

Wild Borneo: Orangutans, Proboscis Monkey & More | 12 Days



Borneo, the world's third-largest island, harbours the tallest and most ancient rain forests on Earth. Sheltered beneath their dense canopies are Jungle Rivers, waterfalls and a host of wildlife that leaps, darts and crawls in the emerald depths. Endangered orangutans thrive in the lush vegetation, sharing branches and vines with leaf monkeys, wild gibbons, flying lemurs and more than 300 vibrant bird species. Rare proboscis monkeys are at home in coastal mangroves where hornbills and sea eagles soar above. Tiny turtle hatchlings find their way to the sea on Selingan Island. In the forest beneath Mount Kinabalu's prominent peaks, pygmy elephants lumber through the underbrush while monitor lizards sunbathe on the banks of the Kinabatangan River. Wildlife flourishes in Borneo, and we safari in search of it on a matchless tropical nature adventure.

This is a comprehensive travel to nature in Borneo, encompassing diverse ecosystems. We explore the jungle sanctuaries of Sepilok, Semenggoh and Kinabatangan, mangroves in Bako National Park, Selingan Turtle Island, and virgin rain forest in the Danum Valley. In these contrasting locales, we search for the endangered orangutan, pygmy elephant, Bornean bearded pig, smooth-coated otter, long- and pig-tailed macaques, monitor lizard, proboscis monkey, rhinoceros hornbill, silvered leaf monkey and numerous tropical rare & exotic bird species!

Trip Highlights

- Close Encounters with Orangutans – Observe wild orangutans living freely in their rain forest

habitat, and learn about efforts to conserve them at two rehabilitation centers

- Selingan Turtle Island – Speedboat ride to Selingan Turtle Island, one of three main turtle nesting sites in Borneo, Selingan's long beaches and coastal mangroves are protected habitat for endangered green sea turtles.
- Visit Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary – A mangrove reserve along the coast that allows us a close-up view of these leaping primates named for their large, fleshy noses, which are found nowhere in the world beyond Borneo.
- Private Tour of Sun Bear Rehabilitation Center – Behind the scenes, hear the inspiring conservation success story of how the world's smallest bear was brought back from the brink of extinction
- Explore Ancient Tropical Rain Forest – Deep in the Danum Valley, search for proboscis monkeys, gibbons and the elusive slow loris, and scout for pygmy elephants along the Kinabatangan River

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Kuching, Borneo - Semenggoh Orangutan Center

Welcome to Kuching! A *travel-to-nature Asia* guide will be at the airport to greet and take us to our hotel. Please look out for your name-card once you exit out of arrival area.

Kuching is the capital of the East Malaysian state of Sarawak and the largest city on the island of Borneo. It is one of the most multicultural cities in Malaysia, melding Chinese, Malay, Indian and Indonesian cultural groups and languages.

In the afternoon your wildlife adventure begins. Visit Semenggoh Orangutan Center outside town to observe the afternoon feeding. The centre was established in 1975 to care for wild animals found injured or orphaned in the forest, or ones that were previously kept as illegal pets. Since its founding, the

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centre has cared for more than 1,000 animals, and its orangutan rehabilitation mission has been so successful that the surrounding reserve has now reached its carrying capacity. While rehabilitation continues elsewhere, today Semenggoh focuses on the study of orangutan biology and behaviour while providing a safe and natural haven for dozens of semi-wild orangutans that are graduates of the rehabilitation program. It is also home to numerous babies, born in the wild to rehabilitated mothers, a further testament to the program's success. This evening, learn more about the adventures to come at a welcome dinner with our Expedition Leader.

Accommodation: The LimeTree Hotel



Day 2: Bako National Park

We embark on a short boat ride this morning to Bako National Park, reachable only by sea on the tip of a peninsula where the Bako and Kuching rivers meet.

Millions of years of erosion have carved the sandstone cliffs and rocky headlands into fantastically shaped arches and sea stacks, striated with colored layers formed by iron deposits. White sandy beaches edge the coast below, while inland, the compact reserve abounds with wildlife. Observe an amazing array of diverse tropical vegetation and wild-life, including such species as Dipterocarp trees, pitcher plants, mangrove forests and 'Padang' or bush type vegetation and look for proboscis monkeys in the trees, along with long-tailed macaques, silvered leaf monkeys and numerous tropical bird species.

A walk along the lush mangrove trails may also reveal smooth-coated otters and Bornean bearded pigs.

Though Bako is one of the smallest national parks in Sarawak, its multiple biomes harbour a great diversity of species. We'll explore rain forest, jungle streams, waterfalls and secluded beaches along a network of trails before returning to Kuching. Overnight in Kuching.

Accommodation: The LimeTree Hotel

Meal: Breakfast

Day 3: Fly Kuching - Sandakan (3.92 hrs) | Kabili-Sepilok Nature Reserve

This morning, we fly to Sandakan (Sabah). Our destination is the Kabili-Sepilok Forest Reserve, home to endangered orangutans. The 10,000-acre protected area, named for the two main rivers that flow through it, comprises tropical highland forest, sandstone ridges and lowland mangrove swamp. In addition to orangutans, we'll search the forest for gibbons, macaques, mouse deer, wild boar and bright-coloured kingfishers. We stay on the very edge of the reserve surrounded by huge trees and lush tropical plants. This evening, head into the forest on a guided night walk to hear and see an array of nocturnal creatures.

Accommodation: Sepilok Nature Resort

Meal: Breakfast

Day 4: Sepilok Orangutan Sanctuary | Sun Bear Conservation Centre

Make two visits today to Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre, established in 1964 to protect orphaned baby orangutans and rehabilitate them for return to the wild. We go early for the orangutans' morning feeding, then return for their afternoon feeding again. Most orphans were seized from illegal captivity after having been taken from their mothers as infants to be kept as pets. Staff help them learn basic survival skills such as how to find food, build nests and climb trees. The center also aids adults that have sustained injuries or require medical care before being returned to their natural habitat. Since the centre was established, more than 100 orangutans have been successfully released. Its mission has grown to include research, conservation education

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and support for other endangered species, including captive breeding of rare and endangered rhinos. During our visit we'll see orangutans up close, learn about the rehabilitation process, and hike on boardwalks through the rain forest as we watch youngsters swing from vines to feeding areas where they receive their daily fruit and milk. Keep an eye out, too, for long- and pig-tailed macaques leaping through the treetops.

We also visit the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre. Founded in 2008, the centre provides care, rehabilitation and release of orphaned and captive sun bears, and increases awareness about the plight of this little-known bear. We'll take an exclusive private tour of the centre—either with founder Wong Siew Te, whom CNN lauded as a Hero of 2017, calling him a "Superman saving the sun bears of Malaysia," or one of his close conservation colleagues. The Malayan sun bear, found only in Southeast Asia, is the world's smallest bear species. While Borneo remains a stronghold for this vulnerable animal, it is seriously threatened if not extinct in many areas of mainland Asia, where forest destruction and poaching have dramatically reduced its numbers.

Accommodation: Sepilok Nature Resort
Meal: Breakfast

Day 5: Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary | Selingan Turtle Island

This morning, we'll visit Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary, a mangrove reserve along the coast that allows us a close-up view of these leaping primates named for their large, fleshy noses, which are found nowhere in the world beyond Borneo. Then we board a speedboat to ride to Selingan Turtle Island, one in a group of uninhabited islands in the Sulu Sea. As one of three main turtle nesting sites in Borneo, Selingan's long beaches and coastal mangroves are protected habitat for endangered green sea turtles pushed to the brink of extinction by trawling, coastal development and consumption. The island is the site of Malaysia's first sea turtle hatchery, established in 1966. We enjoy a relaxing afternoon of birdwatching or snorkeling in the warm turquoise waters. This evening, alongside rangers who patrol the beach, we

observe turtles swimming ashore to lay their eggs, and we may see tiny hatchlings as they are released into the sea. Eventually we retire to our simple chalets—the only accommodations on the island—knowing we are among very few visitors to savour this rare opportunity. Overnight stay in Turtle Island.

Accommodation: Selingan Island Chalet
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 6-7: Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary

Depart by boat for the dense mangrove forests of Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary. The Kinabatangan River at the centre of the reserve is the longest river in Sabah, providing a lifeline for inhabitants of this vital ecosystem. The sanctuary is home to one of the highest wildlife concentrations in Southeast Asia. Lush vegetation provides camouflage for many species, but we'll hope to see plenty of the wild residents including the elusive wild orangutan, proboscis and leaf monkeys, gibbon, macaque, pygmy elephant, wild boar, otter, river crocodile, monitor lizard and a great array of birdlife—rhinoceros hornbill and kingfisher are common sightings. Since palm oil plantations surround the reserve on all sides, it provides especially critical habitat for these species threatened by habitat loss.

Each early morning and mid-afternoon we will take boat trips along the river and into tributaries and oxbow lakes. Once off the main river channel the boatman of each of our motorised canoes will turn off the noisy diesel engine and switch on the low-powered and silent electric motor, enabling us to really enjoy the sights and sounds of this rich wilderness. Here we hope to see wild Orangutans

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making their way slowly through the canopy of riverside trees or, in late afternoon, watch them making their night-time nests.

Our remote Sukau Rainforest Lodge along the riverbank is inaccessible by road, offering exceptional privacy and solitude. We will also take time to wander very gently with our local expert along the short trails into the secondary forest just around our lodge where, with patience, a great variety of birds can be found. Black-headed Pitta can usually be seen, and others such as Raffle's Malkoha, Buff-necked, Banded and Crimson-winged Woodpeckers, Straw-headed Bulbul, Black-throated and Chestnut-winged Babblers, Black-and-Yellow Broadbill, Little Green Pigeon and perhaps even Malaysian Honeyguide. Many birds can also be seen from the lodge veranda, while we can relax with a cold drink, especially if one or two of the adjacent trees are fruiting. It is also a great place for photographing dragonflies and butterflies.

Take guided nature walks in the surrounding rain forest and cruise up the Kinabatangan River by day and at dusk to view and hear nocturnal creatures such as crocodiles and night birds. There are no villages for miles, and the only human presence is a few local shrimp fishermen on the river, whose catch often provides a fresh dinner at the lodge.

Accommodation: Sukau Rainforest Lodge

Meal: Breakfast



Day 8-10: Kinabatangan | Danum Valley

We depart Kinabatangan early by boat, with a last chance to look for wildlife along the river during our 90-minute journey. Once we reach Sukau, we

continue by logging road to the nearest town, Lahad Datu, then on to Borneo Rainforest Lodge within the Danum Valley for two night stay.



Danum Valley Conservation Area is Sabah's largest area of undisturbed lowland forest, with more than 200 species of trees that tower to 160 feet. This spectacular tract of ancient primary rain forest holds exceptional status. Before it received full protection in 1995, there were no human settlements within the area, meaning that hunting, logging and other human activities had not disturbed the habitat. Danum Valley is one of the planet's most complex ecosystems, containing an astoundingly diverse array of flora and fauna, including clouded leopard, orangutan and proboscis monkeys. Amid dense vegetation, follow elevated walkways through the canopy and hike a network of trails that surrounds the secluded lodge. On night drives in open safari vehicles, watch and listen to the rain forest's inhabitants becoming animated after dusk.

In the evening a slide show and if weather permits we go spotlighting to view some of the nocturnal animals.

Accommodation: Borneo Rainforest Lodge

Meal: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11: Danum Valley | Transfer to Lahad Datu | Fly Kota Kinabalu (55 min)

This morning, we enjoy an easy nature hike or birdwatching on the canopy walkway before we depart. Here in the treetops we may spy great Slaty woodpeckers, black-and-red broadbills and giant pittas among a multitude of species.

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Then transfer by road to Lahad Datu, where we depart by plane for Kota Kinabalu, capital of Malaysia's Sabah state in the northern part of Borneo. This coastal city, partly surrounded by rain forest, is known for its classic markets, modern boardwalk, beaches and lively waterfront. Our Borneo adventure comes to a close this evening with a farewell dinner.

Accommodation: Hotel Dreamtel

Meal: Breakfast

Day 12: Kota Kinabalu / Depart

Transfer to the airport for your homeward-bound flight.

Meal: Breakfast

Includes

- Airport (pick up/drop off) transfers by private A/C vehicle
- Twin room sharing accommodation at all hotel/lodge/resort as mentioned
- Daily breakfast throughout the trip and other meals as mentioned in the itinerary
- A local tour leader/guide throughout the trip
- Transportation in private air-conditioned vehicles and river boats
- Internal flight tickets
- Guided Sightseeing, all activities and day excursions as per itinerary
- Entrance fees to all included sites (national parks/conservation areas/monuments etc.)
- Local nature guides at included sites
- Applicable government taxes

Excludes

- International flight tickets
- Visa fee
- Travel insurance
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Personal clothing and equipment

- Tips for trip leader/guide, driver, hotel staff and porters
- Items of personal nature such as alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, laundry, and other unforeseen expenses
- Items/services not listed in "included"
- Extra expenses/payment for 'Optional' activities/programs if participated

Accommodation

Hilton Kuching, Kuching

We're in central Kuching, next to the Sarawak River. Jalan Main Bazaar and Kuching Waterfront are one kilometer away and we're less than five minutes from Tua Pek Kong Temple. Kuching International Airport is a 10 km drive, and we're 30 minutes from Bako National Park. Enjoy our outdoor pool, sun terrace, and fitness center.

Sepilok Nature Resort, Sepilok

It all started in 1991, when John and Judy opened what was then known as Wildlife Lodge, with only 5 fan rooms. With passion and interest in nature, they slowly increase the number of rooms to 60 and now it is known as Sepilok Jungle Resort which now is set amidst in this magnificent landscape full of nature.

Selingan Island Chalet, Selingan

Selingan Island offers 25 comfortable rooms each with air-condition, en-suite bathroom and twin-beds. The facilities here are basic but clean as it offers the turtle watching experience and conservation of the island and not so much on luxury stay. There is a small cafeteria that serves buffet style meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner included in your package.



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Sukau Rainforest Lodge, Kinabatangan

The award winning Sukau Rainforest Lodge nestles on the banks of one of Borneo's most important waterways, the Kinabatangan River, home to many of Borneo's magnificent wildlife. It offers the rare comfort and luxury in the midst of the Borneo Rainforest whilst retaining an Eco-Lodge ethos, the delicate balance of true sustainability.

Borneo Rainforest Lodge, Danum Valley

Borneo Rainforest Lodge is perched on Danum Valley Conservation Area - Sabah's largest Lowland Rainforest, surrounded with primary rainforests giving a relaxing vibe. Our lodge has well-appointed rooms, serves excellent food and has highly knowledgeable naturalist guides. The service is of 5-star quality while still maintaining sustainable and environmentally sensitive practices.



Kota Kinabalu Marriott Hotel, Kota Kinabalu

Find your respite in stylishly appointed hotel accommodations with open floor concepts, modern amenities, 24-hour room service and balconies with panoramic sea views. From our dramatic lobby to our sleek, modern hotel rooms and suites, you'll experience a charming visit at Kota Kinabalu Marriott Hotel. Explore the nearby coral islands or just relax along the beach.

Group/Individual

On this trip you will be traveling privately with your family & friends. Our representative/tour partner will look after your transfers to and from the airport and will be around to answer other questions you may

have about your trip.

Accommodation - Hotel, Resort

Your accommodation has been selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a fine heritage hotel in another or a family-run guesthouse or lodges in a smaller town. Accommodation in remote areas tend to be basic and may not have western amenities.

Single Accommodation

Single (room) supplement is provided on request (single supplement charge applies) and are subject to availability.

Food & Transport

All breakfasts, 4 lunches and 4 dinners are included.

Malaysia is renowned for its culinary excellence; however, food can often be relatively unexciting and limited in the lodges and for hotel breakfasts. Meals will be more varied for everyone in cities and seafood is widely available on the coast.

Most meals will be basic based around rice and noodles although most accommodation does offer a western breakfast of beans, toast and eggs. In the bigger hotels and cities the full range of Western and local foods are available. You can generally avoid the spicier food if you wish. You should allow at least Euro 11-22 (USD 15-30) per day for lunch and dinner. You can eat out very cheaply in Borneo, but if you go to the more expensive restaurants most of the time, you will spend more than the suggested amount.

Vegetarians can be catered for but will find the food choice limited. Please inform us before departure of any special dietary requests.

Please note that in Borneo the availability of certain products is minimal or non-existent, for example wheat or dairy-free, please be prepared for this and you may need to bring such items from home.

For airport, sightseeing transfers, and for long drives

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we use a private air-con car, jeep, van depending upon group size. Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

Weather

Borneo has an equatorial monsoon climate with the weather remaining similar throughout the year. It is hot and humid; temperatures range from 23-33°C during the day and rarely drop below 20°C at night. The rainy season starts from November and ends in January/February and the dry season is from May to September, but in reality it can rain at any time. A Borneo rain shower is quite an event!

Baggage Allowance

At time of writing the standard weight limit is one checked baggage is 25kg (55lb) and hand baggage 7kg (15lbs). We recommend packing only one piece of checked baggage. Luggage allowances for both hand and checked luggage are subject to change, we suggest you check the airline's website for the latest information prior to your departure.

ESSENTIAL/PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Passport & Visas

All nationalities require a passport that must be 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, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information below is primarily for EU passport holders, and other nationalities should check with the relevant embassies. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Visitors (tourist) visa is not required for most of EU countries, UK and US nationals to enter Malaysia.

Please note: Visa regulations can change without notice and it is your responsibility to obtain any required visas for this trip. Therefore, we recommend that you check with the nearest embassy or consulate of your chosen destination(s), including any countries you may be transiting or transferring through.

Vaccination & 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.

There are no mandatory vaccination requirements. Recommended vaccinations are: hepatitis A, hepatitis B, typhoid, Japanese encephalitis, rabies, meningitis, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR), Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis), chickenpox, shingles, pneumonia, and influenza. The risk of malaria is slight, but you may wish to consult your GP or travel health clinic for further advice.

You will also need a yellow fever vaccination certificate if you're arriving from a country with risk of yellow fever transmission or transiting for more than 12 hours through a country with risk of yellow fever transmission. Please confirm your vaccine recommendations and requirements with your doctor or travel clinic.

Dengue and zika fevers, both spread by mosquitoes, are known risks in places visited. There are currently no vaccines or prophylaxes available; therefore, we recommend you take the usual precautions to avoid mosquito bites.

Local Time

UTC/GMT + 8 hours.

Electricity

Malaysia operates on 240V and 50 Hz. They use power outlets and plugs of type G. Plug G has three rectangular pins in a triangular pattern.

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Money

The Malaysian unit of currency is Ringgit and indicated as RM. One euro is roughly equivalent to RM 5 and 1 US\$ RM 4.50. Bank notes come in denominations of 100, 50, 20, 10, 5 and 1.

ATM | Credit Cards

ATM's are widespread throughout Malaysia and cash advances can be obtained, but these can incur a relatively large fee so it's best to check with your card issuer before travelling. Cirrus/Maestro are the most prevalent cards accepted, and you will also be able to use your Visa and Mastercard for cash advances. You may want to notify your bank before leaving home, as some will automatically cancel your card after withdrawals from exotic destinations as a fraud prevention method. The more remote areas have few or no ATM's so it is worth planning your expenditure to ensure you have enough money to survive in these areas.

You will find money changers all over Malaysia, and GBP Sterling and US dollars are the most useful foreign currencies to bring as they are the most widely accepted currencies (USD more so in non-touristy and more rural areas). There are plenty of ATM's and money changers at the airport on arrival. Foreign currency can be converted at banks and money changers throughout the country. Most major credit cards are accepted with Visa and MasterCard being the most widely so, but many shops and banks charge a transaction fee of between 2-4%. AmEx is also accepted in a few places in the major tourist areas, but will not be quite as useful.

Extra Expenses & Spending Money

You will need to bring some extra money to cover drinks, laundry, souvenirs and any other personal expense, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Though it totally depends on individual but generally an approximate amount of US\$200 per person, per week should be sufficient (more if you enjoy a few beers); however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the

optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount. Or if you are the one frugal with money probably allocating less would also be suffice.

Optional Tours may be offered in some city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available. Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each optional tour/activity will be arranged locally by our local partner/guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

Tipping

Tipping is of course entirely at your discretion and it is not expected and customary in Malaysia but a little extra is always appreciated as a thank you for excellent service. Tips should be given individually and at the end of their service.

Itinerary Change

In case of some unusual events/incidents the order of programs (sightseeing, excursions etc.) might have to change in order to accommodate the local situations. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements while maintaining the overall integrity of your trip.

The domestic airlines may change their schedule frequently and, in such cases, our local partner/guide will inform you about the changes.

Travel Insurance

We highly recommend to choose/get an insurance plan/policy that covers your needs. And please make sure to keep/carry a hard-copy of your travel insurance documents on your person while on tour. It's prudent to check thoroughly the inclusions and procedure to file claims prior to purchasing insurance coverage. *travel-to-nature Asia* will not be responsible for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to purchase appropriate travel insurance from the date of booking.

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Important Information

On all guided trips although our leaders/guides are well trained to deal with different capabilities, if they have any concerns about someone's ability to safely partake in an activity, or their impact on other people's enjoyment, we authorize them to take necessary action which, in some circumstances, may involve asking someone to miss that activity.
