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## Malaysia Orang Utan Experience

Adventure



Relaxation



Culture



**Trip Name:** Malaysia Orang Utan Experience    **Trip Code:** MYRE    **Duration:** From 28 days

### Trip Highlights

- Two weeks in the Malaysian National Zoo – proper work with these amazing animals.
- Help local tribes make orangutans an integral part of the local economy.
- Two weeks travelling through the tropical rainforest of Borneo to a wildlife sanctuary and a visit to an orang-utan rehab centre where the orang-utans go through rehabilitation before being released back into protected rainforests.



### Overview

A brilliant opportunity to encounter and work with an increasingly rare and threatened great ape – there are probably no more than 20,000 left in the wild in Asia.

A trip through the jungle – through its inaccessibility, a natural orangutan sanctuary in Borneo. Not only do you get to help improve the lives of the Orang-Utan's who can't be released in a zoo environment in the first two weeks in Kuala Lumpur, you will also be able to help Orang-Utans in the wild by educating local communities in Borneo of the importance of conservation.

### Destination Info

Malaysia is a country of amazing contrasts. Kuala Lumpur is a rapidly expanding, modern and hi-tech city, whilst on the eastern island, where you'll be going, the world's oldest rainforests offer a natural sanctuary to the orangutans of Borneo.

While you're working, please make sure that you wear t-shirts that cover your shoulders (no singlets, or sleeveless

shirts), long trousers and shoes that cover your feet - trainers or trekking shoes are ideal.

## Itinerary



### Day 1: Arrival and Welcome

You will be met upon arrival at the airport and then transferred to your twin share accommodation. You will enjoy a welcome dinner and briefing in the evening.

*Overnight in Kuala Lumpur.*

### Day 2: Orientation

After breakfast, you will be transferred to your project site: Zoo Negara. Upon arrival, you will meet your programme coordinator who will show you to your accommodation and then take you on a short zoo orientation.

You will be given a thorough health and safety talk, a tour of the zoo and then you will go shopping for food etc. (Please note: you will be given a food allowance to buy ingredients to cook your own meals at the zoo accommodation)

*Overnight in Negara.*

### Days 3 to 16: Project Days

A typical working day as a volunteer will start around 8am and finish around 5pm. Usually, weekends are given as off days. During your free time you may choose to explore other parts of Malaysia at your own expense or stay at the volunteer accommodation.

This is real hand-on stuff – cleaning, feeding and maintenance – and it will give you deep insight into the lives of these amazing animals. An important part of the life at a zoo is the work that goes on to keep the animals happy and stimulated. You'll have the chance to take part in this too and, if you're lucky, you might get to know

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individual animals – and they you. Not many things more exciting than being recognised as an individual by a wild animal!

This zoo houses more than 5,000 animals including; camels, sun bears, pythons and tigers as well, and there's every possibility that you'll get to work with them as well.

*Overnight from days 3 to 16 in Negara.*



## **Day 17: Departure from Kuala Lumpur to Sandakan**

Transfer from Zoo to airport for your morning flight out to Sandakan, Sabah. Airfare not included. You will be met by a driver who will transfer you to the accommodation. After a dinner and evening orientation, you will sleep lulled by the sounds of the Borneo Jungle.

## **Day 18 to 26: Project days Sukau**

Once you have been shown to your accommodation, you will be given a thorough Health & Safety briefing as well as an orientation around the village.

For the next 2 weeks, you will live within a wildlife sanctuary among the local tribe: the gentle 'Orang Sungai'. One of your roles on this project involves wildlife observation to collect important wildlife population data. You will also be helping with important habitat restoration work that involves tree-planting and maintenance activities in high priority areas. This work is crucial in connecting fragmented forests in the area to encourage healthy orang-utan and pygmy elephant populations. While the majority of the project is helping with the habitat restoration, there is a small community aspect to the project on which you will be helping to develop conservation based programmes at the local schools. This is hugely important as the children at the schools will in the long term be the guardians of the rainforest!

## **Day 27: Depart Sukau after breakfast for Sepilok.**

Walk through the Rainforest Discovery Centre to reinforce what you have learned about the rainforest during your time on the project. After lunch, visit the world-famous Sepilok Orang-utan Rehabilitation Centre where you will learn about the challenges of orang-utan rehabilitation. Once you have had the learning session, you will head into



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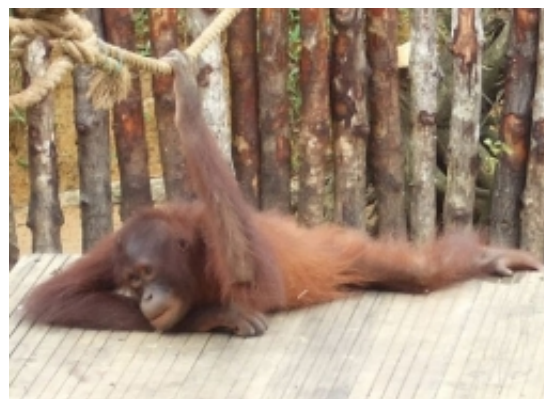
Sandakan where you will check into accommodation. You will then have time free to explore at your leisure, why not try to catch the sunset from the Ba-Lin bar at the rooftop of Nak Hotel.

## Day 28: Departure

Check out and transfer to Sandakan Airport.

*Optional:* independent travel to Kota Kinabalu.

**Please note:** Changes to the activities will occur subject to weather conditions, festivities, zoo and project requirements. Some or all of the above activities may or may not be included on your itinerary. Other activities not mentioned above may also be included on your itinerary subject to weather conditions, community and project requirements.



During the programme you will either care for the animals at the zoo or help towards conservation with habitat restoration and community development. Some of the possible activities that you may be involved with are listed below:

**Husbandry:** This involves cleaning cages and feeding. You will rotate working with different animals depending on the needs of the zoo, the keepers, or the animals themselves within the primates or ape section as well as in other sections. Cleaning is vital to the zoo as better hygiene helps to prevent disease. You must be capable of cleaning up animal faeces - this can be extremely smelly!!

Some daily maintenance work may be included and you always have to clean up after enrichment activities.

**Enrichment:** The idea of enrichment is to stimulate the animals and improve their living conditions as much as possible to mimic their natural habitat. Some sample activities are:

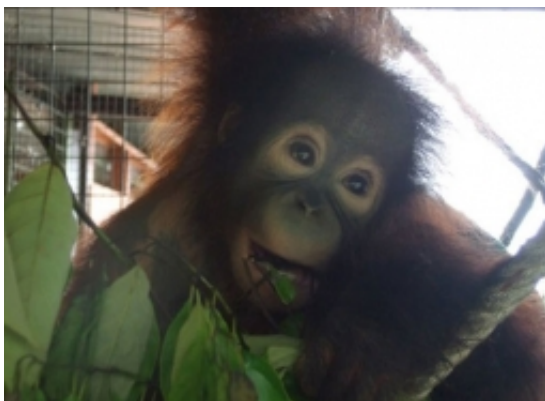
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- Provide leaves in cages for bedding and nesting purposes
- Buy special fruit to give a variation on diet
- Put branches from fig or fruit trees in their homes to observe behaviour
- Rope work - make this fun and varied for the animal
- Hiding food around cages to encourage foraging behaviour

**Construction:** You may be asked to design and work on small construction projects to improve the night dens or enclosures of selected animals, this may include assisting in building new exhibits and extensions to improve the zoo facilities, or improving existing exhibits by adding furniture or painting.

**Education:** There is an education centre and library at the zoo. Volunteers should learn as much as possible about the animals. You may be asked to guide and talk to school children about them. You may also be asked to prepare displays and information on them.

Safety in the zoo is paramount and contact with the animals will be carefully supervised. Please remember this and do what the keepers tell you to do. The orangutans might be in a zoo, but this doesn't mean they're tame.



**Wildlife Population Density Data Collection:** This entails cruising on the river to observe and record the endangered wildlife roaming the forest along the river banks. A lot of time is spent observing wildlife and their habitat. This will be done from a boat cruising along the main river and its tributaries within the wildlife sanctuary;

**Habitat Restoration:** The most crucial activity ensuring the survival of wildlife. You will take part in tree planting, nursery care and seedling generation, sapling maintenance, mulching & composting, clearing invasive species and also tree growth data recording. The planting of trees will be in sections identified as high priority and will build towards the creation of corridors for wildlife to move from one section of a sanctuary to another;

**Education Programme:** Spend half a day with school children of the community to work on conservation issues that the children deal with on a daily basis and emphasise their immediate and personal impact on conservation. You will be provided with a framework and the facilitator will guide you in the planning of this session;

**Community Development:** This involves the development of a continuous project with the community of the local

village. Volunteers will interact with the community on various levels while working on this project. You will learn some local skills required for their daily livelihood and maybe assist them as well;

**Rumble in the Jungle:** The mysterious tropical rainforest of Borneo has a lot to offer not by going jungle trekking. As an introduction to the flora and fauna of the rainforest, you will take the time to understand what the rainforest has been traditionally offering the inhabitants in terms of medication, food and survival;

**Cultural and Community Interaction:** Living and contributing back to the community is a big part of this programme. Lunch and dinners will be in the private homes of individual villagers. Take time for them to warm up to you and you will get to hear about their daily lives, chat with the children, learn about their family structure and see how the Orang Sungai have been living off the rivers and jungles for centuries.

**Please Note:** Not all of the above activities would be included on your itinerary. Changes to the activities will occur subject to weather conditions, school calendar, community and project requirements. Activities not listed above may also be included.

## Accommodation

You will be placed at the Zoo for the first 16 days of the programme.

### The Zoo

The day after your arrival you will leave your hotel and travel 20 minutes to the Zoo. Upon arrival you will check into your accommodation, unpack and unwind. You will be meeting your programme mentor and will have an orientation of the zoo. You will be given a thorough health and safety brief, a tour of the Zoo and then you will go shopping for food. You will be given a food allowance and will need to cook your meals yourself and ensure the accommodation is kept clean and tidy. You will begin working with the animals the following day. Your accommodation at the zoo will be a three-bedroom house within the grounds of the zoo. Rooms hold two to three volunteers each and there is a shared bathroom (one cold and one hot shower) and also basic cooking facilities.

On day 17 you will be transferred to KL airport for your internal flight to Sandakan, Sabah.

### Introduction night in Sepilok:

dormitory-style room in a traditional style longhouse. Hot water showers and toilets are shared. Set on high grounds overlooking the greens of Malaysia, you will find this a peaceful and relaxing place to start your trip,

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specially to recuperate from a tough stint at the zoo. If you arrive early, and wish to explore, Sandakan is about 35 minutes away and all along the way, there are mini townships where you will find little shops, eateries and banks. However, public transport does not ply the roads frequently. The airport is almost halfway between Sandakan and the dormitory. Welcome dinner and introduction will start at 1800 hours at the “lobby” of the dormitory.

## **At Sukau**

Comfortable and basic village-run B&B, set in the middle of the village, within walking distance to the centre of the village and the village jetty. Rooms are shared with other participants and the attached toilet comes with western toilets and cold water showers. Breakfast is taken at the common area overlooking the river.

## **At Sandakan (last night)**

Comfortable and basic hotel room in Sandakan town, shared rooms with other participants with attached toilets & showers. It is within walking distance to the Promenade, and many quaint little shops and eateries. The town has internet cafes, supermarket and restaurants and food stalls serving local and western foods. There is also a rooftop restaurant and bar nearby where you can have a drink and watch the final sunset in Borneo.

All meals are served buffet style at the jungle lodge and any preferences can usually be accommodated but always ask just to make sure. Breakfast is served 8-8.30, lunch mid-day (if trekking lunch will be served later or eaten on the trail) dinner is served around 7pm. Please remember you are in the jungle and time doesn't have much reverence to the tribe so, please be patient.

## **Programme Services and Facilities**

### **Internet**

While you are on the project you will be able to find Internet cafes. If you have any trouble finding this local amenity you can ask your co-workers or co-ordinators and they will point you in the right direction. When you are in the Borneo jungles you will not have any access to this form of communication.

### **Telephone**

The international telephone access code for Malaysia is +60. To place an outgoing, direct-dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK, followed by the telephone number. For example to call Real Gap Experience dial +44 1892 516164.

While you are on the project you will be able to find public phones to make international calls. If you have any trouble finding this local amenity you can ask your co-workers or co-ordinators and they will point you in the right

direction.

When you are in the Borneo jungles you will not have any access to this form of communication.

## Bathroom amenities

Your bathroom facilities will vary from location to location. While you are staying in hotel or hostel accommodation you will have western style bathrooms. While you are in the jungle you will have basic western style bathrooms.

## Laundry

While you are in hostel accommodation you have the option to wash your own clothes in your bath or sink, or to pay for your clothes to be laundered. During your trip into the jungle you will be responsible for washing your own clothes on site.

## Credit Cards

Major credit cards are accepted at upmarket hotels, restaurants and stores. However beware of surcharges added to your bill. Check how much you will be charged before you use your credit cards. It is advisable to take your debit card and use the ATM machines.

Banks in Malaysia include Maybank, HSBC, Citibank, RHB Bank and Union Bank. ATMs can be found in cities and major regional centres. When you travel to your jungle accommodation it is a good idea to have £20 / 27€ in Ringgits as you may want to buy souvenirs or crafts from the tribe.

In addition you should bring approximately RM600, in case for any reason you need to leave the jungle early, so that it will cover transport costs.

## Electricity

There are electrical outlets in the accommodation for a British-style plug with two flat blades and one flat grounding blade. When you are in the Borneo jungles you will have limited access to electricity.

## Meals

The meals at the zoo will be prepared by volunteers. You will be given a food allowance per person and this is a great chance to cook local specialities. In Borneo, the meals are prepared in the lodge and may feature fresh jungle vegetables and other local delicacies. Food will contain chilli, fresh jungle produce and will be rice-based. There are no alternatives, no restaurants out in the jungle - volunteers must eat what they are given. Vegetarian food can be



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provided though prior warning must be given. Many vegetarians take to fish or meat during their stay to avoid health deterioration, especially given the physical nature of the experience. Be warned! (All meals – except on travel days).

## What's Included

- All accommodation
- Food (food allowance for ingredients to cook meals yourself while at the zoo accommodation)
- Meet and greet on start date
- Orientation and welcome meal
- Project Transfers
- Local guides and specialists
- Evaluation with supervisor
- Access permits



## What's Not Included

- Flights
- Local flights
- Travel insurance
- Meals on Travelling (transfer) Days
- Visa



## Additional Information

### Orientation

Upon your arrival at the guesthouse in Kuala Lumpur you will have the chance to relax. This same day you will have a welcome lunch or dinner so you can meet the other volunteers on your programme. Additionally you will have a brief orientation to welcome you to the country. In the orientation our on-site staff will inform you of the details of your placement and the duties involved, additional contact numbers that you may need to know, things to do and an introduction to Malaysian culture and life.

### Project Requirements

You are required to produce a doctor's letter stating that you are free from Tuberculosis and Hepatitis. You will need to take the letter with you to show the programme coordinator on the orientation day. This is a requirement to ensure that no diseases are passed on by volunteers to animals at the zoo. As apes have very similar DNA structures to humans, they are very susceptible to human diseases and could fall gravely ill or die.

### What to Pack

Please note that this kit list is intended to help you plan what you may need to take with you and, therefore, you may not need all the listed items on your travels, nor is it exhaustive. In addition, it is worth noting that you can buy lots of the above in Malaysia and at a very cheap price and there will be opportunities for you to shop in local

markets and towns.

## Personal Admin

- Photocopies of important papers such as passport, airline tickets and insurance documents
- Spending money in Malaysian Ringgit (MYR)

## General

- Digital Camera and batteries/ charger
- Day bag / rucksack - a waterproof cover is also useful
- Torch/ Headlight
- Plastic hooks are handy to hang things on
- Board games and playing cards for free time
- Diary - you will have so many amazing experiences to remember
- mp3 player
- Plastic bags
- Snacks (biscuits etc)
- Towel
- Waterbottle
- Binoculars
- Pocket-knife

## Clothing

- NB: Make sure that the clothes you bring for your volunteer work you don't mind getting a bit dirty!
- T-shirts that cover your shoulders (no singlets, or sleeveless shirts)
- Long trousers for work conditions that are fast drying
- Walking shoes / trainers that cover your feet
- Wellies/ Gum boots\*
- Thick socks
- Flip flops
- Waterproof Jacket
- Clothes to wear in your free time
- A hat to protect you from the sun
- Beachwear if you plan to travel to other places in your free time i.e. swimsuit, sarong
- A light sweatshirt

## Medical Kit

- Small medical kit containing plasters, medicine for diarrhoea, head ache tablets and any medication you will need.
- Malaria tablets if advised by your GP
- Mosquito repellent (containing DEET)
- Contraception including condoms
- Tissues
- Biological soap
- Anti-bacterial soap gel (does not need water to rinse off)
- Travel wash for clothes
- Sun protection cream

\*Wellies/ gum boots are available for most activities, though if you have feet larger than size 10 we advise you to bring your own as larger sizes are not available in Malaysia. You are welcome to bring your own Wellington boots if

you do not feel comfortable wearing used boots or if you prefer your own. Alternatively you can buy cheap wellington boots from the mini-market along the way to the project site. They cost about USD4–5 in Malaysia. They are black and come almost up to your knees, very convenient when working in wet weather on wet grounds and when jungle trekking. Please bring good socks as boots can get very uncomfortable when worn for long periods. You are not allowed to wear open toe shoes at the project.

## Luggage

On the jungle part of the programme, you can take your bags with you if you wish - you will need to cover your bag with a bin liner to ensure it doesn't get wet in the boat (in case it rains!). Also due to the humid jungle conditions, it is therefore advisable to leave bags with everything that you don't need in the guesthouse in Kuala Lumpur in a locked luggage room. Another option is to leave your bag in a secure locker at KL airport, if you are going back that way after the Borneo part of the visit- this will cost you around £50 / 67.50€ a week.

Finally, please ensure that you don't over-pack and bring unnecessary luggage such as hairdryers, hair straighteners etc.

## Minimum Age

Minimum 18 years, maximum will be decided depending on potential participants health.

## Flights

Your flight to Malaysia should arrive at Kuala Lumpur Airport (KUL) on your programme start date ideally before 15:00, and your return flight from Sandakan (SDK) should be arranged for your programme end date. You will also need to arrange your internal flight during the programme from Kuala Lumpur to Sandakan. If your flights deviate from the following itinerary you will incur extras charges for out of hours transfers and accommodation.

Your internal flight should be booked as follows:

On the 21st of your arrival month, please book a morning flight from Kuala Lumpur (KUL) to Sandakan (SDK).

On your end date, you should book a flight that departs Sandakan (SDK) ideally after 11:00, followed by any onward flights from Kuala Lumpur.

To investigate your flights, please contact us on 01273 647219 and let us find you some great prices.

## FAQs

### 1. Will I be able to touch the Orang-utans?

There is no contact with the Orang-utans or any animals. If, under very special circumstances, you are allowed to touch the animals, it will be under the strict supervision of the zoo keeper. Remember, they are

wild animals and can be unpredictable.

**2. Will I work with other animals whilst at the zoo?**

Your main focus will be the orang-utans and the other residents of the ape centre. There will be a rotation system to work with some other animals around the zoo, especially other endangered Malaysian animals.

**3. Do I need previous experience with animals?**

No, as long as you are enthusiastic and willing to get involved you are welcome! We do recommend that you do visit a zoo before you start the programme.

**4. Will I be with others on the programme?**

Yes you will be working with other volunteers, the maximum group size is 10.

**5. What will the jungle section be like?**

The jungle is amazing, you will meet the locals and experience life with the basics. Top tip: when travelling along the river to the jungle accommodation, make sure you take a bin liner with you to protect your clothes from the water!

**6. Do I need to take a sleeping bag?**

No, all bedding is provided for you.

**7. Do I need to take a mosquito net?**

No, not unless you really want to. All the windows are netted, you will just have to remember to shut the door.

**8. Is there a safety deposit box/safe?**

At the Zoo yes, in the village no, however the village is very safe.

## Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

## Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

## Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you

think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

## Money Matters

The national currency of Malaysia is the ringgit (RM) and consists of 100 sen. Coin denomination come in 1, 5, 10, 20 and 50 sen and 1 RM. Notes come in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 50 and 100 RM. The ringgit was tied to the US dollar but now floats against a number of undisclosed currencies. Locally the ringgit is known as the 'dollar'.

Traveller's cheques are now accepted in most banks but to ensure no additional charges are added, travellers should take Pounds sterling, US dollars or Australian dollars traveller's cheques.

ATMs can be found in most major cities and banks and the most common cards accepted are American Express, American Express, Diners Club, Mastercard and Visa.

Passports will always be needed when changing currency or travellers cheques.

You'll find your money goes a pretty long way if you purchase local foods and drinks.

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant 2.28 \$

Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) 2.33 \$

Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) 0.55 \$

Water (0.33 litre bottle) 0.33 \$

(Prices quoted in US Dollars)

## Passports and Visas

You should ensure that you have a full passport that is valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information provided below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Citizens for the following countries do not require a visa for a stay of up to 3 months:

Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Rep, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland



Republic, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Korea (South), Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, United States, Uruguay, Yemen & holders of British passports.

## Cultural Considerations

### Religion

Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism are the main religions in Malaysia. About 50% of the Malaysian population are Muslim, whereas 75% of the population are Buddhist in Singapore on the southern tip of Malaysia. These three religions have a heavy influence in the lives and culture of the people of Malaysia.

### Clothing

The climate is tropical, thus hot and humid. Wear comfortable cotton clothes which are light and which dry easily. Respect local standards of modesty: women please do not wear short skirts or brief shorts when visiting local villages.

Cotton T-shirts or shirts, Bermuda shorts or skirts are ideal for everyday wear and a sunhat (which can be brought locally) is strongly advised. If visiting a longhouse, a longer skirt, long trousers or even a sarong are recommended for women. You may find, however, that buildings such as hotels, shopping centres and government offices are cold due to the air-conditioning. In these cases, you may wish to have a pull over. An umbrella, for protection against both sun and rain, greatly adds to comfort, as does a pair of good sunglasses. Bring a light jacket to wear on long-distance buses and for early-morning travel.

Shoes are the most important item. They should be comfortable and grip well on muddy paths. The shoes may get wet and muddy, so don't bring your hand sewn calfskin aerobic shoes! Bring the good old walking shoes for long treks. Sandals or thongs or flip-flops are cool and comfortable around the hotel and lodging house. They also allow your feet to breathe naturally.

### Wildlife and Environment

Malaysia is a rainforest region beautiful in every way. However please be aware that the rainforest has much wildlife that you will be exposed to no matter where you are. You will see geckos, spiders, monkeys, forest rats, mosquitoes, cockroaches and caterpillars, hornets and snakes. Some of these can cause injury if you accidentally stumble across them.

It is important that when you are trekking to stay with the group and not wander off ahead. This is not the place to show off your jungle skills in terrain you are not familiar with. Animals such as forest rats, and monkeys and insects such as spiders and cockroaches may get into your room. So make sure to leave nothing lying around to attract them (food, soap, rubbish). If you go trekking in the jungle always stick with your facilitator and the group. Always bring a mosquito net. Please also be aware that Malaysia is hot and humid and your rooms will be warm during the day.

## Tipping

Tipping is not expected. Bills come with service charge already added on.

## Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

## Safety

As in most countries there are people who try to take advantage of tourists. The following advice is intended to help you keep safe:

- Always keep your personal items such as passport, money and camera with you and in a safe place. You can buy mini padlocks to prevent people from going into your day sack without your permission.
- Always walk around in groups
- Never go out alone after dark
- Stick with the escorted trips. If you do go out in the evening unescorted, you do so at your own risk. Please tell the co-ordinators where you are going and what time you will be back
- Please do not get into fights, or arguments with locals. We cannot guarantee your safety and it could provoke future attacks on other travellers.
- As in this country there have been reports of drinks being spiked on the islands. Please do not leave your drinks unattended and do not accept drinks from strangers.

This information is not intended to scare you. Unfortunately, bad things can happen, as they can do in any country and we want you to be prepared. We want you to stay safe and have a good time. I would like to add that the majority of the locals are friendly, warm and hospitable people who love meeting our travellers. Please be friendly, respectful and stay aware and you will have a great time.

We advise that you check your government's advice before travelling abroad. For UK, American and Australian customers please see the relevant links below;

UK: [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)

USA: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

Australia: [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au)

## Kidnapping

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Tourists should always be aware of the threat of kidnap in some, especially coastal regions of Sabah. In light of this, make sure you do not walk around alone after dark and be aware of getting yourself into a situation that could put you at risk.

## Terrorism

You may find that institutions such as the British Foreign Office are warning travellers of an increased risk of terrorism in the entire South- East Asia region since the Bali bombings in 2002 and the more recent Bangkok bombings. This is a pre-cautionary warning to make you aware of the situation, the majority of people have a completely trouble free stay. Malaysia itself is a safe and stable country for foreign visitors.

## Drugs

Drugs are illegal in Malaysia. Please do not involve yourself with illegal drugs as it could result in prison or the death penalty.

## Sexual Relations

We advise against having any sexual relations whilst in Malaysia and would ask you to respect the local culture and customs whilst on the programme.

## ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

## Dengue

There has been an increase in the number of Dengue Fever cases in Malaysia and the Southeast Asian Region. Dengue fever is a mosquito-borne disease that occurs in tropical and subtropical areas of the world. It is common in both urban and rural areas. Mild dengue fever causes high fever, rash, muscle and joint pain. The severe form of dengue fever can cause bleeding and in some cases death. Volunteers must protect themselves against mosquito bites by wearing light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible while working and traveling in Malaysia and the region. We take great care to ensure that there are mosquito nettings at all volunteer accommodations. Nettings are checked regularly for damage and are replaced in a timely manner should we find any damage. Our coordinators are well versed with the symptoms of dengue fever and will always be ready to send an ill volunteer to the clinic or hospital to obtain a diagnosis.

## Language Guide

The Malaysian language is Malay, known as Bahasa Melayu. We suggest you obtain a Lonely Planet or language guide for the destination(s) you are travelling to. Here are some useful phrases to remember when you get to Malaysia:

How do you do? - *Apa khabar?*  
Goodbye - *Selamat tinggal*  
Can you help me? - *Bolehkah anda tolong saya?*  
How much does it cost? - *Berapa harganya?*  
What is this/that? - *Apa ini / itu?*  
Excuse me - *Maafkan saya*  
I am sorry - *Saya minta maaf*  
No - *Tidak*  
Yes - *Ya*  
Please - *Tolong / Sila*  
Thank you - *Terima kasih*  
Toilet - *Tandas / Bilik air*  
Where? - *Di mana?*  
When? - *Bila?*

## Food & Drink

Malaysia offers a wide variety of food. The staple diet includes rice, noodles, vegetables and fresh fish is plentiful. Vegetarians can be catered for. Please remember to let us know before you depart if you have any special dietary requirements.

## Public Holidays

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country. However, although businesses and government offices are closed on public holidays, tourist attractions and shops are almost never closed. The main impact on the tourist of these holidays is the increased competition for travel and accommodation from Malaysians who use long weekends to get away from the big city.

To view a list of the public holidays for Malaysia, please see the link below:

[www.timeanddate.com/holidays/malaysia/](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/malaysia/)

## Weather

The variations of climate across Malaysia come from the difference between the areas of altitude and the exposed coastal regions. The alternating southwest and northwest monsoon winds blow from April to September for the former and November to February for the later. Throughout the year and for as many as 150 to 200 days, there is rainfall which is fairly evenly distributed across the county. Most places endure a rainy season with the heaviest of rainfall falling between March to May and September to November.

## Time

Malaysia is 8 hours ahead of GMT

## Electricity

# Malaysia Orang Utan Experience

Electricity in Malaysia uses 240 volts, 50Hz. Outlets across Malaysia generally accept the following plug types;



Two parallel flat pins with ground pin

## Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as we make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of recommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

## Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

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