

Grand Borneo Wildlife Odyssey: Kinabalu, Sepilok, Kinabatangan & Danum Valley

Prepared by TourGrids



Destination
Malaysia



Duration
9 Nights 10 Days



Starting from
Rs. 1,68,000 / person

ITINERARY ROUTE

✈ Kuala Lumpur · 1N

✈ Kota Kinabalu · 2N

✈ Sandakan / Sepilok · 1N

✈ Kinabatangan River (Sukau) · 2N

✈ Danum Valley (Lahad Datu) · 2N

✈ Kota Kinabalu · 1N

Overview

The full Sabah circuit for serious wildlife travellers, covering montane forest, lowland floodplain and primary rainforest in one route. It starts at Kinabalu Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site on the slopes of Southeast Asia's highest peak, where mountain blackeye, Kinabalu squirrels and rafflesia blooms are the draw. Sepilok follows, with orangutan and sun bear centres side by side. Three river cruises on the Kinabatangan target proboscis monkeys, pygmy elephants and eight hornbill species.

The finale is Danum Valley, 438 square kilometres of undisturbed lowland dipterocarp forest reached by a two-hour drive from Lahad Datu. Danum's canopy walkway, night drives and forest trails offer chances at orangutans in the wild, red leaf monkeys, bearded pigs, clouded leopard tracks and over 300 bird species. Best in February to April and July to September. Includes one night in Kuala Lumpur for flight connections.

✓ What's Included

- ✓ 9 nights accommodation as per itinerary, including 2 nights Danum Valley lodge and 2 nights Kinabatangan jungle lodge
- ✓ Daily breakfast; full board at Kinabatangan and Danum Valley (9 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 5 dinners)
- ✓ All airport and land transfers in air-conditioned vehicles
- ✓ Kinabalu Park and Poring Hot Springs canopy walk with entry fees
- ✓ Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre and Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre
- ✓ Rainforest Discovery Centre canopy walkway
- ✓ Three Kinabatangan River cruises and one guided night walk
- ✓ Danum Valley conservation fee, canopy walkway, guided jungle trek and night drive
- ✓ Klias or Weston wetland cruise with proboscis monkeys and fireflies
- ✓ Dedicated naturalist guide at Kinabatangan and Danum Valley

✗ Not Included

- ✗ International flights and domestic sectors (Kuala Lumpur to Kota Kinabalu, Sandakan, Lahad Datu, Tawau)
- ✗ Visa/eNTRI fees, travel insurance and airport taxes on domestic sectors
- ✗ Camera and video permits at parks and wildlife centres
- ✗ Meals and drinks not specified
- ✗ Optional Selingan Turtle Island overnight, Mount Kinabalu climb permits and Sipadan diving
- ✗ Laundry, personal expenses and tips to guides and boatmen
- ✗ Anything not listed under inclusions

Day-by-Day Itinerary

Day

1

Arrive Kuala Lumpur

Arrive at Kuala Lumpur International Airport and transfer to your hotel. Depending on arrival time, visit Batu Caves with its 272 painted steps and resident macaques, or explore Merdeka Square and the Jamek Mosque area. Dinner in Brickfields, KL's Little India, where South Indian thalis and banana leaf rice are easy to find. Early night, as tomorrow's flight to Borneo departs in the morning.

Day

2

Fly to Kota Kinabalu, Klias Wetlands Cruise

Morning flight of about two hours forty minutes to Kota Kinabalu. Transfer to your hotel and rest. In the afternoon drive around two hours to the Klias or Weston wetlands for a river cruise through nipah and mangrove forest. Proboscis monkeys, unique to Borneo, gather in riverside trees before dusk along with silvered langurs and macaques. After a riverside dinner, the boat returns in darkness to watch fireflies clustering on the mangrove trees. Late return to Kota Kinabalu.

Day

3

Kinabalu Park & Poring Hot Springs

Full-day trip to Kinabalu Park, about two hours from the city, sitting at around 1,500 metres with cool mountain air. Walk the botanical garden and the lower montane trails with a park guide, looking for Bornean treepie, mountain blackeye and pitcher plants. Continue to Poring Hot Springs for the Poring canopy walkway strung high above the forest, and check whether a rafflesia, the world's largest single flower, is in bloom at a nearby private site. Stop at Nabalun market for tribal handicrafts on the return.

Day

4

Fly to Sandakan, Sepilok Orangutans and Sun Bears

Short morning flight to Sandakan on Sabah's east coast. Transfer to Sepilok and attend the 3 pm feeding at the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre, which has been rehabilitating orphaned orangutans since 1964. Move next door to the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre to see rescued sun bears from raised platforms. Late afternoon at the Rainforest Discovery Centre, where the canopy walkway and towers are good for Bornean bristleheads, trogons and flying squirrels at dusk. Overnight in Sepilok.

Day

5

Transfer to Kinabatangan & Evening Cruise

Drive two and a half hours to Sukau on the lower Kinabatangan, Sabah's longest river, with an optional stop at the Gomantong Caves where swiftlet nests are harvested and bats stream out at dusk. Check in to a riverside lodge and take lunch. The late-afternoon cruise turns into the Menanggul tributary, one of the most reliable places to see proboscis monkeys and crocodiles. After dinner, join a guided night walk for civets, frogs and roosting kingfishers.

Day

6

Full Day on the Kinabatangan

Dawn cruise when animals are most active, watching for Bornean pygmy elephants, orangutan nests in riverside trees, oriental pied and rhinoceros hornbills, storm's storks and monitor lizards. Return for breakfast and rest through the heat. Optional afternoon walk to an oxbow lake trail behind the lodge. A second cruise goes out before sunset, when hornbills cross the river to roost. Dinner at the lodge followed by a night boat ride, weather permitting, to look for sleeping birds and crocodile eyeshine.

Day

7

Drive to Danum Valley Conservation Area

Morning cruise, breakfast, then a long transfer via Lahad Datu into the Danum Valley Conservation Area, roughly five to six hours in total including the final unsealed logging road. Danum protects one of the largest remaining stretches of undisturbed lowland dipterocarp forest in Southeast Asia. Check in, take lunch and join an orientation walk near the lodge. After dinner, a night drive with spotlights gives chances at sambar deer, mousedeer, civets, flying squirrels and, rarely, a clouded leopard or slow loris.

Day

8

Danum Valley Canopy Walkway & Jungle Trek

Early start for the canopy walkway suspended high in the emergent layer, the best vantage for hornbills, gibbons calling at dawn and Bornean orangutans moving through the crowns. After breakfast, a guided trek to the Coffin Cliff burial site and a jungle trail through buttressed dipterocarps, with your naturalist reading tracks of bearded pig, sambar and elephant. Cool off at the Segama River swimming spot. Evening bird list session and dinner, followed by an optional second night drive.

Day

9

Danum Morning Walk, Return to Kota Kinabalu

A last dawn walk on the nature trails, when gibbon calls carry across the valley and red leaf monkeys feed in the canopy. Breakfast and check out, then transfer to Lahad Datu for the flight to Kota Kinabalu via the scheduled sector. Check in to your city hotel and spend the evening at the Kota Kinabalu waterfront, with sunset over the South China Sea and dinner at a seafood or Indian restaurant near Gaya Street.

Day

10

Kota Kinabalu Departure

Free morning for the Sunday Gaya Street market if the day matches, or the Sabah State Museum with its heritage village and ethnobotanic garden. Pick up Sabah tea, tenom coffee and Bornean handicrafts before checking out. Transfer to Kota Kinabalu International Airport for your flight home via Kuala Lumpur. Travellers extending can add Selingan Turtle Island near Sandakan or diving at Mabul and Sipadan from Semporna.

? Frequently Asked Questions

? What is the best time to visit Malaysia from India?

December to February is the most reliable window, with drier weather in Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Langkawi and daytime temperatures around 31–33°C. March to May stays warm and works well if you want lower crowds. The west coast (Langkawi, Penang) gets heavy rain from September to early November, while the east coast islands like Perhentian and Redang shut down roughly from November to February during the northeast monsoon. If you are heading to Borneo for Sabah's diving or Mount Kinabalu, aim for March to September. Chinese New Year (January or February) and Hari Raya bring festive energy but also higher hotel rates and packed transport.

? How much does a Malaysia trip cost from India per person?

A 6-night Malaysia package from India typically costs Rs 65,000 to Rs 95,000 per person on twin sharing, covering return flights, 3–4 star hotels, airport transfers, breakfast and key sightseeing. Budget travellers doing it independently can manage Rs 45,000 to Rs 55,000 by booking AirAsia or Batik Air fares early and staying in Bukit Bintang budget hotels. Mid-range daily spend runs about Rs 3,500–5,000 covering meals, Grab rides and entry tickets. Genting cable car, Petronas Twin Towers observation deck and Langkawi Sky Bridge each cost roughly Rs 700–1,900. Luxury island resorts in Langkawi push the total past Rs 1.5 lakh per person.

? Do Indians need a visa for Malaysia?

Indian passport holders currently enjoy visa-free entry to Malaysia for stays up to 30 days, a facility Malaysia extended for Indian and Chinese nationals from December 2023. You must complete the Malaysia Digital Arrival Card (MDAC) online within three days before arrival, which is free. Carry proof of return or onward ticket, confirmed hotel bookings and sufficient funds, as immigration officers do check these. Your passport should have at least six months validity. Policy extensions are announced periodically, so verify the current status on the Immigration Department of Malaysia website or with your tour operator before booking non-refundable flights.

❓ **How do I reach Malaysia from India?**

Direct flights to Kuala Lumpur International Airport operate from Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, Kolkata and Ahmedabad on Malaysia Airlines, AirAsia X, Batik Air Malaysia, IndiGo and Air India Express. Flying time is around 4 hours 30 minutes from Chennai and Bengaluru, and about 5 hours 30 minutes from Delhi. Return fares usually sit between Rs 18,000 and Rs 32,000 depending on season. Penang has direct connections from Chennai on some carriers. For Langkawi, Kota Kinabalu or Kuching, take a domestic hop from KLIA, which takes an hour or so and costs Rs 3,000–6,000 when booked in advance.

❓ **How many days are enough for a Malaysia trip?**

Six to seven nights suits most first-time Indian travellers. A practical split is three nights in Kuala Lumpur covering Petronas Twin Towers, Batu Caves, Merdeka Square and a day trip to Genting Highlands or Putrajaya, followed by three nights in Langkawi for the cable car, island hopping and beaches. If you prefer heritage and food, swap Langkawi for Penang and spend two nights exploring George Town, Kek Lok Si and Penang Hill. Adding Malacca needs one extra night. Sabah or Sarawak for orangutans and diving deserves a separate four-night extension. Anything under five nights leaves you rushing between airports rather than enjoying the destinations.

❓ **Is Malaysia safe for Indian tourists and solo travellers?**

Malaysia is among the safer Southeast Asian destinations for Indian travellers, including women and solo visitors. Violent crime against tourists is uncommon; the practical risks are pickpocketing and bag snatching in crowded areas like Petaling Street, Bukit Bintang and Chow Kit, and occasional taxi overcharging, which you avoid by using the Grab app. Malaysia has strict drug laws with severe penalties, so never carry parcels for anyone. Dress modestly when visiting mosques and in conservative states like Kelantan and Terengganu. Tap water is treated but stick to bottled water. Save the tourist police number 03-2149 6590 and keep digital copies of your passport and MDAC confirmation.

❓ **Is vegetarian and Indian food easily available in Malaysia?**

Yes, easily. Malaysia has a large Indian-origin population, and Kuala Lumpur's Brickfields (Little India) is packed with South Indian vegetarian restaurants serving banana leaf meals, dosa and thali for Rs 250–500. Jalan Masjid India and Bangsar have more options, including Gujarati and North Indian places. Penang's Little India in George Town and Ipoh also serve familiar food. Halal certification is widespread, so Muslim travellers from India have no difficulty. Do try local vegetarian-friendly dishes like roti canai with dal, nasi lemak (ask without anchovies), cendol and Nyonya kuih. In Langkawi and island resorts, Indian food is limited, so inform your hotel about dietary needs at booking.

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