of its proximity, people usually do Johor Bahru as a quick day trip from Singapore. However, I would recommend families to stay in Johor Bahru for at least 3D2N. This will allow you one day for Legoland Resort, another for Legoland Water Park, and a few hours in Puteri Harbor and Sanrio Hello Kitty Town.

Airbnb also has several listings of top quality condominium units, which a family can book for less than US\$20 per night.

How to get to Johor Bahru

To reach Johor Bahru from Singapore, catch a bus right outside the MRT Kranji Station. You can even use your Ezlink card with at least SGD1.39 credit (or pay SGD2 cash to the driver). This way, you won't need to reserve a ticket online.

If coming from elsewhere in Malaysia, take a local bus to Larkin Bus Terminal. And from there, take Grab Taxi to your chosen accommodation in Johor Bahru.

Desaru
[Klook Exclusive] Adventure Waterpark Desaru
Coast Ticket in Johor



4.5

(0 Reviews)
£11.65

ALSO READ: [Jaw-dropping Instagram Spots in Singapore](#)

Tioman Island



Recommended by Emma | Small Footprints, Big Adventures

Tioman Island is a beautiful place to visit in Malaysia. It is relatively unspoiled, with the jungle within it still pristine, and several coral reefs sought for diving and snorkeling. There are also waterfalls and great hiking options within the island. Not to mention, some mangroves that you can kayak through and spot wildlife like monkeys and snakes.

The beachfront of Juara Bay is stunning and not crowded like most other beaches of its quality. The water is calm, and it's safe for swimming all year round, and there are several dive shops to hire equipment from. Also, there are many excellent local cafes on the beach serving fresh Malay and Western food.



There is accommodation to suit every budget on Pulau Tioman, some even with their own private beach. The **Juara Turtle Project** – a sea turtle conservation program is well worth a visit. You can also opt to volunteer with them for a week or more and help with many tasks while meeting other travelers from around the world.

To get to Pulau Tioman, catch one of the daily ferries from Mersing on the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia. It takes two hours to reach Tioman Island and arrives at the main port, Tekek. Plan to stay at least a week to really enjoy all that this beautiful island has to offer! By the time you've relaxed sufficiently in your hammock, explored the amazing natural wonders, and feasted on heaps of great food, you'll be struggling to leave Pulau Tioman!

Kapas Island



Recommended by Dave | Jones Around the World

Malaysia is home to some truly spectacular islands and beaches, but one of the best hidden gems is **Pulau Kapas**, more commonly known to tourists as Kapas Island!

Located just a few kilometers off the west coast of Malaysia, nearby to Kuala Terengganu, it's become a popular destination for weekend trips. While there isn't actually that much to do there besides go snorkeling right off the beach, enjoy delicious beachside restaurants, and watch beautiful sunsets every night – you will definitely be amazed at the relaxing atmosphere found here. The island is simply stunning, and the color of the water will leave you speechless!

While it could be easy to stay there for a week or longer, most people find that a 3-4 day stay is more than enough to experience the Kapas magic. Accommodation options range from beach

camping (for the budget travelers), beach chalets, or the more expensive resort on Gem Island, just a 5-minute boat ride away from Kapas. It's a truly remarkable place in Malaysia, and shouldn't be skipped while planning your itinerary through the country!



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By Kattee
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★★★★★

Ads by Amazon

Taman Negara National Park



Recommended by Erika | [Erika's Travelventures](#)

In the heart of Malaysia lies Taman Negara National Park, an ideal introduction to what the Malaysian jungle has to offer visitors. The best way to reach Taman Negara National Park is by a 3-hour scenic boat ride, which departs from Kuala Tembeling and costs 35 Ringgit (USD 8.40). Buses or minivans depart from Kuala Lumpur or the Cameron Highlands heading to Kuala Tembeling each day. Alternatively, you can bus to Jerantut, then bus to Kuala Tahan, the village next to the national park.

You have to take a boat across the river from Kuala Tahan to reach Taman Negara's main visitor center. Entry to the park costs 1 Ringgit (USD 0.25). You can depart on many treks from the visitor's center – some are only a few kilometers, and others are overnight treks. Whichever hike

you embark on, you are sure to see some interesting insects, plants and flowers, and views over the jungle! If you're lucky, you may see some jungle animals too.

There are a few tours that you can do in Taman Negara National Park, such as a guided trek at night, to try and see nocturnal animals. Inside the park are some elevated animal viewing huts and a fun canopy walkway where you can walk from platform to platform far up in the trees! Overall, Taman Negara is a great place to experience walking in the dense Malaysian jungles and spend time in nature. Unless you're an avid jungle trekker, I recommend staying 1-2 nights in Kuala Lumpur before heading to a Tahan for visiting Taman Negara National Park.

Cameron Highlands



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Recommend by Renata Green | [Bye Myself](#)

A visit to the Cameron Highlands is not to be missed when traveling Malaysia, especially since it is one of the most **famous landmarks in Malaysia**. The wide tea plantations, lush jungles, and mysterious mossy forests at the significantly cooler highlands will amaze you.

This region, named after British explorer and geologist William Cameron, ranges from 2,600 to 5,259 ft above sea level and is a Malaysian Garden Eden. There are over 700 species of plants growing here, and the vegetation changes according to the ascent of the mountains. **Around April**, a guided hike to the jungle is a must since the famous Rafflesia Arnoldii, a stemless blossom looking like some weird red cabbage, being the largest single flower of any flowering plant, is in full bloom. If it's not the season, you do not need a guided tour to explore the jungle trails around.

But the highlands are especially known for tea farms – BOH being the most popular one. Therefore, the views of the breathtaking landscape are obstructed by ugly, plastic-covered hothouses. But no worries, it gets better. Once you get into the woodlands, you'll be amazed by the perfect and undisturbed ecosystems. Besides the sumptuous flora, this area is also a shelter



various animals, birds, reptiles, and insects. There are two main places to stay in the Highlands, namely Brinchang and Tanah Rata. Brinchang is a rather touristy place frequented by groups, while Tanah Rata is more popular with the laid-back backpacker crowd. To get to the highlands is easy since there are frequent buses going from Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, and Penang. Also, accommodations can arrange direct trips being a little more expensive but much faster and more comfortable.

Cameron Highlands
Cameron Highlands Day Tour

4.5

(186 Reviews)
£ 60.85
⚡
Ipoh

Ipoh



Recommended by Chris | [More Life in Your Days](#)

Ipoh has to be one of the best places to visit in Malaysia. Despite being the largest city in Perak state, it has a great small-town feel to it and a cool, retro vibe. You will find street art, hawker markets, cute architecture, and trendy cafes all in the relatively small historic center of the town Ipoh.

If you are a foodie, you will love Ipoh, which many people consider Malaysia's culinary capital. At night, hawker food markets spill out into the streets and alleyways. And, you will be spoiled for choice when deciding how to fill your tum! Ipoh is also the birthplace of Malaysia's famous white rice. This you can enjoy at one of the many retro cafés around the town center.

Stay in the town for at least a couple of days to give you a chance to soak up the vibe and visit some of the other attractions nearby. Be sure not to miss the many cave temples or Sunway Lost World (ideal if you have kids) on your visit here.

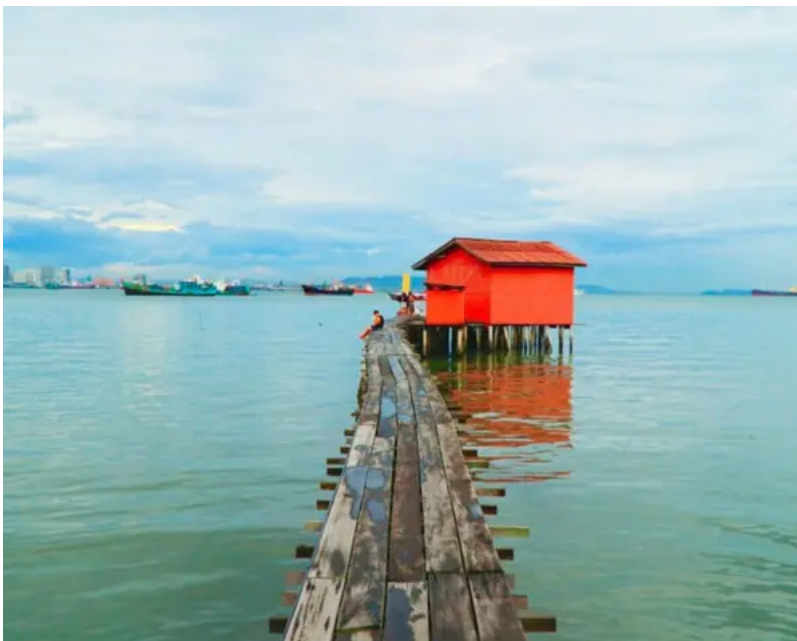
Ipoh is easy to get to from Kuala Lumpur and is around a 3-hour journey from the capital. We prefer the train for this journey, but you could also take the bus. Other tourist destinations like the Cameron Highlands and Penang can also be reached from Ipoh by bus.

Ipoh
Ipoh Private Day Tour from Kuala Lumpur

4.9

(7 Reviews)
£ 29.55
⚡
Ipoh

Penang Island





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Recommended by Nate | Travel Lemming

Perhaps no place in Malaysia better encapsulates the country than the island of Penang. The UNESCO World Heritage town of Georgetown is one of the best places to visit in Malaysia in its own right. Still, the entire island is also worth inclusion on your Malaysian itinerary.

From soaring skyscrapers and lush jungle to white sand beaches and bustling street stalls – you can find nearly everything that Malaysia is known for packed into this small island, which can be traveled from end to end just over an hour.

There are so many **great activities in Penang** to keep you busy during your stay. So, I recommend at least three to four days to truly do the island justice.

Try hiking to the aptly-named Monkey Beach for a rewarding jungle trek that ends with a picturesque beach filled with the critters who gave it its name. Or you can ascend the longest and steepest funicular track in Asia to the top of Penang Hill, where you'll be treated to heavenly views of the island and surrounding water. And of course be sure to check out one of the many hawker food stalls that dot the island for a taste of the cultural vibrancy that makes this place so special.

Whatever you do, Penang is sure to be an island that will capture your heart!

Penang
 Private Penang Airport Transfers (PEN) for
 Penang

4.6

(1046 Reviews)

£ 12.55



Georgetown



Georgetown | Places to Visit in Malaysia

No Malaysia itinerary would be complete without visiting Georgetown – Penang’s capital and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. So it comes as no surprise that this little town is one of the best places to visit in Malaysia!

Georgetown packs the perfect mix of culture, history, and Instagrammable places. One of the most popular things to do in the city is to hunt for street art. The town is chock-full with cute and quirky street art dotted along colorful streets lined with broken down shophouses, colonial-style buildings and age-old temples. The best way to find these gems though, is to grab a Street Art Map as soon as possible. Many of the murals are hidden, which means finding them on your own can be tricky.

Getting an **iconic view of the cityscape at Komtar** is another must while visiting here. Go at sunset for magnificent views and, more importantly, cooler temperatures! The Clan Jetties is another popular point of interest. Here you can get a closer look at Chinese settlers’ local life and snap up some great pics of the colorfully decorated stilt houses. Of course, **joining a fun food tour** is yet another great pastime here. Head to one of the hawker stalls where it’s easy to mingle with locals and get a real taste of authentic Malay cuisine.

Whatever you do, try to spend at least 2-3 days in Georgetown before exploring the rest of the island in-depth.

Penang
Georgetown Heritage Tour



4.5

Langkawi



Recommended by Aurelia | Daily Travel Pill

This beautiful island, situated in the north of Malaysia, is one of the most incredible places to visit in Malaysia. Endless beaches with white sand and tall palm trees are waiting for you here! Every corner of this island is simply postcard-perfect.



Langkawi is well known for snorkeling and island hopping, but there are many other things to do too. You can visit the Langkawi Sky Bridge, which offers the most beautiful views of the island. Alternatively, visit the amazing **Seven Wells Waterfall**. The waterfall is a popular attraction among both locals and tourists. You can explore the falls or swim in the small pools formed at the base of the waterfall. It's the perfect place to cool down on a hot summer day.

To get to Langkawi, you can take the fast boat for a few hours from Penang. I recommend spending at least **two days in Langkawi**. You will be amazed by the beautiful beaches and the island's incredible natural beauty. While you're in Langkawi, don't hesitate to try the seafood.

Simply delicious!



Langkawi

Langkawi Island Hopping Shared Speedboat

Tour

4.2

(853 Reviews)

£ 6.29



Perhentian Islands



Recommended by Ann | [The Road Is Life](#)

When considering an island getaway in Malaysia, Langkawi is the first thing that comes to mind for most people. But, just off Malaysia's northeast coast lies the ultimate tropical paradise: the stunning Perhentian Islands. Upon arrival, you will be met with lush jungle, calm turquoise water, and pristine white sand beaches that aren't packed with tourists.

The Perhentian Islands are made up of two main islands: Perhentian Kecil and Perhentian Besar. The island you choose to stay at comes down to the type of traveler you are. Besar, the larger of the two, is known for its luxurious villas and resorts. Whereas, Kecil caters to backpackers and budget travelers.

No matter which one you choose, the laid back island vibes make this place truly unique. With no roads or cars and limited Wi-Fi, time just seems to slow right down. Besides spending your time relaxing on the beach, you might wonder what people fill their days with.



The main attraction of the Perhentian Islands is what lies beneath the surface of those crystal waters. For a surprisingly affordable price, you can enjoy world-class snorkeling and diving here. Fancy swimming with turtles and snorkeling with reef sharks? Look no further! Depending on how much diving/snorkeling you're planning to do, 5 nights is the perfect amount of time to spend on the Perhentians.

Pro Tips

The reason you don't see tourists lining these perfect beaches is that getting to the Perhentians is no simple task. Depending on where you are coming from, it can take up to a full day of travel. The quickest way to get there from Kuala Lumpur is to fly into the city of Kota Bharu. From there, take a taxi (1hr) or a bus (1.5hrs) to Kuala Besut.

Fast boats to the Perhentian Islands depart regularly daily from the [jetty at Kuala Besut](#). It's not necessary to book your boat ticket in advance. However, if you wish to do so for peace of mind, [find more information here](#).

ALSO READ: [What are the Best Islands to visit in Asia?](#)

Sungai Lembing



Recommended by Aaron from [Aaron Teoh](#)

Once a bustling tin mining town that was home to the deepest and largest tin mine in the world, Sungai Lembing was fading into oblivion with the collapse of tin ore prices in the 80s. It is experiencing a revival as a tourism spot in recent years, mostly among locals but with a growing reach.



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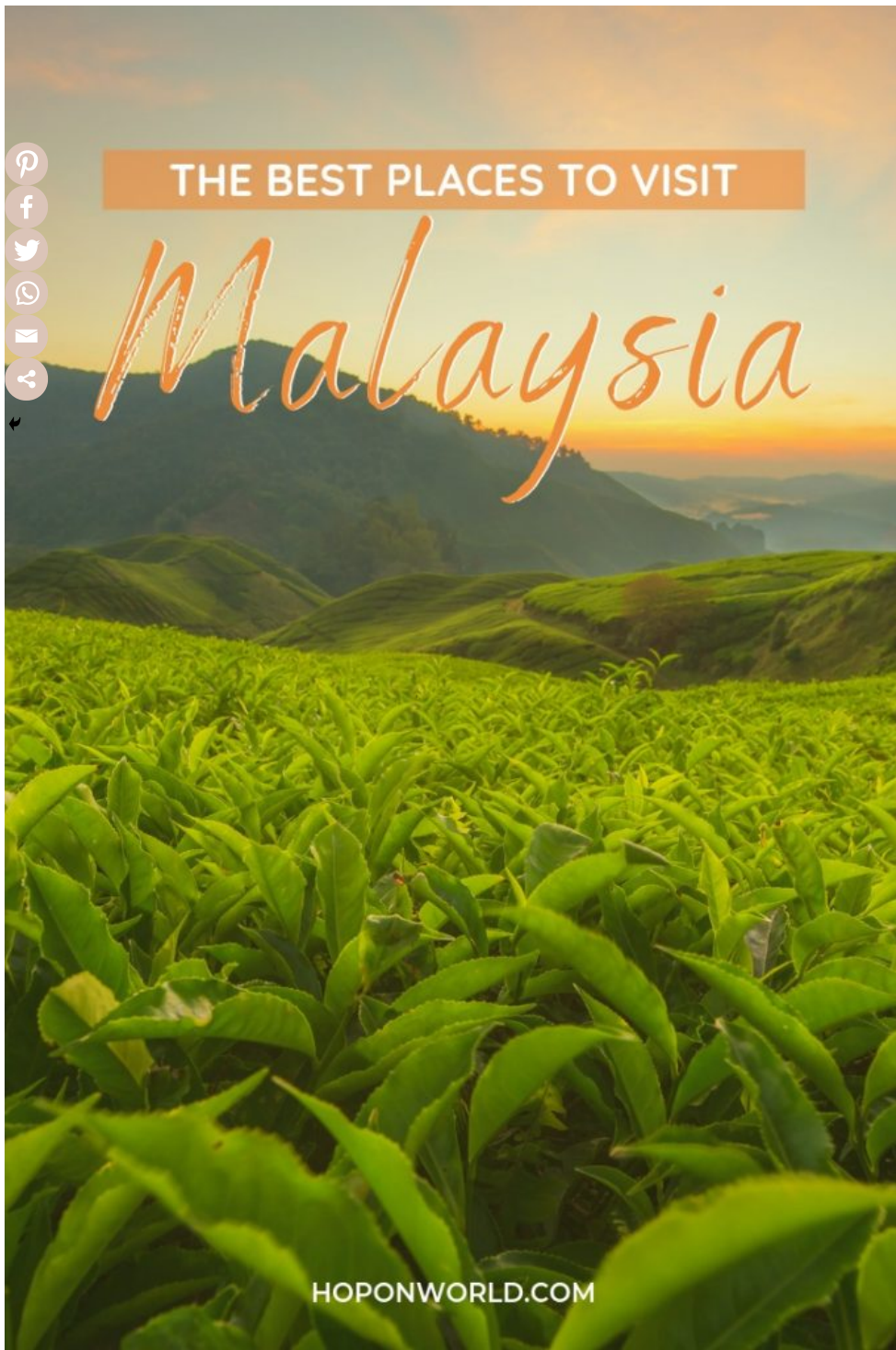
The biggest draws at Sungai Lembing are its mining history, the surrounding nature, and the local food. At the mining museum, it is possible to explore parts of the old mine and learn about its history and miners' lives.

For more nature, the two popular morning hikes from town are to Panorama Hill and Rainbow Waterfalls. Both start pre-dawn and are done on separate days.

Finally, the ingredients and food made in Sungai Lembing, from noodles to beancurd to broths, draw visitors from all over Malaysia. Mainly because the mountain spring water used to make them, give the food a unique flavor not found in similar dishes elsewhere.

Given the two morning hikes that are often part of the itinerary, a weekend trip of 3 days would be ideal for covering the main attractions and exploring the old town a little. Most people travel to Sungai Lembing by car or with tour coaches. To experience some of that old-time vibes, with accessible hikes and fabulous food without the crowds, Sungai Lembing would be the perfect candidate, *at least until everyone else hears about it.*

Like what you're reading? Maybe your friends will too. Pin *The Best Places to Visit in Malaysia* here.



Sabah
Tunku Abdul Rahman Island Visit & Boat
Snorkeling Experience

4.7

(74 Reviews)

£ 34.89



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★★★★★



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★★★★★

Ads by Amazon



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Places to visit in East Malaysia / Borneo

Tawau



Photo by Kit Yeng Chan

Recommended by Marco | Monkey Rock World

Most people come to Tawau flying from Kota Kinabalu as a pit-stop on their way to Semporna and its famous islands. Besides a good coastline and some incredible food, it doesn't have many attractions for travelers to linger longer. But that's a pity because Tawau's outskirts have some interesting things to do for nature lovers.

Tawau Hills Park

First of all, 20km north of town is **Tawau Hills Park**, a treasure for nature lovers and people interested in spotting tropical snakes. Guests can stay in the charming wooden accommodation at headquarters. It's possible to see hornbills fly overhead, spot colugos, many frogs species, hundreds of local insects.

With at least three days on your hands, you should hike to Mount Lucia, one of the three peaks of the park. This 10-km trek brings you through pristine forest and a mountain ridge inhabited by red leopards – feel extremely lucky to spot one. You need a ranger and a guide for this trek, and you will stay in a dorm on top of the ridge, with plenty of great jungle walks around you, and the chance of seeing gibbons and wild Malay civets.

SABAH SOFT WOODS



Not far away from Tawau is the Sabah Soft Woods plantation and their Plant4Borneo Elephants project. Guests come to join jeep safaris to see the herds of wild elephants who have taken up residence in this huge plantation. As part of the trip, they also help plant trees that serve to reforest a wildlife corridor the animals will later use to move between this area and the nearby Danum Valley Conservation Area. A 4 days/3 Nights tour of both Tawau Hills Park and the elephants cost RM1700 per person and is organized by the NGO 1StopBorneo Wildlife.

You can otherwise go to the park yourself, but it takes a bit of time and effort to organize guides if you wanted to trek further – getting on a tour is the most time and cost-effective way to go.

Sipadan Island



Recommended by Lora | Explore with Lora

In Borneo, Malaysia, Sipadan Island is regularly ranked as one of the best dive destinations in the world. And it's not hard to see why. This small island, formed by living corals growing on top of an extinct undersea volcano, is one of the world's richest marine habitats.

When **diving Sipadan Island**, you can expect to see giant green sea turtles and hawksbills all over the place, tornadoes of barracudas, parrotfish, sharks, and morays, all in one dive. More than 300 species of fish and hundreds of coral species have been classified in the waters surrounding Sipadan.

There are twelve dive sites, and each has its own distinctive views of coral and aquatic life. But the Barracuda point is definitely the highlight of the trip. This dive site has a great barracuda shoal where you can see thousands in a tornado-like formation. During interval stops, divers get the chance to relax and recharge on Sipadan island's beautiful beaches.



The island is located in the state of Sabah, in the northern part of Borneo. It is not possible to stay on the island overnight. You can either stay in the town of Semporna or on the nearby islands of Mabul and Kapalai. The closest airport to Sipadan is Tawau, about an hour's drive from Semporna. From Semporna, you can arrange dive trips to the island through any dive shop. Be sure to book in advance, though. Dive permits are limited to 120 a day, and space can fill up quickly.

Semporna



Recommended by Wendy | The Nomadic Vegan

Most foreign visitors pass through Semporna rather quickly to go diving or snorkeling on one of the nearby islands like Sipadan or Mabul. But if you can spare a day, it's really worth stopping to experience something beyond the typical tourist attractions and see what life is like for the locals in Borneo, particularly the Bajau people who live in Semporna.

The most prominent building in town is the main mosque, which stands proudly painted in green and white and is topped with golden onion domes. A great way to while away a morning is by strolling through the local markets. As you might expect in a coastal town, there is a busy fish market, where you will see fish and other sea creatures that have been caught in the nearby waters.

Vegetarian and [vegan visitors to Malaysia](#) will probably prefer the produce market, which is quite colorful and much less smelly. Around the mosque and the jetty, you will see many ramshackle houses built on stilts.

Danum Valley



Recommended by James | Travel Collecting

One of the best places to visit in Malaysia [Borneo](#) is the Danum Valley in the Sabah area. This is one of the few parts of Borneo that has never been logged by humans. The primeval rainforest is magical. There are towering trees with enormous buttresses that are draped in thick vines and shrouded in the early morning mist.

The only place to stay in the Danum Valley Conservation Area is Borneo Rainforest Lodge, an upscale lodge that provides guided hikes and night walks and drives. A typical stay is three days/two nights.

The lodge has an office near the airport in Lahad Datu, where a jeep or minivan picks you up for the two-hour drive to the resort. There are hikes up the escarpment where you can look out over the lodge and rainforest. Alternatively, hike to waterfalls deep in the jungle, shallow creeks, or along the canopy walkway.

There is also a guided night walk and a night drive in the back of an open truck, with a powerful spotlight and an expert guide to help spot wildlife. Possible sightings include orangutans, pygmy elephants, red leaf monkeys, giant flying squirrels, flying frogs, and even rare clouded leopards.

After the hikes, you can relax in the open-air restaurant and bar or have a spa massage. This is a truly incredible experience rightly deserving a spot on your best places to visit in Malaysia list!

Kinabatangan River Valley



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AUTODESK

Recommended by Sarah | A Social Nomad

The Kinabatangan River in Malaysian Borneo is the second-longest river in Malaysia and is located not far from Sandakan's town. It's home to a wide variety of wildlife, some of which can't be seen elsewhere globally. The river and the rainforest banks are home to the proboscis monkey, orangutans, monitor lizards, macaques, and many different birds.

The river's area is also home to the Borneo pygmy elephants – the smallest elephants in Asia, and there are only 1,500 of them left. They're distinctly different from mainland elephants, having evolved when Borneo's island separated more than 300,000 years ago. Even when these elephants are fully grown, they look like babies. And they are seriously cute when viewed from a

nce.
 Visit the Kinabatangan River from Sandakan by taking a bus and boat transfer. Most visitors will book a stay in one of the lodges located on the river banks. There are both basic and luxury options available. The Kinabatangan River is not a protected area, so there's no National Park fee to pay, but you are likely to see wildlife directly from your lodge. Otherwise, boat trips are available, and wildlife spotting is best early morning or early evening. Don't miss out on nighttime walks to see another side of the rainforest.

You should spend at least two days and one night here, although two nights will give you a better sense of the area.

Sandakan
 Gomantong Caves & Kinabatangan River
 Adventure

4.7

(13 Reviews)

£ 53.65



Sandakan



Recommended by Chad | Adventure Filled Life



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Sandakan is a quiet city in the Sabah region of Malaysian Borneo that has maintained its local feel quite well. It is only a 1-hour flight from Kota Kinabalu, making it an easy choice for those wondering 'where to go next.'

You won't find much in the way of resorts and high-end restaurants here. However, you will find a connection to nature and a city known as a haven for foodies. Food is definitely a major draw, and visitors should prepare to feast on a wide range of spectacular Cantonese and Malaysian food. Things like Bak Kut Teh (pork soup with a rich broth) and Char Kway Teow (stir-fried noodles) are dishes that visitors must try.

If you only have a day in the city, it's a good idea to check out the Sim Sim Fisherman's Village, the Sandakan Central Market, and the War Memorial at Sandakan Park.

Sandakan lends itself to nature lovers and active travelers, as many of the highlights are located outside of the city. If you have a bit more time, there are a great number of exciting day-trips in the area. Some highly recommended excursions include visiting the Gomantong Bat Cave, taking a cruise on the Kinabatangan River, or seeing one of the many nearby sanctuaries. For a truly bucket-list experience, consider spending the night on Turtle Island!

Kota Kinabalu



Situated in Sabah, Kota Kinabalu is a fairly newish city with plenty of development still underway. Despite mainly serving as a pit-stop to those wanting to climb Mount Kinabalu, explore the

nearby islands, or trek through the lush jungles here, the city itself is a great add-on to your list of places to visit in Malaysia.



There's a lovely promenade at the KK Waterfront where you can stroll along and enjoy a sundowner or fresh seafood dinner. Those wanting to immerse themselves in the local life, head to one of the daily markets where fresh produce and seafood are on display. The "Floating Mosque" is another great attraction in the area, and so are the white sandy beaches nearby.

When you're ready to explore the outdoors, hop on a speedboat to the Tunku Abdul Rahman National Park. Taking a day trip to **Sapi and Manukan Islands** is the perfect way to soak up some island vibes. Spend the day relaxing on the beach and swimming in the turquoise waters. Adrenaline junkies can also get their fix by doing an array of water sports. Or better yet, zip line through the lush jungles!

Be sure to also head to Mount Kinabalu – even if you aren't into hiking. There's a great trail through the botanical garden where you can familiarize yourself with the unique plant life. Alternatively, book a **Kinabalu Park & Poring Hot Spring** tour for a hassle-free experience.

With three to four days, you'll have ample time to get to know the city and explore its surroundings.

Sabah
Kinabalu Park & Poring Hot Spring

4.2

(720 Reviews)

£



Sabah

Kampung Meritam's Mud Volcanoes



Recommended by Penny | Globe Trove

Not many people have heard of **Kampung Meritam's mud volcanoes**. Fewer people have visited the spot. Located in the Sarawak district of Malaysian Borneo, the mud volcanoes are rather hard to reach. Especially seeing that you have to drive through the Brunei borders. However, they are worth the effort and still ranks as one of my favorite things to do in Borneo.



Caused due to tectonic activity, these volcanoes are a curious sight to see. If you have seen a real volcano, these look like little pimples in the ground. The grey clayey mud that spills out of them is warm to the touch and quickly dries as it is exposed to the hot surroundings.

It is much fun to smear it on your face, and you will find that it is rather cooling. You can also immerse yourself in one of the larger mud pools formed by some of the volcanoes if you want. Just make sure to see if the tanks are filled with water for a bath post your soak.

Sabah
 Snorkeling, Hiking, and Volcanic Mud Bath
 Experience in Pulau Tiga

3.7

(3 Reviews)



Mulu National Park



Recommended by Fiona | Passport and Piano

Mulu National Park is a Unesco World Heritage site in the Miri Division of Sarawak. In the heart of the tropical rainforest, Mulu's main attraction is the show caves.

The show caves are unique and can only be visited on day tours with a national park guide. Inside the caves are some of the world's most exceptional examples of stalactites and stalagmites.

There are four caves to visit; the Deer Cave has the largest cave passage globally and is home to millions of bats. You can watch the bats leave the cave at dusk. It's a spectacular sight as they form waves of black swirls in the sky. At the end of the passage is the Garden of Eden. Here a hole in the cave allows light to filter through, and a plethora of flora and fauna grow below.

Another spectacular cave is Clearwater, which is the longest cave in Asia. There's a river through the center, with stunning scenery to admire from the well designed wooden walkways inside the cave.

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To experience the rainforest from a different angle, you can participate in a sky canopy walk. The 480km rope bridge swings high in the sky, and you can see all the trees and vegetation from above. You can also get a little closer to the monkeys that swing amongst the treetops.

Another spectacular cave is Clearwater, which is the longest cave in Asia. Through the centre, there's a river, with stunning scenery to admire from the well designed wooden walkways inside the cave.

Pro Tips: The only way to get to Mulu is by air. Flights go from either Miri or Kuching and can be booked through Malaysian airways. The best hotel in the area is the **Mulu Marriott Resort and Spa**. To experience the caves and explore a couple of trails around the park, you need at least 3 days. Although, staying longer is recommended, especially if you want to do some of the overnight treks.



Niah National Park



Recommended by Penny | Globe Trove

Located on the Malaysian part of Borneo's island, **Niah National Park** is often overlooked by tourists. The closest town to this gorgeous place is Miri. The National Park is located around 80 kilometers from Miri, and you can reach the park in 1h30.

One of the interesting things about the park is that it encompasses a part of Borneo's tropical forest. This makes it an interesting experience to walk through. The boardwalks and well-marked trails make it easy to explore the park, and you do not need a guide.

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The highlight of the park, however, is the Niah Caves, which are enormous. The interconnected network of caves will leave you spellbound. Make sure you carry a torch, though, as one of the caves is explored in pitch darkness. If that wasn't enough, at the end of the cave, you could marvel at wall paintings that date back to the Iron age.

The walk itself is long, so set out early and carry water. It isn't strenuous and can be done easily but watch your step as it can get slippery in parts. If you are in the Sarawak area of Borneo, make sure to put it on your list places to visit in Malaysia!

Kuching



Recommended by Ania | The Travelling Twins

Fancy visiting the Cat City of Borneo? Kuching is a fascinating place. Both within the city and on day trips. There's everything from jungle hikes (Orangutans, insect-eating plants, mud-skipping fish), street-art trails and a Cat Museum.

Firstly about those cats. The word Kuching means "cat." The place is full of cat statues, and you can even listen to Cats FM radio. Visit the museum in North City Hall containing thousands of moggie images, and even a cat mummy (the Egyptian kind.)

The lovely character of Kuching city follows through with more street art, including our favorite: a wheelbarrow full of orangutans.

If this is your first trip to Borneo, visit the Sarawak Cultural Village early. It gives an enjoyable and painless introduction to ethnic diversity and is a great place to explore in its own right. Staff demonstrates the timeless pursuits of the jungle economy in a village of reconstructed folk-houses.

Then go on into the real jungles and parks. Bako is close to Kuching and is one of Borneo's richest wildlife areas (and the world.) Explore diverse habitats and see those mud-skipping fish, snakes,

lizards, and endangered probosci's monkeys. On other day trips from Kuching, we saw orangutans and the ghastly Rafflesia plant with its one-meter diameter flowers smelling rotten meat.

We loved our five-day stay in **Kuching with kids** as it combined fascinating learning with the fun of spotting rare and exciting living things. All in a vibrant, friendly place.



g Kong
Ocean Park Hong Kong Tickets (Advance
Online Reservation for Park Entry Required)

4.7

(60381 Reviews)

£ 0.99



Where to go in Malaysia Conclusion

As you can see, there are heaps of amazing places to visit in Malaysia! I hope this guide has helped you decide where to go and what to do!

That's all I've got on Malaysia for now. Have you visited Malaysia yet? If so, what tips do you have for fellow travelers planning a Malaysia itinerary? Feel free to share your tips on best places to visit, best things to do and see, and anything in between below!

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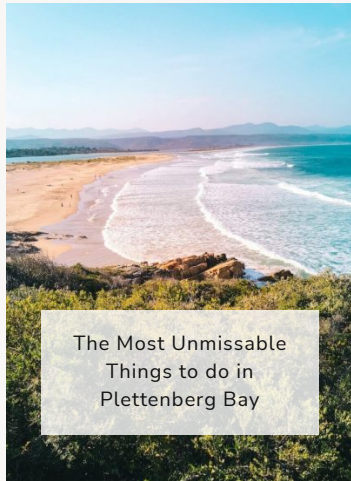
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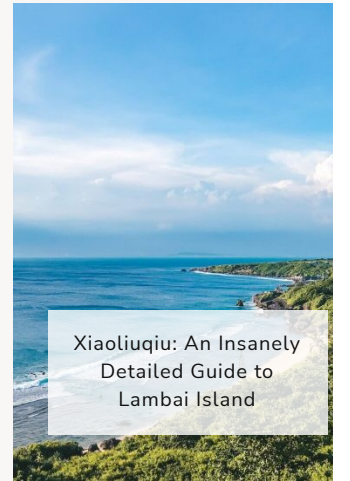
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