

# Naturally Sabah

## 8 Days | Kota Kinabalu to Sandakan



*Mt Kinabalu, pygmy elephants, orangutans, rainforests and great food. There's sun and there's sand but this tour is not for those who long to lie on the beach reading a book, it's much more! Come to Sabah and soak it all in... naturally*

### HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

#### Trip Highlights

- Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park and pristine Mamutik Island - snorkelling and swimming
- Taun Gusi Village - experience village life at a homestay, horseriding and swimming in the river
- Kudasang WWII Memorial Park - learn about Sabah's WWII history
- Sepilok Orangutan Sanctuary
- Sukau Rainforest - home to an array of wildlife. River cruise in search of wildlife
- Kinabalu National Park - tropical rainforest
- Kinabatangan River and Kelenanap oxbow lake - river cruise to view birds and wildlife
- Poring treetop canopy walkway - spectacular views of the rainforest below

#### What's Included

- Entrance fees to all included sites
- 7 breakfasts, 2 lunches and 3 dinners

- 4 nights 2-3 star hotels, 2 nights rainforest lodge with private facilities, 1 night homestay with shared facilities
- Arrival and departure transfer on days 1 & 8
- Sightseeing and river cruises as per itinerary (please note that touring in Sepilok, Sukau and Kinabatangan on days 5 - 8 is on a shared basis)
- Transportation in air-conditioned vehicles and river boats
- Local guides for all included sightseeing

#### What's Not Included

- International flights and visas
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture
- Tourism Tax - RM 10 per room, per night to be paid directly to hotel

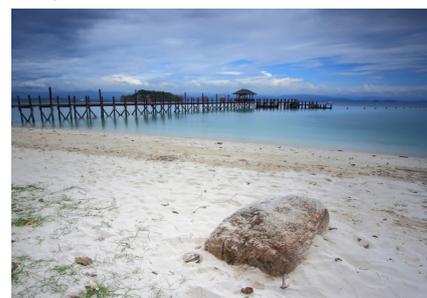
### DETAILED ITINERARY

#### Day 1 : Kota Kinabalu

Welcome to Kota Kinabalu. Upon arrival, you'll be met and transferred to your hotel.

**Overnight - Kota Kinabalu**

#### Day 2 : Mamutik Island



Kota Kinabalu - Mamutik Island - Kota Kinabalu. Just a 20 minute boat ride and you'll arrive at the beautiful coral islands of the Tunku Abdul Rahman Park. Offering pristine white beaches, clear water and coral reefs, this is perfect place for a day of relaxation and swimming. Snorkel in crystal clear water among coral reef and tropical fish or explore jungle trails before returning to Kota Kinabalu.

**Overnight - Kota Kinabalu (B)**

#### Day 3 : Taun Gusi Homestay

Kota Kinabalu - Taun Gusi. Today travel north to Taun Gusi Village in Kota Belud, which is known as the rice bowl of Sabah. It's a scenic journey through paddy fields and rubber plantations, passing native houses with majestic Mount Kinabalu as the background. Upon arrival meet your host family and in the afternoon there's the opportunity to go horse riding, visit a place that makes swords (Bajau Parang Making) and bathe in the river. You spend the night at the home of your

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host family and gain a fascinating insight into village life. **Overnight - Taun Gusi Village Homestay (B, D)**

## Day 4 : Kinabalu National Park



Taun Gusi - Kundasang. Wake up to the calls of roosters and enjoy the tranquility of the village. Start the day by visiting the 'Valley of Paddy field' which is a vast low valley of lush paddy fields. Transfer to Kinabalu National Park where you visit the education centre and mountain garden, home to various species of the flowering Rhododendrons, carnivorous pitcher plants, orchids, ferns, and birds. If time and weather permits, take a guided trail walk. **Overnight - Kundasang (B)**

## Day 5 : Kundasang Memorial Park

Kundasang – Sepilok. This morning visit the Kundasang memorial park and discover Sabah's WWII history, before heading to Poring, 1,500 ft above sea level, and east of Kinabalu Park HQ. Explore tropical lowland rainforest and the jungle trail leading up to the treetop canopy walkways, suspended 41 meters above the forest floor across giant Mengaris trees. Next proceed by road to Sepilok, where this evening we experience the Sepilok Jungle Nightwalk. **Overnight - Sepilok Nature Resort (B)**

## Day 6 : Sepilok Orangutans



Sepilok - Sukau. Your first stop today is the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre, where orphaned and injured orangutans are reintroduced into the wild. We take a walk through the Tropical Lowland Dipterocarp Forest and visit the outdoor nursery where around 25 young orphaned orangutans are housed.

Depart Sepilok and transfer to jetty in Sandakan for a scenic hour boat cruise up to the Lower Kinabatangan River Sanctuary to Sukau, through a magnificent scenery of the Mangrove Forest. After lunch it's time to relax and look out for nature from the boardwalk, make sure to bring along your binoculars. Look out for any moving tree branches, as you might have the chance to spot the wild orangutan, silver leaf monkeys, birds and other wildlife. Later in the afternoon, take another cruise in search of more wildlife until the sunsets and by night fall you'll see the twinkling fire flies. After dinner at the lodge, you can experience the jungle at night from the nature boardwalk, searching for birds, snakes, insects and other wildlife with your nature guide. **Overnight - Abai Jungle Lodge (B, L, D)**

## Day 7 : Sukau Rainforest



Wake up to the calls of nature. Early this morning take a river cruise to the Pitas oxbow lake to observe wildlife before returning to the lodge for breakfast. Then there's the opportunity to take part in a tree planting project with the locals before enjoying a simple lunch arranged by the villagers at Abai village.

After lunch cruise up river to Sukau village in search of primates especially the endemic Proboscis Monkeys, birds and other wildlife. After check-in at Kinabatangan Riverside

Lodge and time to relax, you take another late afternoon cruise to Menanggal River, a small tributary of the Kinabatangan. **Overnight - Kinabatangan Riverside Lodge (B, L, D)**

## Day 8 : Sandakan

Sukau - Sandakan. Early this morning after breakfast take a two hour boat cruise back to Sandakan with the opportunity to spot wildlife en route. Your tour ends with a transfer to Sandakan airport. Flights should be booked after 2pm.(B)

## Entrance fees & tipping

Entrance fees are included in the cost of your Borneo tour.

Tipping is not included. For a job well done, we would suggest you tip your tour guides USD\$5 - 10 per person per day. Tipping is an entirely personal gesture and ultimately the amount is up to you.

## Accommodation

Whether it is a longhouse in Sarawak, a rainforest eco lodge on the Kinabatangan River or a homestay in a local village of the Dusun people, Sabah, our jungle lodges and homestay accommodations have been chosen primarily for the experience.

On day 4 of our 'Simply Sarawak' and 'Wild Borneo' tours we spend a night in a Longhouse. Longhouses located on the periphery of the Batang Ai Reservoir are approximately a 1½ hour longboat ride from boat-launch in a remote area of Borneo. Lodgings are very basic but clean with communal western-style toilets, showers and mosquito nets. You will sleep on mattresses in the 'Ruai' - the communal covered walkway of the longhouse. Freshly laundered bedding is provided. Facilities are shared and power is supplied by a generator. This is a very unique experience and a wonderful way to experience how the Iban people live, however it's important to be aware that accommodation at the longhouse is very basic.

On days 6 & 7 of 'Sabah...Naturally' and days 13 & 14 of our 'Wild Borneo' tour we stay at rainforest lodges on the banks of the Kinabatangan River. These lodges are nestled among lush primary and secondary

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jungle, which is home to a plethora of wildlife including Borneo's iconic Proboscis Monkey, orangutans in their natural habitat as well as herds of Borneo Pygmy Elephants.

On day 3 of 'Sabah...Naturally' and day 10 of our 'Wild Borneo' tour we spend a night in homestay accommodation located in Taun Gusi Village. The accommodation is clean and comfortable with shared facilities. This is not a hostel or pension, it's accommodation in specially accredited homes which have been specifically set-up to host guests and allow the local families to not only display their traditional way of life but a chance to retain it. You will be housed in a separate building from the main home but will share meals with your hosts and usually bathroom facilities.

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

### Entrance Fees

Entrance fees to most sites are not included, although reasonably priced. The entrance fee amount is noted under exclusions on page one of this document and a breakdown of the entrance fees is provided upon arrival on the Welcome Letter.

For tours starting in Vietnam we collect entrance fees on Day 2 of the tour. All funds collected in Vietnam are payable in either US dollars (USD) or Vietnamese dong (VND).

For tours starting in Laos or Cambodia, we collect entrance fees on Day 2 of the tour and the entrance fees are payable in USD.

Multi country tours starting in Laos - please note if you are travelling on our Laos to Vietnam, Inside Indochina or Indochina Discovery tour your entrance fees will be split into two separate payments. Entrance fees for Laos will be collected on day 2 of the tour in Vientiane and entrance fees for Vietnam/Cambodia will be collected on day 8 in Hanoi.

### Tipping Kitty

At the start of your tour, we take a small tipping kitty (the amount is noted under exclusions) from all tour participants to cover tips throughout your holiday. This saves you the hassle of knowing when and how much to tip bellhops, luggage handlers, bus

drivers, train conductors and other support staff throughout the tour.

This amount does not include a tip for your tour guides. For a job well done, we would suggest USD \$3 - 6 per person per day. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture and ultimately the amount is up to you.

Multi country tours starting in Laos - please note if you are travelling on our Laos to Vietnam, Inside Indochina or Indochina Discovery tour your tipping kitty will be split into two separate payments. Tips for Laos will be collected on day 2 of the tour in Vientiane and tips for Vietnam/Cambodia will be collected on day 8 in Hanoi.

### Groups & Guides

The longest Signature Tour we offer in Southeast Asia is our Indochina Discovery 23 day tour. All other Signature Tours we offer (with the exception of the family tours) are sectors of this larger tour. The longest Budget Tour we offer in Southeast Asia is our Hanoi to Bangkok Tour 19 day tour, all other Budget Tours are sectors of this longer tour. As our tours are modular you may have travellers join you part way through your holiday (in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City or Phnom Penh on Signature Tours or in Ho Chi Minh City our Budget Tours). There will also be travellers who end their tour when you continue on.

#### Guides:

In Laos a Lao national guide escorts our tours from Vientiane through to Luang Prabang and in Vietnam a Vietnamese national guide escorts our tours from Hanoi through to Ho Chi Minh City.

In Cambodia our tours have two guides - a Cambodian national guide in Phnom Penh and a specialist regional guide in Siem Reap.

Our tours that end in Bangkok are not fully escorted for the Thailand sector. On our Signature Tours there is a local Thai guide for the Bangkok city tour. If you are travelling on a Budget Tour a local guide will meet you at the Cambodia border and escort you to our hotel, then you will be unescorted for the rest of your stay in Bangkok.

### What to Pack

- Lightweight cotton garments. Ladies may need to have their shoulders and legs (to below the knee) covered when visiting certain sites, so please pack accordingly.
- Comfortable walking shoes in addition to flip flops/ thongs
- DEET based mosquito repellent & antihistamine cream
- Electrical adaptors. A universal adaptor will cover all bases
- Lightweight, fold up raincoat/ poncho/ umbrella
- Two spare passport photos & a photocopy of your passport
- A small daypack for your day-to-day needs
- Sunglasses, hat, sunscreen, swimming costume and torch
- Sleep sheet if taking an overnight sleeper train in Vietnam. These also can be easily purchased in Hanoi at a cost of USD\$5
- An overnight bag, if your tour includes a night board a Junk boat in Halong Bay. As we will be returning to Hanoi it is not essential that you take your big bag/ suitcase with you.

### Borneo Country Guide

#### Visas

Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Borneo.

New Zealand, Canadian and South African passport holders can enter Malaysia without a visa for a visit not exceeding one month. British and Australian passport holders do not require a visa for stays of up to three months. National from the U.S.A do not require a visa. All other nationalities please check with your nearest Malaysian/Borneo Embassy or Consulate.

Foreign travellers visiting Malaysia are required to hold sufficient funds (at least US\$500) to cover their expenses while in the country, a return/onward tickets and the necessary travel documentation for their next destination. If travellers are not in possession

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of a return/onward ticket, they may be requested to purchase one.

## Health Requirements

As Rabies are an ever present problem in Malaysia, close animal contact should be avoided and if bitten, you should treat the matter seriously and seek medical attention immediately.

Leeches are present in the jungles and can be a nuisance after heavy rain on jungle walks. Leech socks can be purchased locally and are recommended.

Treated tap water is available in most built-up areas. In rural areas we recommend bottled water which is widely available and inexpensive.

A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required to enter Malaysia, if arriving within six days of leaving or transiting through an infected area.

## Climate

Borneo has an equatorial climate and situated south of the equator, a dry season is the reverse of the rest of south-east Asia: April – November. The rainy season is from December – March and although travel is possible it is less pleasant. At all times of year however, it is usually hot and humid in the lowlands and cooler in the mountains. Mt Kinabalu has its own climate and often experiences freezing temperatures at night.

## Time & Voltage

Malaysia is 8.00 hours ahead of GMT

The voltage in Borneo is 240v 50Hz AC and the outlet is a UK style three-pin (type G) rectangular pronged plug.

## Currency

The Myanmar Kyat, often denoted by MMK, is the official currency of Myanmar. The official rate is far different from the market rate. Some exchange booths, especially at the airport offer a very poor rate so we recommend you wait until meeting our representative or your tour guide for advise on the best place to exchange.

Carry USD or Euros cash, larger denominations tend to get better exchange

rate. USD bills should be of the new series ('big' heads rather of 'small' heads) and any notes that are old, torn or marked will not be accepted. Further USD bills with the CB series are not acceptable for exchange. ATMs are not available in Burma and Credit Card and Travellers Cheques are not accepted. We recommend you bring all your holiday money in cash (preferably USD notes).

## Holiday Money

GBP1 = RM5.2 USD 1 = RM3.2 AUD 1 = RM2-9 EURO1 = 4.2

Malaysia's currency – the Ringgit (RM) is equivalent to 100 sens (cents). Coins are issued in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50 sen and RM1. Notes come in RM1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100.

Foreign currency and traveller's cheques can be converted to Malaysian Ringgit at banks or authorized money changers throughout the country or you can purchase currency in advance. ATM's are common in larger cities however Malaysian pin numbers are 6-digits and some travellers have reported difficulty receiving cash from ATMs using 4-digit pins. We recommend a combination of cash (US, Euro, AUD, GBP) and credit/debit cards.

By international standards, Malaysia presents relatively good value for money. Meals at a local market will average USD3, in a restaurant, USD15 for mid-range, rising to as much as USD30 depending on the establishment and what you order. Bottled water is about USD40c and a local beer anywhere from USD2 - USD5. We recommend you budget USD25-USD30 for meals in addition to your tip kitty and entrance fees.

## Essential Packing

- A small daypack for your day-to-day needs
- Sunglasses, hat, sunscreen, swim costume and torch
- Lightweight cotton garments
- Comfortable walking shoes in addition to flip flogs/ thongs
- DEET based mosquito repellent & antihistamine cream
- Bring a 2 flat prong (type A) and a 2 round pin (type C) electrical adaptors. A universal adaptor will cover all bases • Lightweight, fold up raincoat/ poncho

- Two spare passport photos & a photocopy of your passport

## Food

Situated between Thailand and Indonesia and a stop along the traditional trading routes of Europe India and China, Malaysia, by its very location has become a melting pot for food. Now known as Nyonya, the cuisine takes elements from both Chinese and Malay culture and is a fusion of an array of amazing food experiences.

The flavours of Malaysian cooking are chillies, garlic, ginger, Limes & lemongrass – essential to the curry pastes which form the base of many of the dishes and also often used by themselves to add flavour. Coconut milk and palm sugar are frequently added to soften the heat.

Wander along the open air eating stalls and try a popiah (spring rolls) or curry puff before moving on to a fish-head curry, Nasi Ayam (Chicken Rice) or a rendang. There'll be noodles, sambals, seafood curries and fish, all full of flavour. The choice will be limitless, so ready up your taste-buds and get ready to dive-in!

## Malaysia Country Guide

### Health Requirements

It is recommended that you be vaccinated for Tetanus and Polio, if you haven't had a booster in the last ten years. Food and waterborne diseases are more common, so we recommend vaccinations for typhoid (valid 3 years), Hepatitis A (validity varies) and Diphtheria.

As Rabies are an ever present problem in Malaysia, close animal contact should be avoided and if bitten, you should treat the matter seriously and seek medical attention immediately.

Leeches are present in the jungles and can be a nuisance after heavy rain on jungle walks. Leech socks can be purchased locally and are recommended.

Altitude Sickness can be an issue if climbing Mt Kinabalu – generally returning to a lower altitude will resolve the issue but if symptoms persist seek medical advice immediately.

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Symptoms include headaches, throwing-up, diarrhoea, disorientation & in severe cases temporary blindness.

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## Holiday Money

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By international standards, Malaysia presents relatively good value for money. Meals at a local market will average USD3, in a restaurant, USD15 for mid-range, rising to as much as USD30 depending on the establishment and what you order. Bottled water is about USD40c and a local beer anywhere from USD2 - USD5. We recommend you budget USD20-40/day for meals in addition to your tip kitty.

## Essential Packing

- Lightweight cotton garments
- Comfortable walking shoes in addition to flip flops/ thongs
- DEET based mosquito repellent & antihistamine cream
- A universal adaptor
- Lightweight, fold up raincoat/ poncho
- Two spare passport photos & a photocopy of your passport
- A small daypack for your day-to-day needs
- Sunglasses, hat, sunscreen, swim costume and torch

## Currency

USD 1 = RM3.12 AUD 1 = RM3.19 NZD 1 = RM2.48

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All foreign nationals require at least a six month validity on their passports from the date of entry into Malaysia.

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