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Guide



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By Wayne Tarman & Mike Reed

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*This guide focuses on Kuching and the surrounding area. In order to provide as much local detail as possible, we have not included information on immigration requirements, exchange rates, climate, etc. These details are readily available from popular guidebooks.*

**Front cover:** Iban girls at Batang Ai, Proboscis Monkey at Bako and the Astana.

# INTRODUCTION

## First Impressions



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Kuching, the capital of Sarawak, Malaysia's largest state, is simply unique. No other city in Malaysia has such a romantic and unlikely history. And no other city in Malaysia displays its charms with such an easy grace. The residents of Kuching (pop. 580,000 approx.) enjoy living here, and take great pride in their fascinating city, a pride that is reflected in their attitude towards visitors. Kuching welcomes visitors warmly, but it does not put on an act for them. Instead it goes about its own business in a relaxed manner that hasn't changed in 150 years. It is impossible to really enjoy Kuching from the air conditioned comfort of a tour bus. To make the most of your visit you must put on your walking shoes, take to the streets (and the water), and join in.

Like all towns and cities in Borneo, the focal point of Kuching, and the reason for its existence, is the river. Hiring a "sampan" to meander slowly up and down the Sarawak River is the best way to get your first impression of Kuching, and a real bargain. It's good during the day, bliss at sunset and a truly one-off experience at night. From the river you will see picturesque Malay villages (*kampungs*), a golden-domed mosque, a Victorian fort, a whole street of 19th century Chinese shophouses and an imposing wooden-roofed palace, all set against a background of distant mountains.



Kuching's city centre is well preserved and very compact; virtually everything that is worth seeing can be reached on foot or by sampan. The narrow, bustling streets are crammed with shops selling all manner of goods, from the mundane to the exotic. There are ornate Chinese temples, many fine examples of colonial-style architecture, a beautiful waterfront and a number of interesting museums, including the historic Sarawak Museum. There is an excellent range of accommodation, from luxury to budget, good restaurants, and nightlife to suit every taste and pocket. You can try local delicacies such as deer meat and jungle fern, drink a glass or two of *tuak* (local rice wine), or feast on a vast array of seafood dishes.

Kuching has an unusual name - the word means "cat" in Malay. There are a number of stories as to how this name came about, but it is unlikely that it has anything to do with cats. The two more likely explanations are that it derives from the Chinese word *kochin*, meaning "harbour," or that it is named after the *mata kuching* or "cat's eye" fruit, a close relative of the lychee that grows widely here.

Sarawak is a unique and enjoyable tourism destination, and Kuching is the ideal base from which to go exploring. There are a number of national parks nearby including the famous Bako, home of the rare proboscis monkey, Gunung Gading, where giant *rafflesia* flowers bloom, the Kuching Wetlands, which protects a fascinating mangrove ecosystem, Kubah, with its rare palms and orchids, and the Matang Wildlife Centre. Literally hundreds of Iban and Bidayuh longhouses are within easy travelling distance. Damai, on the nearby Santubong Peninsula is Sarawak's main resort area, and many travel agents offer "two-centre" packages allowing you to explore Kuching, go on a longhouse trip, visit Bako and the rainforest and then relax on the beach after the rigours of jungle trekking. See the **Damai and Santubong** section for details.

## The People



Kuching is a cosmopolitan city, and this is reflected in the faces on the streets. Whilst the population is predominantly Chinese and Malay, Kuching is home to people from virtually all of Sarawak's 26-plus ethnic groups. As well as Bidayuhs (formerly known as Land Dayaks) and Ibans (Sea Dayaks), you are sure to encounter Melanaus from the coastal areas and Orang Ulu (literally "upriver people"), the collective name given to the smaller indigenous groups, including Kayan, Kenyah, Kelabit, Berawan, Lun Bawang, Penan, etc. All are thoroughly modern Malaysians nowadays, but many of the rural people still live in longhouse communities.

This rich and varied cultural heritage makes Kuching a great place to buy native handicrafts, as all of Sarawak's ethnic groups produce excellent craftsmen and women. The variety of goods on offer is simply enormous (see **Shopping** section). Kuching is also the ideal base for visiting longhouses (see **Longhouse Tours** section). Local travel agents have a variety of tours, ranging from half-day trips to nearby Bidayuh longhouses, to week-long safaris to Iban longhouses on the Skrang, Lemanak, Batang Ai and Rejang rivers. Longhouse visits are always interesting and invariably great fun.

## History - The White Rajahs



Kuching's history is also Sarawak's; the kind of adventure story that would be unbelievable if it were not true. Local bookshops are crammed with volumes old and new describing the reign of the White Rajahs in great detail. What follows is a brief summary.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Sarawak was a typical Malay principality, under the control of the Sultan of Brunei. Apart from occasional piracy on the coast and headhunting in the interior, Sarawak was peaceful. All of this changed when the Sultan of Brunei appointed a hugely unpopular Governor. The Malays and Bidayuh of the Sarawak River revolted in 1836

and declared independence. An ugly guerrilla war ensued, which continued until 1839, when James Brooke, a young, wealthy Englishman arrived on the scene in his well-armed yacht, The Royalist.

Brooke set himself up as a freelance adventurer and the Sultan's uncle immediately asked him to help put down the rebellion. Brooke readily agreed. The spears and muskets of the rebels were no match for a modern warship, and the conflict soon ended. As a reward, the grateful Sultan made Brooke the Rajah of Sarawak in 1841. Brooke was not content to rule over a small riverside town, and set out to pacify his new kingdom, with the help of the British Navy. At the time of his death in 1868, Sarawak was a relatively peaceful territory covering the area between Tanjung Datu (which is now the Indonesian border) and Kuching.



James Brooke's nephew Charles, who succeeded him, was no adventurer like his uncle, but an excellent administrator and politician. He set up a proper system of government, gradually expanding his area of control until it formed the present day Sarawak. His legacy is everywhere in Kuching. It was he who built the Astana, Fort Margherita, the Courthouse, the Sarawak Museum and many other fine buildings. Charles Brooke died in 1917, and was succeeded by his son, Charles Vyner Brooke, who built on his father's achievements and improved the general administration of the state. In 1941 he set up a State Council to oversee the passing of new laws, bringing the first stirrings of democracy to Sarawak.

The rule of the State Council was short-lived, as the Japanese invaded at the end of the same year.

When the Japanese surrendered in September 1945, Sarawak came under Australian military administration. Vyner Brooke felt the state would be better off as a colony and ceded it to Britain. This move was very unpopular and resulted in the assassination of the Governor, Duncan Stewart, in 1949. Order was eventually restored and the colonial administration concentrated on preparing Sarawak for independence. In 1963, Sarawak and Sabah gained independence by joining with Malaya to form the new nation of Malaysia.



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## The City Centre



Kuching **Waterfront**, a major restoration and land reclamation project, has become the most popular meeting place in the city. Drab warehouses have been replaced with an almost 900 m long esplanade, beautifully landscaped and dotted with wooden benches, food stalls, restaurants and entertainment facilities. A number of older buildings have been preserved and incorporated into the design, including the Chinese History Museum (see **Museums** section), the Sarawak Steamship Building, an open-air theatre and the Square Tower. Modern additions to the Waterfront include a restored Chinese pavilion, colourful musical fountains, and a

number of modern sculptures. During the daytime, the Waterfront offers excellent views of the Astana, Fort Margherita and the Malay *kampungs* which line the north bank of the river, but at night-time it really comes alive; it seems like half of Kuching is out meeting friends, watching a show, or just taking the air.

**Main Bazaar**, opposite the Waterfront, is the oldest street in the city and the heart of old Kuching. It has some superb examples of Chinese shophouse architecture, many of which have been occupied by the same family for generations. These families still pursue traditional occupations such as tin-smithing, carpentry and petty trading. Kuching's highest concentration of antique and handicraft shops are to be found here, and shoppers can rest between bargaining sessions in a number of old-fashioned coffee shops with panelled walls and marble-topped tables.



© STB

**Jalan Carpenter**, parallel to Main Bazaar, has a similar selection of small traders and coffee shops, as well as food stalls and two small Chinese temples. The whole area oozes charm and character. Off Leboh China (Upper China St.) there is a row of perfectly preserved 19th century Chinese houses.



The ornately decorated **Tua Pek Kong Temple** is located on Jln Tunku Abdul Rahman, opposite the Waterfront, and is the oldest Chinese temple in Kuching. It is believed to date from 1843, although official records only recognise its existence since 1876. The Wang Kang festival to commemorate the dead is held here.

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The present day **Kuching Mosque**, previously the State Mosque, is best seen from the river. It was built in 1968, and its gilded cupolas make it one of the city's most striking landmarks, particularly at sunset. The site originally housed an old wooden mosque built in 1852. The new **State Mosque** is situated across river at Petra Jaya. It is a striking design, featuring a single cupola and Italian marble interior detailing.

**Note:** Visitors to mosques are requested to dress respectfully and remove their shoes. Non-Muslims may not enter during prayer times.



**The Malay Kampungs** (villages) along the riverside next to Fort Margherita are seldom visited by tourists, which is surprising as they have some beautiful examples of traditional and modern Malay architecture. There are some more superb Malay houses around Jln Datuk Ajibah Abol, behind the Kuching Mosque. Both these areas are particularly noteworthy as they are self-contained, intact communities existing within a modern city.

**Civic Centre.** The futuristic Civic Centre tower offers the best all-round views of Kuching and the surrounding area. The open air viewing platform and the enclosed *Links* bar and restaurant offer equally good panoramas of the city and its hinterland. Mount Serapi, Mount Santubong and even the mountains of Kalimantan are visible on a clear day.

## Historic Buildings and the Brooke Legacy



**The Square Tower** on the Waterfront was built in 1879 as a fortress, fortunately never fired a shot in anger, unlike its wooden predecessor which was burnt down in the 1857 gold miners' rebellion.



**The Astana**, the imposing palace on the north bank of the river opposite the Waterfront, was built in 1870 by Charles Brooke as a bridal gift to his wife, the Ranee Margaret. It is nowadays the official residence of the Governor of Sarawak, and therefore not open to visitors.

**Fort Margherita** (across the river from Holiday Inn) was built in 1879 to guard Kuching's river approaches from pirates. Named after Charles Brooke's wife, Ranee Margaret, it is an extremely attractive and interesting building. As the Fort is situated within the police training barracks, visitors may be asked for some form of ID. *Sampans* go to the Fort from various Waterfront jetties.





**The Court House Complex** (junction of Main Bazaar and Jalan Tun Abang Haji Openg, facing the Waterfront) was built in 1871 as the seat of Sarawak's government, and was used for this purpose as late as 1973. It is a superb collection of buildings, with

magnificent *belian* (ironwood) roofs and beautiful detailing inside and out, reflecting local art forms. The colonial-baroque **Clock Tower** was added in 1883 and the **Charles Brooke Memorial** in 1924. The complex also includes **The Pavilion Building** - a piece of old New Orleans transplanted to Kuching, completed in 1909 used for many years as the General Hospital and now transformed into Sarawak's **Textile Museum** - and **The Round Tower**, originally planned as a fort (1886), then used as a dispensary, and nowadays the headquarters of the **Sarawak Craft Council**. Following restoration of the original buildings and redevelopment, this important heritage site reopened in 2003. Now known as the **Sarawak Tourism Complex**, the area also houses the **Visitor Information Centre**.

The **Sarawak Steamship Building** on the Waterfront was built in 1930, and was previously the offices and warehouse of the Sarawak Steamship Company. It is now the home of the **Kuching Waterfront Bazaar**, with dozens of stalls selling a wide range of handicrafts and souvenirs.

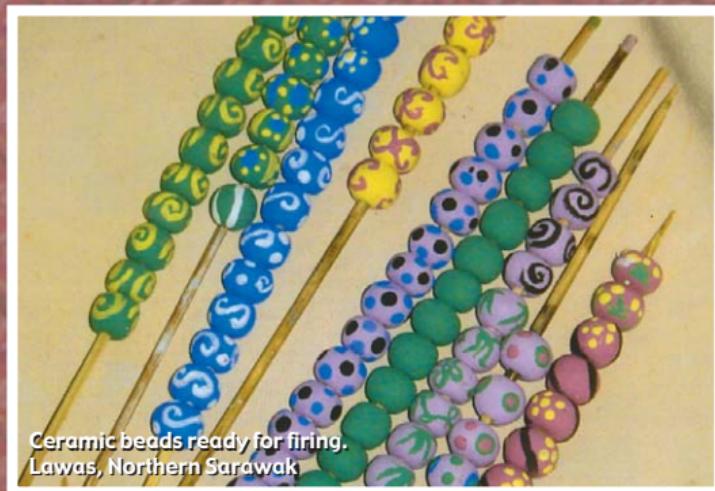
The **Main Post Office** on Jln Tun Haji Openg is another good example of Kuching's cosmopolitan architectural mix. Built in 1931, it appears to belong to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century with its neo-classical style and Corinthian columns.

## Museums



**The Sarawak Museum**, straddling both sides of Jln Tun Abang Haji Openg, has one of the best collections in Southeast Asia. The old wing, opened in 1891, is designed in the style of a Normandy town-house. It houses an exceptional ethnographic collection, some good natural history displays and a section on the oil industry in Sarawak. The exhibition of traditional wood-carvings on the first floor is magnificent. The new wing across the footbridge is used for events and exhibitions. In the Museum grounds there is an **Aquarium**, the **Botanical Gardens** and the **Heroes' Memorial**. Open daily from 9 am to 6 pm. Admission free.

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The Round Tower is located in the Sarawak Tourism Complex,  
between the Textile Museum and the Visitors Information Centre

The **Islamic Museum** is open daily from 9 am to 6 pm. It is located on Jln P. Ramlee in the beautifully restored Maderasah Melayu Building (1930). It is also accessible from the rear of the Sarawak Museum's new wing. The Islamic Museum presents a clear picture of the rich historical heritage and special culture of the Muslim community in Sarawak and throughout the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, and traces connections with the development of Islam in the rest of the World. The museum consists of 7 galleries set around a central courtyard garden, each with a different theme.

The **Chinese History Museum** is situated on the Waterfront opposite the Tua Pek Kong temple. It traces the history of the Chinese community in Sarawak. Exhibits include the early trade routes, initial migration from various regions of China, geographical distribution, the early pioneers, traditional trading activities, the formation of trade and community associations, political history and the involvement of the Chinese community in modern, multi-racial Sarawak. Tel: 231520. Open daily 9 am to 6 pm.



The newly-opened **Textile Museum**, housed in the Pavilion Building opposite the Main Post Office on Jln Tun Haji Abang Openg, showcases Sarawak's fascinating traditional textiles, most notable of which are the Iban *pua kumbu* and the Malay *kain songket*. Open daily 9 am to 6 pm.

Textile buffs interested in a more hands on look at textiles should not miss the **Tun Jugah Museum**, 4th Floor, Tun Jugah Tower. Run by

the private Tun Jugah Foundation, it houses a superb collection of Iban *pua kumbu* textiles, both antique and modern, as well as exquisite Iban silverware and jewellery. You can also watch the weavers at work, or even learn the craft yourself (if you have a year or two to spare). Visitors are very welcome, but large groups should make an appointment beforehand. Call the curator on Tel: 239672, Fax: 412185, E-mail: jrn@po.jaring.my. Open Mon - Fri 9 - 12 am, 1 - 4.30 pm.

More textiles and other handicrafts can be found at the **Sarakraf Pavilion**, at 78 Jalan Tabuan. This Chinese-Colonial style mansion houses a workshop where a wide range of crafts are demonstrated. A huge variety of authentic Sarawak handicrafts are on sale, visitors may sign up for courses to study many different types of craft skills, and traditional dance lessons are also offered. Open daily 9 am - 5 pm. For further details see their listing under Shopping.

Another good place to see authentic Sarawak handicrafts being made is the **Sarawak Handicraft Centre** in the Round Tower (see Court House Complex earlier in this chapter). Groups of craftspeople from rural villages and longhouses demonstrate their skills in various types of Sarawak crafts, rotating on a monthly basis. The centre also has interesting handicraft displays, and a resource centre with a library and handicraft videos. Tel: 425652, website: [www.sarawakhandicraft.com](http://www.sarawakhandicraft.com). Open Mon - Fri 8.30 am - 12.30 pm (11.30 pm Fri) and 2 pm - 5 pm, weekends and public holidays 8.30 am - 12.00 midday.



The World's first **Cat Museum**, devoted to all things feline, is in Petra Jaya in the Kuching City North City Hall. Cat lovers will find a range of exhibits, photos, feline art and cat souvenirs. Tel: 446688. Open daily 9 am to 5 pm (closed public holidays). Admission free, camera fee RM 3, video fee RM 5. Petra Jaya Transport bus No 2C or 2D.

The **Timber Museum** is situated in the Sarawak Timber Industry Development Council building (Wisma Sumber Alam) in Petra Jaya. Anyone with an interest in forestry, traditional wood items, forest products and the development of the timber industry should head here. Tel: 443477. Mon - Fri 8.30 am - 5 pm. Petra Jaya Bus No. 6, then 10 mins walk.

The **Sarawak State Library**, an elegant modern building in Petra Jaya, has extensive databases on almost everything you could want to know about Sarawak. Tel: 442000. Open Mon. 2 pm - 9 pm, Tue - Sat 10 am - 9 pm, closed most public holidays. Petra Jaya Bus No. 6. The library enforces a strict dress code - smart casual is the order of the day.

The **Society Atelier Sarawak** is involved in promoting the arts and crafts of Sarawak. Phone for details of current or forthcoming activities. Rumah Masra, Jln Taman Budaya, 93000 Kuching. Tel: 243222.

## Streetlife

The **Sunday Market**, which actually starts on Saturday afternoon, is held at Jln Satok. It is renowned for the Bidayuh ladies who set up shop here selling fruit and vegetables, but there are also many good Chinese and Malay stalls. Goods on offer include handicrafts, forest produce (including delicious wild honey), pets of all descriptions, orchid plants, live fish, and a whole range of local snacks and delicacies. The market is a must for weekend visitors, as it is very colourful and teeming with shoppers. The best time to go is Saturday night or early Sunday morning.



**Jln Padungan** is lined with Chinese shophouses, mostly built in the 1920's and 30's during the rubber boom. Some are very elegantly decorated, and a walk round the back of the buildings can reveal fascinating architectural details. The area has some excellent coffee shops and restaurants, more handicraft shops and some unusual specialist retailers. The Great Cat of Kuching, a monumental kitsch statue, is situated at the junction of Jln Padungan and Jln Central. After years of being the king of kitsch, the Great Cat now has a competitor - the Cat Statue opposite Holiday Inn.

**Jln India** is lined with shops selling all kinds of goods, particularly textiles. Mid-way down Jln India (if you can find it!) there is a narrow passageway that leads to **Jln Gambier**, where the fruit, vegetable and fish markets and the spice merchants are located. If you follow this passageway you'll pass a small Mosque hidden away in the middle of the city. The Mosque's structure has undergone many changes since it was originally built by Kuching's Indian Muslim community in the mid 19th century.

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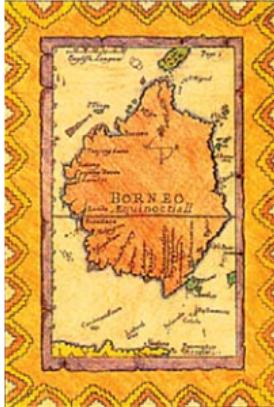
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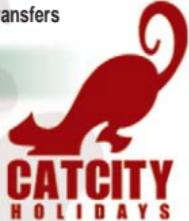
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Lot 2598, 2nd Floor, Wisma Sandhu, Green Road, 93150 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

## DAMAI AND SANTUBONG

The Santubong Peninsula is located at the West Mouth of the Sarawak River. At its northern tip, Mount Santubong (810 m) rises majestically from the sea. The area has been settled since ancient times, and was once a major trading centre. Nowadays the Peninsula, particularly Damai, is a popular beach resort area



and a good base for discovering the charms of Southwest Sarawak. All manner of attractions are here; sleepy fishing villages, primary rainforest, superb seafood restaurants, an Arnold Palmer-designed golf course, a "living museum", and a choice of beach resort hotels. On a clear day, the Santubong area offers spectacular sunsets, as the sun sinks slowly into the sea framed by Sarawak's rolling hills on one side and scattered islands on the other.

Only 35 minutes drive from Kuching, the Santubong area has a great deal to offer the visitor. It has some superb natural attractions centred on the rainforested slopes of Mount Santubong, its mangrove forests, rivers, near shore waters and mudflats. These different habitats are home to variety of wildlife making Santubong one of the best sites in Sarawak to see a range of wildlife in a natural setting.

A number of tours and excursions can be made from the various hotels at Damai or from Kuching. These include jungle treks to the summit of Mount Santubong, Irrawaddy dolphin watching tours, river cruises and wildlife watching tours in and around the Kuching Wetlands National Park, and bird watching at Buntal - one of Malaysia's most important sites for migratory birds. Just offshore are two small islands - Pulau Satang Besar and Pulau Satang Kecil. Satang Besar has been designated as a Turtle Sanctuary to protect the green turtles which come ashore to lay eggs.

### Tour Options & Day Trips

#### Sarawak Cultural Village

#### Cultural

**Village:** "See Sarawak in Half a Day" is the claim made by Sarawak Cultural Village, a unique award-winning living museum offering an excellent introduction to local cultures and lifestyles. On a sprawling 17-acre site just a short walk from the nearby resort hotels, there are replica buildings



representing every major ethnic group in Sarawak; Bidayuh, Iban and Orang Ulu longhouses, a Penan jungle settlement, a Melanau tall-house, a Malay town house with adjacent top-spinning court, a Chinese farm House and a Chinese pagoda. All the buildings are staffed with members of the various ethnic groups, in traditional

costume, carrying out traditional activities. Each building has a "storyteller" who is expert in describing and interpreting traditional cultures and lifestyles. Staff will happily pose with you for photos.



After touring the village, you can enjoy a multi-cultural dance performance in the village's own theatre. There is also a good restaurant and a handicrafts shop on-site. Sarawak Cultural Village can also host theme dinners and parties (check with your hotel), and you can even get married here, in traditional Iban, Bidayuh, Malay

or Orang Ulu style! Admission is RM 60 (Children age 6 - 12, RM 30, below 6 free.). Open 9 am - 4.45 pm daily. Dance performances at 11.30 am and 4.00 pm. Tel: 846411, Fax: 846988, E-mail [info@scv.com.my](mailto:info@scv.com.my) for tour bookings and enquiries. [www.scv.com.my](http://www.scv.com.my)

**River Cruises:** See Kuching Wetlands National Park section.

**Bird Watching:** The Santubong Peninsula offers a number of interesting sites for bird watching. Perhaps the best spot is **Buntal** village, an important wintering ground for migratory species. The whole Bako-Buntal Bay is listed as an 'Important Bird Area' under Birdlife International's Asia programme. The best time for bird watching is from October to March, when large numbers of migratory birds can be seen in the Buntal river estuary. These include a variety of plovers, terns, egrets, sandpipers and godwits plus some rare migrants. Resident birds often sighted include the white-bellied sea eagle, brahminy kite and collared kingfisher. **Pulau Tokong Ara**, a small rocky outcrop located in the Santubong bay, close to Satang Island, is another site of interest to birdwatchers. The island is home to breeding colonies of bridled terns and black-naped terns. Pacific reef egrets are also frequently sighted on the rock. Tokong Ara is best seen as part of a wider coastal tour of the Santubong area.



**Irrawaddy Dolphin Watching:** The Santubong area is one of the best places in Sarawak to see the rare Irrawaddy dolphin, which inhabits rivers, estuaries and shallow coastal areas. The Santubong, Salak and Buntal river estuaries are good dolphin watching areas. The Irrawaddy is a relatively shy dolphin - it's usually hard to see so a good guide-cum-spotter is essential. CPH Travel was the first company to offer regular dolphin watching tours in the Santubong area. Their boatmen and guides are familiar with the waters around Santubong and the areas where the Irrawaddy is often seen. CPH run regular dolphin-spotting trips. Best from April to October, but also possible at other times if water conditions are right. Contact CPH at Tel: 243708. For more information on Sarawak's Irrawaddy dolphins see <http://dolphinsofsarawak.blogspot.com>).



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Set amidst lush greenery, Santubong Kuching Resort offers 380 guest rooms and extensive conference and banquet facilities. The Resort overlooks the South China Sea and majestic Mount Santubong, making it a perfect tropical retreat.



For further details and facilities see our hotel listing on page 20, or contact:

**Santubong Kuching Resort**

P.O. Box 2364, 93748 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.

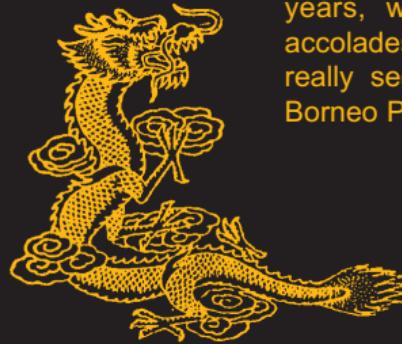
Tel: 082-846888 Fax: 082-846666

E-mail: [skresort@po.jaring.my](mailto:skresort@po.jaring.my)

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Tel: 082-243708, 242289, 414921 Fax: 082-424587, 426981

E-mail: [cphtrvl@streamyx.com](mailto:cphtrvl@streamyx.com)

Web Site: <http://www.cphtravel.com.my>

**Jungle Trekking:** There are a number of jungle trekking and walking trails at Damai. The 'Santubong Jungle Trek' (blue trail markings) is a circular trail situated close to the hotels. The 2 km long trail takes 1-2 hours and begins at a 'Starter Hut' on the Santubong-Kuching Road. Pick up a trail map from hotel recreation counters. Damai Rainforest Resort also maintains a trail behind its activity centre. By far the toughest trek is the Mount Santubong Summit Trek (red trail markings) which takes 4-7 hours (up and down) depending on fitness and the route taken. Two trails lead to the summit. The 'Main Trail' starts near the resort hotels whilst a 'Short Cut' trail starts a few hundred metres past the Damai Lookout Point Seafood Restaurant on the Kuching-Santubong road. Whatever route you opt for it is essential to wear good hiking shoes and take plenty of drinking water. You can trek to the summit by yourself or go with a guide. Check with hotel recreation counters.

**Malay Villages:** There are a few interesting coastal villages (*kampungs*) in the Santubong Peninsula. The most accessible from Damai is Kampung **Santubong**, a well-kept Malay village at the foot of Mount Santubong. Buntal, a Malay fishing village just off the Kuching-Santubong road, is famous for the seafood restaurants perched on wooden stilts which line the shore. **Pasir Panjang** and **Pasir Pandak** are two beach-side kampungs which are surrounded by small rolling hills, coconut groves and durian orchards. Although Santubong is within walking distance (4 km) from Damai beach, the other villages require transport.



**Damai Golf Course:**  
Jln Santubong, P.O. Box 400, 93902 Kuching. Tel: 846088, Fax: 846044. Arnold Palmer designed course featuring a Mountain Nine that sprawls over the foothills of Mount Santubong, and an Ocean Nine which hugs the coastline and the mangrove forests. According

to Palmer, it's a "must-play course for those who love golf." Green fees RM 150-180 (weekends). Caddies RM 15-25. Promotional offers and discounts available.

**Watersports:** Holiday Inn Resort Damai Beach and Holiday Inn Resort Damai Lagoon offer a range of watersports including jet skiing (RM 80 for 30 mins), canoeing (RM 12-20 per hour), sailing in catamarans (RM 70 per hour) and windsurfing (RM 50 per hour). Both hotels can also arrange coastal excursion trips and snorkelling and beachcombing trips. Further details and prices are available from hotel recreation counters or the Damai Beach boathouse. Permai Rainforest Resort rents sea kayaks (RM 15-30 single, RM 20-35, double) and can arrange guided kayaking trips and coastal cruises.

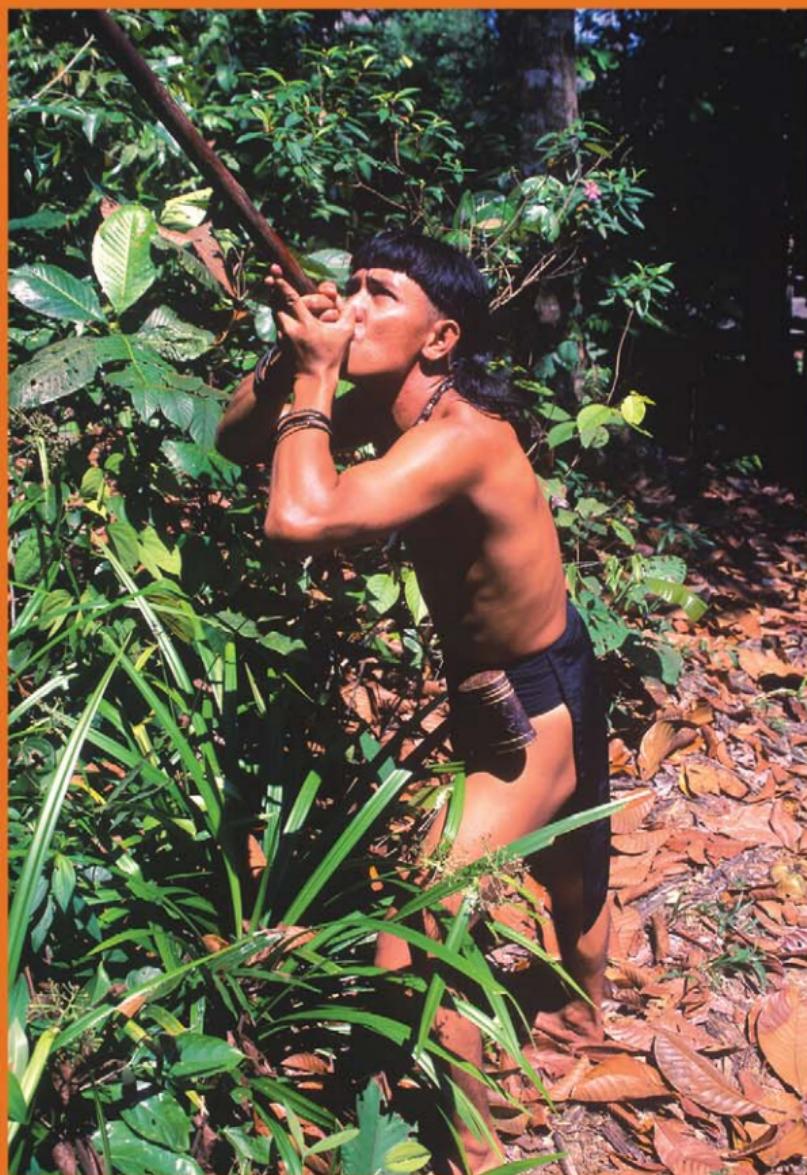
## Accommodation

Rates shown include 10% service charge and 5% tax (where applicable). Promotional rates are sometimes available at certain times of the year. Enquire for details.

**Holiday Inn Resort Damai Beach**, Teluk Bandung Santubong, P.O. Box 2870, 93756 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. Tel: 846999 Fax: 846777 E-mail: hirdb02@po.jaring.my (general), resvn@hirdb.com (reservations) 224 rooms. Room Rate RM330-440, Suites RM570-2,300. Outlets include *Cafe Satang* (international & Malaysian cuisine), *Mango Tree Terrace* (light meals & snacks), *Clifftop Terrace* (snacks), *Santubong Bar* (cocktails & live music), *Treez Cafe Pub* (disco & casual

# EXPERIENCE SARAWAK WITH ALL OF YOUR SENSES

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## SARAWAK CULTURAL VILLAGE

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Website: [www.scv.com.my](http://www.scv.com.my)

e-mail: [info@scv.com.my](mailto:info@scv.com.my)

dining). Features include Squash and Tennis Courts, Mini Golf, Kids Village, Watersports, Mountain Biking, Jungle/Mountain Trekking, 2 Swimming Pools and 1 Children's Pool, Hairdressing Salon, Manicure, Traditional Malay Massage & Reflexology, Extensive Conference & Banquet Facilities, Meeting, Seminar, Convention, Beach Wedding & Theme Party Packages, Business Facilities, Laundry & Dry Cleaning, Tour Information & Car Rental Desk, Lobby Shops, Nurse on call 24 hours, Non-Smoking Rooms, Facilities for Disabled Guests. All rooms have Air-Con, TV with In-House Movie plus local & Satellite channels, IDD telephone, coffee/tea maker, hair dryer and minibar.

**Damai Lagoon Resort & Spa**, Teluk Penyuk, Santubong, P.O. Box 3159, 93762 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. Tel: 846900 Fax: 846901, 236 rooms. Room Rate RM300 - 400, Suites RM530 - 2,600. Outlets include *Peninsula Terrace* (international & local cuisine), *Rentap Lounge* (Cocktails & Karaoke), *Puteri Lagoon* (poolside bar, snacks), *Wooden Deck* (Light Meals & Snacks). Features include Health & Fitness Centre, Squash & Tennis Courts, Watersports, Jungle/Mountain Trekking, Kiddies Club, Rooms & Facilities for Disabled Guests, Lagoon-shaped Pool, Extensive Conference & Banquet Facilities, Business Facilities, Tour Agency, Car Rental, Laundry & Dry Cleaning, Convenience Shops. All rooms have individually controlled air-con, TV with satelite channels, IDD telephone, Coffee/Tea Maker, Safe, Hair Dryer, Mini Bar.

**Santubong Kuching Resort**, P.O. Box 2364, 93748 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. Tel: 846888 Fax: 846666. [skresort@po.jaring.my](mailto:skresort@po.jaring.my). 378 rooms. DeLuxe King RM 138, Deluxe Queen RM 172.50, Suites RM 253, Chalets (2 bedrooms) RM 379.50. Outlets include *Cafe Gunung Santubong* (Coffee House - International & Local Menus), *Talang Restaurant* (private bookings only), *Lobby Lounge* (Karaoke, Cocktails, Snacks). Features include Tennis Courts, Table Tennis, Basketball Court, Exercise Room, Kiddies Corner, Swimming Pool, Watersports (by arrangement), Board Games, Largest Conference & Banquet Facilities in Sarawak (2,000 pax theatre style seating), Laundry & Valeting, Souvenir Shop. Rooms have individually controlled Air-Con, TV, Separate Bath & Shower, IDD Telephone, Coffee/Tea Maker, Hair Dryer, Mini-bar.

**Permai Rainforest Resort**, Pantai Damai, Santubong. Tel: 846487/90. Fax: 846486. E-mail [reserve@permairainforest.com](mailto:reserve@permairainforest.com). [www.permairainforest.com](http://www.permairainforest.com). 10 x 2-person air-con Tree Houses, RM 188 (incl. b/fast for 2), 29 x fan-cooled Cabins (6 persons) RM 180, 6-bed Longhouse, RM 20 (per bed) or RM 90 per house, campsite available. All accommodation set amongst the rainforest. Amenities include wireless internet access, restaurant, Outdoor Activity Centre, jungle pool. Can arrange nature-based tours and activities in the Damai/Santubong area.

**Nanga Damai**, Jalan Sultan Tengah, Santubong, Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. Tel: 019-8871017, 016-8871017, Fax: 414802 E-mail: [polseb@pc.jaring.my](mailto:polseb@pc.jaring.my), [www.nangadamai.com](http://www.nangadamai.com). Luxury family-run homestay set in luxuriant tropical garden on the edge of the rainforest overlooking the South China Sea. Close (15-20 mins walk) to Cultural Village, Damai beaches, golf course and seafood restaurants. 4 double air-con rooms with phone, TV, fridge and sea & jungle views, plus 2 rooms in a wooden garden cottage. Room rate RM 80-120 incl. breakfast. Minimum 2 nights stay. Lunch & dinner by arrangement. Amenities include multi-gym, bar terrace, swimming pool. Please note: not suitable for small children, family dogs are kept on the premises. Nanga Damai also offers occasional **Yoga Retreats and Seminars**, enquire for details.

## Eating Out

There are plenty of interesting dining possibilities for visitors to Damai. The resort hotels have a wide choice of restaurants, with menus ranging from spicy Malay curries and Chinese seafood to Continental cuisine and Western fast food. See accommodation fact files for full details. The **Green Paradise Café** at the entrance to the Santubong Mountain Trek is a 5-minute walk from the hotels and offers rice and noodle dishes in a pleasant jungle setting. The **Damai Lookout Point** Seafood Restaurant has a wider selection and is 20 mins walk from the hotels. Nearby **Buntal** village has a host of excellent seafood restaurants, and there are a few more dotted along the Kuching-Santubong road overlooking the sea. Hotels can arrange transport.

## Santubong Travel Connections

Santubong Village is roughly 31 km from Kuching. The Damai Beach area is 35 km. For details of bus services, see Travel Connections in the main section. The usual taxi fare from Kuching to the resorts or the Cultural Village is RM 35 (one way). From the airport to Damai is RM 47.50. The resort hotels have shuttle buses running to and from Kuching, operated by travel agents. Fare is RM 10 (adult), RM 5 (child) each way. Contact the hotel travel desks for the latest schedule.

## NATIONAL PARKS

### Entry Fees

Visitors to all national parks in Sarawak must pay an entry fee upon arrival. Entry fees and special passes are listed below. More detailed information on park fees can be found at [www.sarawakforestry.com](http://www.sarawakforestry.com).

	Single Entry	Multiple Entry (non-transferable)		5 Entry Pass	Group Entry (5 persons per group)
		1 month	3 months		
Adult	RM 10	RM 50	RM 100	RM 40	RM 40
Student <sup>1</sup> /Senior Citizen <sup>2</sup> /Disabled Person	RM 5	RM 25	RM 50	RM 20	RM 20
Mixed Group <sup>3</sup>	-	-	-	-	RM 30
Children <sup>4</sup>	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free

<sup>1</sup> A person who is studying at primary or secondary school or university. University students should produce a valid university identity card.

<sup>2</sup> A person aged 55 and above.

<sup>3</sup> At least one person in the group must be a student, senior citizen or disabled person.

<sup>4</sup> 6 years & below.

## Accommodation Bookings

The National Park and Wildlife booking office (Tel: 248088, Fax: 248087) in the Kuching Visitors' Information Centre (located in the Sarawak Tourism Complex) handles accommodation bookings for national parks in the Kuching area. An online booking service is available at [www.sarawakforestry.com](http://www.sarawakforestry.com) or <http://ebooking.com.my>. Day-trippers can obtain entry permits and pay fees upon arrival.

# BAKO NATIONAL PARK



A National Park since 1957, Bako offers the perfect introduction to Sarawak's forests and wildlife. The park covers the northern tip of the Muara Tebas peninsula, an area of 27 sq km. Despite its seemingly small size, Bako contains a wide range of vegetation - swamp forest, scrub-like *padang* vegetation, mangrove forest, dipterocarp forest, delicate cliff vegetation and more. In fact, at Bako it is possible to see almost every type of vegetation found in Borneo. Bako also contains a rich variety of wildlife and a coastline covered with small bays, coves and beaches.

The park has a number of well-marked trails offering interesting walks ranging from short pleasant strolls to serious full-day hikes. Unlike some national parks, visitors to Bako are almost guaranteed to see wildlife. Long-tailed macaque monkeys and silver leaf monkeys are ever present, wild boar are often found rummaging around the park HQ, squirrels and monitor lizards are also common. There is every chance of seeing the rare and unusual proboscis monkeys on trails such as *Telok Paku* and *Telok Delima*, particularly if you go late afternoon. You are more likely to see wildlife if you quietly follow the trails and keep listening. For example, you'll probably hear the crash of vegetation before you are able to locate a proboscis monkey high up in the forest canopy.



Bako's plant life is both beautiful, and readily accessible. All the trails have a great variety of vegetation, from mighty 80-metre dipterocarps to dense mangrove forest. Carnivorous pitcher plants are found on the Lintang trail. Bako also has some good white sand beaches that provide perfect resting spots in between jungle treks. *Telok Pandan Kecil* is perhaps Bako's best beach. After an hour or so the *Telok Pandan Kecil* trail comes to a rocky headland. The view down to a beautiful secluded bay, and the thought of a swim in the cool waters, has a magical effect on tired calf muscles. The following 20 minute descent suddenly becomes more enjoyable. All of the beaches

trail comes to a rocky headland. The view down to a beautiful secluded bay, and the thought of a swim in the cool waters, has a magical effect on tired calf muscles. The following 20 minute descent suddenly becomes more enjoyable. All of the beaches

are bordered by limestone and sandstone cliffs, and the action of the sea has left some remarkable rock formations, such as the famous Sea Stack.

If you take a stroll at sunset on *Telok Assam* beach near the park HQ, you will see hundreds of swifts hovering around their nests at the rocks at the far end of the beach. Don't leave the beach after the sun disappears behind Mount Santubong. Wait another 20 minutes as the sky's colours often change dramatically, providing a colourful backdrop to the mountain.

**Note:** At any given time some of Bako's long distance trails are temporarily closed to trekkers. This is done for conservation reasons so that an area is left totally undisturbed for a fixed period of time. Please check with the National Parks & Wildlife booking office if you wish to know which particular trails are closed.

**Accommodation:** Be careful of the monkeys - they are compulsive thieves. Bako is very popular, especially at weekends, so it is advisable to book accommodation well in advance. Prices shown exclude 5% government service tax. All rooms have fans. Accommodation consists of 'Type 5' Forest Lodges (2 rooms with 3 single beds each, shared bathroom) at RM 150 per house or RM 100 per room; 'Type 6' Forest Lodges (2 rooms with 2 single beds each, attached bathroom) at RM 75 per house or RM 50 per room, and Hostel Rooms (4 beds) at RM 40 per room or RM 15 per person. The Campsite is RM 5 per person.

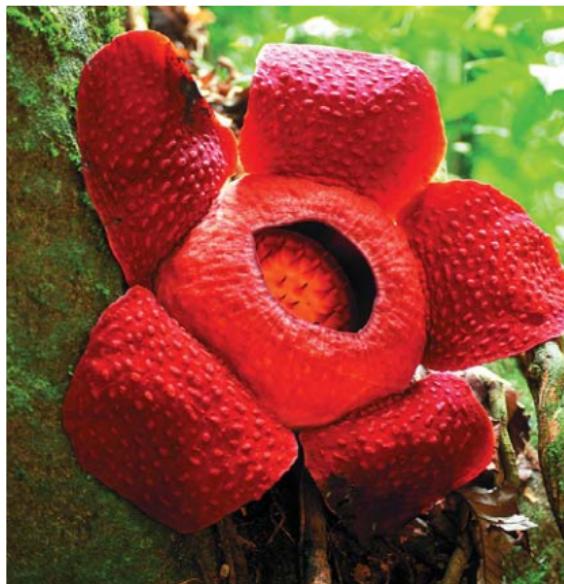
**The Park HQ:** Upon arrival visitors must register at the Park HQ. There is an information centre, canteen and shop at the Park HQ. The information centre shows films and slide shows on Bako's wildlife, and has full details of all the trails and what to look out for. The canteen serves a range of hot and cold drinks, snacks and light meals (fried rice, noodles etc.).

**Getting There:** Petra Jaya bus No.6 and regular minibuses (see Travel Connections) go to Kampung Bako, a picturesque fishing village. Taxi fare is RM 35 one-way. From there you have to charter a boat to the Park HQ from the booth at the jetty. The one-way fare is RM 40 per boat (up to 5 people). The boat ride is an adventure in itself, with the skilled and experienced boatmen riding the surf at high speed, to the delight of most visitors. For many people, this is where Borneo really starts! If you have to wait at Kampung Bako for a bus, or for the tide to rise, there is a good seafood restaurant near the jetty that also serves snacks and drinks.

For a visual introduction to Bako see Travelcom Asia's video "*Discovering Bako National Park*" available at [www.youtube.com/profile?user=pesut](http://www.youtube.com/profile?user=pesut)



# GUNUNG GADING NATIONAL PARK



© STB

Gunung Gading is home to the world's largest flower, the *rafflesia*, which can grow up to one metre in diameter. When in bloom the flower gives off a nasty smell which attracts flies and other insects. The rafflesia has no specific season, taking nine months to mature and flowering for only 4 or 5 days before dying.

Gunung Gading was only opened to the public in mid-1994, after extensive environmental impact studies.

Previously it was used solely as a conservation zone for the rafflesia. The emphasis is still on conservation, and the National Parks agency have taken measures to allow visitors to view flowering rafflesia without damaging young rafflesia buds and other plants. There is a plankwalk close to where rafflesia are commonly found, and if a plant is flowering deeper in the forest, the park rangers may be able to take you on a guided walk to the site. Please take care; the small brown buds that you see on the forest floor may be rafflesia, so tread carefully and follow the park ranger's instructions. Guiding fees are RM 20 per hour (per group).

Owing to the rafflesia's rarity and brief flowering period, timing (and luck) are important. The park staff usually know when a plant is about to bloom. Visitors can check with the park HQ (Tel: 735714) or the National Parks and Wildlife Booking Office in Kuching (Tel: 248088) to find out if any plants are about to bloom or already in bloom. Although flowers generally bloom throughout the year, November, December and January can be regarded as the peak flowering season as the frequency of blooms is high.

Seeing a blooming rafflesia is certainly the highlight of a trip to Gunung Gading, but the Park and the whole Lundu area are well worth visiting anyway. The rugged mountain peaks that make up the Park provide a scenic backdrop to the nearby town of Lundu, and the nearby beaches at Pandan and Siar. Gunung Gading also has some enjoyable walks and a challenging jungle trek.



*The Waterfall* trail offers the shortest walk, winding its way up through the forest past a series of waterfalls. It takes about one hour to reach the last one, Waterfall





No. 7. You'll need to be fit for the other trek, the *Gunung Gading Summit* trail (3-4 hours, one way) as it involves some serious hill walking. You must complete the trail and return the same day, as overnight stays in the forest are not permitted. From the summit you can opt for a side trek to *Batu Bakubu*, which was a former communist camp during the insurgency. Further information about these treks can be obtained from the Park HQ.

**Accommodation:** The HQ is fairly small and consists of an information centre, toilet blocks and accommodation facilities. There are two 'Type 5' Forest Lodges (3-bedroom chalets, up to 6 people) at RM 150. A hostel is also available (RM 15 per person, RM 40 per room). The Campsite is RM 5 per person. There is no canteen at the park HQ. Overnight visitors can either head into Lundu for food or bring their own provisions.

**Getting There:** Gunung Gading is 5 minutes drive from the small town of Lundu in Southwest Sarawak. Kuching-based travel agents can arrange tours. Independent travellers should take STC Bus No. EP07 from Kuching's regional express bus terminal to Lundu town centre. From there, take a taxi or white *bas sewa* to the park HQ.

## Lundu Town

Lundu is a sleepy up-country town comprising a few rows of shophouses, a small market, government buildings and some attractive *kampong* houses, inhabited by very friendly residents. The town is a good base to explore the area if the national park accommodation is full. In addition to Gunung Gading there are some attractive beaches nearby, including Siar and Pandan. There are some beach huts and chalets at Pandan beach, but they are overpriced for the basic facilities they offer so staying in town or at the Park HQ is more convenient and better value. Lundu has two budget hotels, a few food stalls and restaurants, and regular bus departures to Kuching and Sematan.

**Lundu Gading Hotel.** Lot 174, Lundu Town District. Tel: 735199, Fax: 735299. RM 58 (a/c, attached bathroom and TV).

**Cheng Hak Boarding House.** Basic rooms with shared bathroom. Contact Goh Joo Hak store at No. 51 Bazaar (near the Lundu Gading Hotel). Tel: 735018. RM 25 (fan) and RM 35 (a/c).

**Ocean Resort.** 176 Siar Beach, Jalan Pandan, Lundu. Tel: 452245. 2 bed-room a/c Chalets with kitchen area, RM 250 (weekends), RM 180 (weekdays).

**Union Yes Retreat,** Siar Beach. The best hotel accommodation in the Lundu area. Choice of hostel rooms (RM 100-160), hotel rooms (RM 120-200) and apartment style units (RM 180-360). Tel: 453027. Email [headoffice@sbeu.org.my](mailto:headoffice@sbeu.org.my).

# KUBAH NATIONAL PARK



Kubah National Park is an easy and enjoyable day trip from Kuching. Situated on a small sandstone plateau, this small park (2,230 ha.) boasts crystal clear streams and a host of small waterfalls and bathing pools. Kubah is mostly covered by mixed dipterocarp forest, but it also has one of the widest selections of palms and orchids in Borneo. The varied wildlife includes bearded pig, mouse deer, black hornbill and many species of amphibians and reptiles. However, Kubah's wildlife tends to stay deep in the forest so it is not really a park for "wildlife encounters" (Bako is unbeatable in that respect). Kubah's appeal lies in its rainforest scenery, its waterfalls, streams and bathing pools and the 93 species of palm found within its boundaries.



The park has six jungle trails and a path that leads to the summit of Gunung Serapi (5-6 hours return trip). Wooden shelters are located along the various trails. The *Main Trail* passes through dipterocarp forest and links the various trails of the park. The *Palmetum* is the park's showcase trail, passing through an area rich in palms. The *Selang Trail* leads to a view point about 45 minutes walk from the HQ. After about 30 minutes you come to a very steep section where ropes are provided to help with the climb. At the end of the trail you'll find a raised wooden platform complete with a bench chair and some superb views of Matang and the Santubong peninsula. The *Waterfall Trail* is the most popular trail in the park. It passes through mixed dipterocarp forest and incorporates a number of plankwalk sections that cross streams and swampy land. From the HQ, it takes about 1 hr 30 mins to reach the waterfall.

The *Rayu Trail* leads from the park HQ to the Matang Wildlife Centre (see below) and takes about 3-4 hours (one way). First follow the main trail before turning right to begin a relatively easy descent through the rainforest. Mid-way along the trail you'll find some rainforest giants, and pass numerous Bintangor trees which are currently the subject of Aids research. At the end of the trail you enter a swampy section (watch out for leeches) before coming to a crystal clear stream and the riverside picnic areas at the Wildlife Centre. Note that you can also start both the *Waterfall* and *Rayu* trails just past the 900 feet point on the Mount Serapi path. The trek from the road to the waterfall takes about 45 minutes and begins with a steep descent on a wooden staircase that winds its way down the forested slopes. The new *Belian Trail* is about 1 hour's easy walking and as well as huge *Belian* (Borneo ironwood) trees, there is a wide variety of other plant life. Colourful forest birds including the maroon woodpecker, white rumped shama, chestnut-naped forktail, and rufous-collared kingfisher are often heard and seen, and giant squirrels are frequently spotted jumping from tree to tree.

# MATANG WILDLIFE CENTRE

Matang Wildlife Centre, part of Kubah National Park, houses endangered wildlife in large enclosed areas of rainforest or spacious cages. The main attraction is the orang utan training programme, where young orang utans, who were either orphaned or rescued from captivity, are taught how to survive in the wild. The best time to see the orang utans is at feeding time (see below). As well as orang utans, the centre includes enclosures housing sambar deer, crocodiles, sun bears, civets, bear cats and a host of birds native to Sarawak.



There are some pleasant riverside picnic spots a short walk from the information centre and four jungle trails. The *Pitcher Trail*, which follows a circular path through the forest, takes approximately two hours and trekkers should not have too much difficulty in spotting the various species of pitcher plants that litter the forest floor at the sides of the trail. The *Rayu Trail* leads to the Kubah Park headquarters and takes 3-4 hours. The Sungai Buluh Trail leads to two secluded waterfalls and takes 2-hours (one way).

There is an information centre, accommodation facilities and a small canteen just a short walk from the car park.

## Animal Feeding Times

Morning	: 9.00 - 10.00 am
Afternoons	: 3.00 - 4.00 pm

## Animal enclosure opening hours

9.30 - 11.30 am  
2.00 - 3.30 pm



© STB

## Accommodation Facilities

**Kubah Park HQ:** 'Type 4' Forest Lodge, RM 225 per house (kitchen, 2 bedrooms (6 beds), air-con, TV, hot water and verandah). 'Type 5' Forest Lodge, RM 150 per house (3 bedrooms (10 beds), fan and common cooking facilities). Hostel, RM 15 per person.

**Matang Wildlife Centre:** 'Type 5' Forest Lodge (2-bedrooms, each with double bed) RM 150 per house. Hostel, RM 15 per person or RM 40 per room (4 beds), Campsite RM 5 per person.

## Getting There

Kubah is only 21 km from Kuching, whilst Matang Wildlife Centre is 35 km from town. Local tour operators run day trips to both the National Park and the Wildlife Centre. There is no regular bus service to the Centre. Local mini-buses serve the villages in the Matang area but the service is irregular. These mini buses depart from the alleyway near the Saujana car park (See **Travel Connections**).

# KUCHING WETLANDS NATIONAL PARK



Located just 15 km from Kuching and approximately 5 km from Damai Beach, the Kuching Wetlands National Park covers an area of 6,610 hectares on the estuarine reaches of the Sibu Laut and Salak rivers. The park is mostly comprised of a saline mangrove system that includes an extensive network of marine waterways and tidal creeks interconnecting the two major rivers that form the boundaries of the park. Small patches of heath forest are found in the interior of the park.

The park is an important spawning and nursery ground for fish and prawn species and contains a wide diversity of wildlife, including proboscis monkeys, long tailed macaque monkeys, silver-leaf monkeys, monitor lizards, estuarine crocodiles and a range of birdlife, including kingfishers, white-bellied sea eagles and shore birds, including the rare lesser adjutant stork.

Gazetted as a national park in July 2002, the site is one of the last remnants of the formerly extensive Sarawak Mangrove Forest Reserve, which previously covered approximately 17,000 hectares and was first protected in 1924. Recognising the ecological significance and tourism potential of the area, the Sarawak State Government is currently formulating a management plan for Kuching Wetlands. On 8th November 2005, Malaysia designated the park as a Ramsar site, a wetland of international importance.



Whilst the park is relatively new, the area has long attracted nature enthusiasts owing to its fascinating ecosystem and excellent wildlife viewing opportunities. For the visitor, Kuching Wetlands offers an excellent introduction to the mangrove environment, and a chance to see a range of wildlife and spend some time soaking up the sights and sounds of one of the most interesting stretches of coastline in the whole of Sarawak.

## River Cruises

To explore the park you have to take to the river. A number of tour operators offer coastal and river cruises in and around the park. These cruises follow the main waterways of the park with most trips taking up half a day. Tours usually meander up the Salak River before entering the smaller rivers and creeks in the park. Some tours stop at the Malay fishing village on Salak Island, which lies just outside the park's boundary. Contact hotel recreation counters or tour operators for details.

### The Santubong Wildlife Cruise

This award-winning tour is run by CPH Travel and is one of the best wildlife watching tours in Sarawak. The tour departs from the Santubong Boat Club between 4 and 5 pm (depending on tide and weather) and returns around 7.30 pm. After departing the boat club you head to the Santubong and Salak river estuaries (just outside the park boundary) to search for Irrawaddy dolphins. Small groups of dolphins often feed at these river mouths and occasionally enter the Salak River itself. After searching for dolphins, your boat then enters the park proper, navigating the smaller rivers channels. Along the way you'll get a chance to experience the mangroves and go in search of the park's wildlife, including proboscis monkeys. As darkness descends your boat makes its way to sites where fireflies and crocodiles are commonly seen. Flashlights are used to locate the 'eye shine' from the crocodiles. Bookings are essential - contact CPH Travel at Tel: 243708.



### Getting There

The park is located within an hour's journey time from Kuching. From Damai Beach it's just a 20-30 minute boat ride away. Whilst boat access to the park is possible from Telaga Air and Samariang, most tour operators use the more convenient jumping-off points at Damai Beach or Santubong. Tour packages usually include transfers from your hotel in Kuching or Damai to the boat jetty departure point. Contact hotel recreation counters or tour operators for details.



### Discover Sarawak's Wildlife On A Santubong Wildlife Cruise

*For bookings or further details please contact:*

**CPH Travel Agencies (Sarawak) Sdn Bhd**

70 Padungan Road, 93100 Kuching,  
Sarawak, Malaysia

Tel: 082-243708 Fax: 082-424587

HP: 013-8012826

E-mail: [cphtrvl@streamyx.com](mailto:cphtrvl@streamyx.com)

[www.cphtravel.com.my](http://www.cphtravel.com.my)



# SEMENGGOH NATURE RESERVE



For over 20 years, the wardens here trained young orang utans, who had been orphaned or rescued from captivity, how to survive in the wild. The success of this programme has left the surrounding forest reserve with a thriving population of healthy adolescent and young adult orang utans, who are now breeding in the wild. The programme has

been transferred to Matang Wildlife Centre, but Semenggoh is still home to its successful graduates, semi-wild orang utans and their babies. They spend most of their time roaming the forest but frequently come back to the Centre for a free meal. If it is the fruiting season in the forest, some or even all of them may not come to feed. This in itself is a good sign and another step on the way to full rehabilitation. The entrance fee for Semenggoh is RM 3 (adult) and RM 1.50 (child). Opening hours are 8 am to 12 pm and 2 pm to 4.15 pm. Feeding times are 9.00 to 9.30 am, 3 pm to 3.30 pm (approx.). Tour operators arrange trips here, or STC bus No. 6, 6A, 6B and 6C stop outside the gate. RM 2 one-way. It's a 20-minute walk from the main entrance to the feeding area.

## AROUND KUCHING & SOUTHWEST SARAWAK

**Jong's Crocodile Farm** and mini-zoo is located 29 km from Kuching, just off the Serian road. Open daily from 9 am to 5 pm. Feeding times are 11 am and 3 pm approximately. RM 8 (adult), RM 4 (child). Take STC bus No. 3A or 9 to Siburan village. Tel: 863570.

**Padawan Pitcher Plant and Orchid Garden** showcases lowland pitcher plants and orchids from around Borneo. Open from 9 am to 4pm, Tuesdays to Sundays. Entrance fee: foreign visitors RM 2 (adult or child), Malaysians RM 1 (adults) and RM 0.50 (children). Located on the way to Semenggoh at Kota Padawan, 10th Mile Penrissen Road. When you reach the Bazaar, follow the signposts. Tel: 615566 for further details.

**Serian:** A small market town about 1 hour from Kuching. Tour groups heading for the Skrang, Lemanak and Batang Ai areas often stop here. The main attraction is an excellent farmers' market selling all manner of fruit, vegetables and forest produce, and a thriving fish market. If you are lucky you will also see sago worms, a favourite local delicacy, offered for sale. The Serian District Council has a number of chalets at nearby Ranchan Pools, a local beauty spot. Chalets RM 50-100, Dormitory RM 100 (10 beds). Tel: 876681 Fax: 874799.

**Bau:** A 19th century gold rush put Bau on the map. Small-scale mining continues, but nowadays Bau is a market town and administrative centre, about 60 km from Kuching. There are some interesting caves around Bau. The Wind Cave - a collection of small passageways - is a popular local picnic spot. The Fairy Cave is larger and more impressive - there is a small Chinese shrine in the main chamber and varied vegetation at the entrance. A flashlight is essential to explore the rock formations within. Travel agents can arrange trips, or there are frequent buses to Bau. From the town, take a taxi or hitch-hike (usually quite easy). The Bau area, with its jungle streams and interesting limestone scenery, is a great location for

kayaking. Kuching Kayak ([www.kuchingkayak.com](http://www.kuchingkayak.com)) offers a number of kayaking tours in the Bau District (see **Sports & Recreation** section for further details).

If you are in Sarawak during June, it is well worth travelling to the Bau area to witness **Gawai Padi** (or Gawai Sawa'a), the culmination of a remarkable shamanistic ritual where the Bidayuh community give thanks to the Rice Goddess for an abundant harvest. Each village has its own ritual, complete with shamen, priestesses, trance dancers, musicians, and of course an all-night street party. Contact community insider Mr. Diweng Bakir, Tel: 019-8565498, E-mail: [diweng\\_bakir@yahoo.com](mailto:diweng_bakir@yahoo.com), for further details.

### **Borneo Highlands Resort & Hornbill Golf & Jungle Club:**

Located 70km from Kuching, this hill resort is situated at the Sarawak-Kalimantan border, at an altitude of 600 to 1,000 metres. The challenging 18-hole golf course winds its way around the natural features of the highland plateau whilst the Jungle Spa offers herbal treatments and traditional massages. The resort's Clubhouse offers 62 rooms and suites. Phone 578980, fax 576690 or visit [www.borneohighlands.com](http://www.borneohighlands.com) for further details of golf and spa packages.



### **Lundu** (see Gunung Gading Section)

**Sematan** is a picturesque fishing port located about approximately 110 km from Kuching. The long stretch of beach north of the town is a popular weekend getaway and picnic spot for residents of Kuching. Owing to the low sloping sand you have to walk out a fair distance if you want a swim. There are several chalet developments at Sematan beach, and the pick of the bunch is Sematan Palm Beach Resort. Rates from RM 130-390, incl. breakfast & dinner. Call 712388 for further details.

**Matang Family Park:** A popular recreation and picnic spot situated at the foothills of Mount Serapi about 25 km from Kuching. There are picnic areas, a children's playground, jungle tracks and a crystal clear mountain stream which is ideal for swimming. Entrance fee RM 3. There is no bus service from Kuching. Local mini-buses (*bas sewa*) depart from the alleyway next to the Saujana car park.

**Telok Melano:** This picturesque Malay fishing village is situated at the western tip of Sarawak, about an hour's boat ride from Sematan. A homestay programme offers visitors the chance to experience village life and enjoy the natural attractions of the area. Activities include snorkelling, diving, fishing, jungle trekking and trips to nearby Tanjung Datu National Park. For further details contact the Sarawak Tourism Federation information centre on the Kuching Waterfront. Tel: 240620.

**Malesiana Tropicals** specialises in the artificial propagation of rare tropical plants such as pitcher plants and orchids. Their nursery is located 45 minutes from Kuching and is open to visitors but only by prior arrangement. Tel: 419290 to arrange a visit. Further information at [www.malesiana.com](http://www.malesiana.com).

**Kampung Panchor Dayak Hot Springs** is accessed from the Kuching-Serian Road, just after the small town of Tapah, via a rural road and gravel track. Around 48 km from Kuching, the spring is managed by the local community who have developed basic infrastructure including boardwalks and changing rooms. Open at weekends, admission is RM 3 for adults and free for children.



It is almost a crime to come to Sarawak without visiting an Iban longhouse. Iban hospitality is legendary, and visitors are guaranteed a good time. A longhouse is basically a terraced street of separate dwellings covered by one roof, under the authority of a headman, or *tuai rumah*. Each family lives in its separate apartment, or *bilik*, and communal activities

take place outside on the verandah, or *ruai*. This is also where single male visitors spend the night. Female visitors and couples will be invited to stay inside the *bilik* with the family.

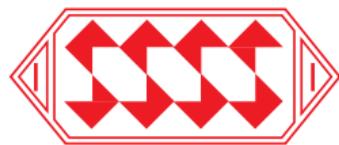
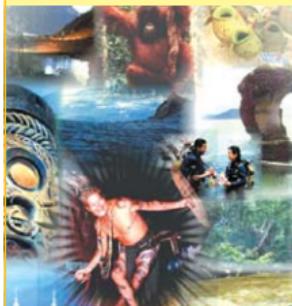
Most longhouses are busy, modern farming communities, and people wear practical clothes like jeans and T-shirts when they are at work. Traditional costumes and head-dresses are usually only worn for special festivals like *gawai dayak* (the Iban harvest festival, 1st June), *gawai antu* (the ancestor festival, very rare) and weddings. If you want to see traditional rituals, customs and dances, then unless you are very lucky it is best to go with an organised tour group.

Tour groups are usually greeted with a glass of *tuak* (rice wine) and a welcome dance. They are then shown around and treated to various cultural performances, including dancing and drumming. You will usually be invited to attempt the *ngajat* dance. Do not try to refuse as guests are expected to contribute to the entertainment just like the hosts. If you know any dances, folk songs or poems from your own country, you will make some lifelong friends, no matter how badly you perform. Normally you will be able to stay in the longhouse overnight, but if you prefer some privacy, many tour operators have their own guest houses near the longhouse.



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**Main office:** 1st Floor, 63 Main Bazaar, 93000 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.

**Tour desk:** Lobby Floor, Merdeka Palace Hotel & Suites, Kuching, Sarawak.

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3 Borneo Hotel	20 Kuching Park Hotel
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5 Central Inn	22 Liwah Hotel
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7 City Inn	24 Motel Siangolila
8 Carpenter Guesthouse	25 Penrissen Inn
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 Police Station  Tourist Police

 Malaysian Airlines (MAS)

 Air Asia

 Sarawak Transport Company

 Petra Jaya Transport (for Bako)

#### INFORMATION

 Visitors' Information Centre & National Parks Office

 Sarawak Tourism Federation

 Tourism Malaysia Office

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KUCHING AREA MAP

Not to scale





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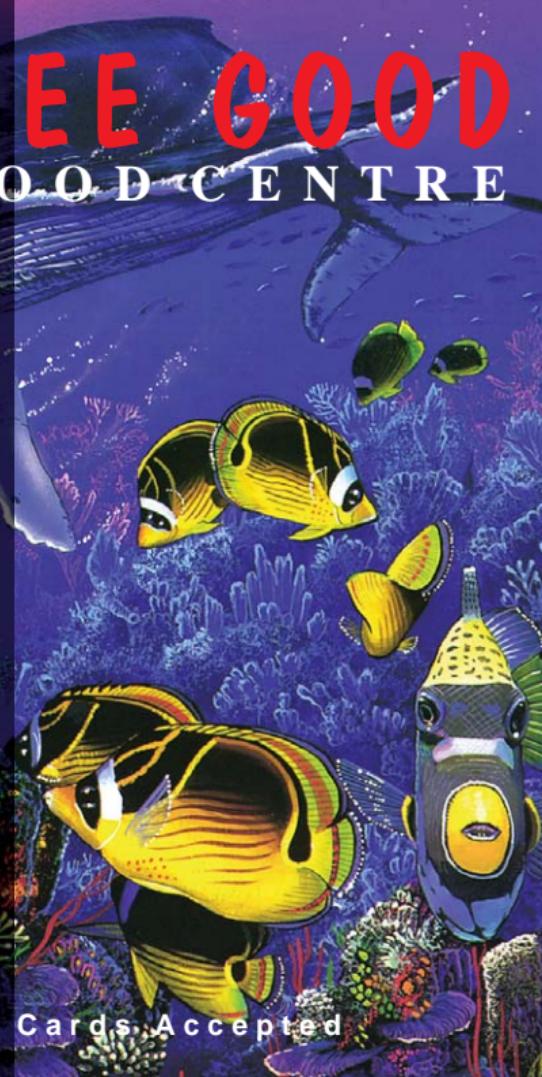
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The majority of longhouses that accept guests are in the Skrang, Lemanak, Batang Ai and Rejang River areas. These all involve at least one overnight stop and a longboat trip on the river, but some longhouse safaris can last for a week or more. The Visitors' Information Centre in Kuching has a list of approved tour operators. If you are short of time, there are also a number of Bidayuh longhouses near Kuching that can be visited as a day trip.

**Note:** Visitors are very welcome at most longhouses, but only if they are expected. If you receive an invitation to a longhouse (quite common when travelling upriver), take up the offer - you are sure to have an interesting and enjoyable trip. If you do not have an invitation it is best to go with a tour group, as you will not only be expected but warmly welcomed.



© STB

**Hilton Batang Ai Longhouse Resort**, situated on the banks of the Batang Ai Hydro Lake near Lubok Antu, is roughly 4 hours from Kuching on the fringes of Batang Ai National Park,

and provides jungle adventures with all the usual Hilton comforts. The resort offers visits to some of the most traditional Iban longhouses in Sarawak, jungle treks, and boating and fishing in the lake and its tributaries, etc. Tel: 083-584388, Fax: 083-584399, or contact the reservations office in Hilton Kuching, 082-248200 extn 4035. 100 rooms built in traditional longhouse style. Standard room rate RM 250 (nett), suites RM 350 (nett). Includes restaurant serving authentic Iban Cuisine, bar/lounge, pool table, swimming pool, conference facilities. All rooms fully equipped with a/c, IDD phone, hot & cold water and satellite TV.

## Miri and Northeast Sarawak

**Miri**, a bustling oil town and commercial centre, is the main town and gateway of Northeast Sarawak, home to some of the state's most interesting attractions. Miri is linked by air and road to all of Sarawak's major towns and to Brunei. The town has a wide range of accommodation catering to all budgets, and dozens of good restaurants, pubs and bars. The main reason for coming here is to visit the national parks, including spectacular **Gunung Mulu** with its world-famous cave system, **Niah Caves** with its burial grounds and cave paintings, **Lambir Hills**, the world's most diverse rainforest, and **Loagan Bunut**, Sarawak's largest natural lake. There



are also excellent opportunities to visit Iban and Orang Ulu longhouses on the Baram river and its tributaries. A little-discovered destination accessible from Miri is **Bario** and the **Kelabit Highlands**, a beautiful and remote mountain valley with superb jungle treks and welcoming Kelabit longhouses.

## Sibu and the Rejang River



The Rejang is Malaysia's greatest river, 350 miles (560 km) long and draining a vast rain forest catchment area. It is also the only means of access to for thousands of longhouses and villages along the river and its many tributaries. In fact many experienced travellers believe that a journey up the Rejang is one of the world's last great travel adventures. **Sibu** is the gateway to the Rejang and the second largest town in Sarawak. It is a bustling modern town and the main port of the Rejang basin. Sibu has a number of good hotels and a wide range of budget accommodation, as well as restaurants, pubs, and karaoke

lounges. It is the main jumping off point for embarking on a Rejang river journey and visiting longhouse communities along the way. The banks of the Rejang are dotted with longhouses. On the lower reaches as far as the small town of **Kapit**, and along the Baleh tributary, the people are usually Iban. Above the Pelagus rapids, one hour upriver from Kapit, members of the various Orang Ulu groups have settled, and the banks are guarded with *Klirieng*, wooden burial poles. Usually the journey finishes at **Belaga**, a small bazaar town dominated by the Kayan and the Kenyah peoples, where nomadic Penan sometimes come to trade their jungle produce.

For more detailed information on the above destinations see the Sarawak Tourism Board's guides to 'Sibu & Central Sarawak' and 'Miri & Northern Sarawak'.

# TOURIST INFORMATION

Please Note: If you are calling from outside Kuching, the telephone area code is **082** and the country prefix is **60**.

**The Sarawak Tourism Board** (STB) offers a range of services to provide visitors and the travel industry with up-to-date travel information about Sarawak. STB's visitors' information centres in Kuching, Miri and Sibu stock a wide range of guidebooks, maps, brochures and leaflets. The helpful staff can also assist with detailed travel enquires and national park accommodation bookings.

The **Kuching Visitors' Information Centre** is located in the Sarawak Tourism Complex (Old Court House). Tel: 410944/410942 Fax: 256301. Email: [vic-kuching@sarawaktourism.com](mailto:vic-kuching@sarawaktourism.com)

## Opening hours

Monday-Friday	0800 hrs - 1800 hrs
Saturday, Sunday & Public Holidays	0900 hrs - 1500 hrs

The centre also houses the **National Park and Wildlife Booking Office** (Tel: 248088, Fax: 248087) where you can obtain visitor permits and book accommodation for Bako, Gunung Gading, Kubah and Matang Wildlife Centre.

## **Miri Visitors' Information Centre**

Lot 31, Jln Malayu, 98000 Miri.

Tel: 085-434181, Fax: 085-434179. Email: [vic-miri@sarawaktourism.com](mailto:vic-miri@sarawaktourism.com)

Opening hours: Same as Kuching above.

## **Sibu Visitors' Information Centre**

Ground Floor, 32 Jln Lintang, 96000 Sibu.

Tel: 084-340980, Fax: 084-341280. Email: [vic-sibu@sarawaktourism.com](mailto:vic-sibu@sarawaktourism.com)

Opening hours: Monday - Friday 0800 hrs - 1700 hrs.

Closed Sat, Sun and Public Holidays

**STB's Kuching Head Office** provides comprehensive media and travel industry liaison services, up-to-date information on tourism policy and planning in Sarawak, and replies to written or email enquiries.

## **Sarawak Tourism Board**

P.O. Box 2950, 93758 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.

Tel: 423600 Fax: 416700 Email: [stb@sarawaktourism.com](mailto:stb@sarawaktourism.com)

[www.sarawaktourism.com](http://www.sarawaktourism.com).

The **Sarawak Tourism Federation** information centre is situated on the waterfront next to the Sarawak Steamship Building, and can supply information on accommodation, bus routes, hotels, approved travel agents etc. Tel: 240620 Fax: 427151.

## Opening hours

Monday-Thursday	0800 hrs - 1245 hrs, 1400 hrs - 1615 hrs
Friday	0800 hrs - 1130 hrs, 1430 hrs - 1645 hrs
Saturday	0800 hrs - 1245 hrs

The **Tourism Malaysia** office, on the Mezzanine Floor of Riverbank Suites, has information on Sarawak, the rest of Malaysia and a good stock of Tourism Malaysia's colourful and informative brochures. Tel: 246775/246575. Fax: 246442. E-mail: [mtpbkch@tourism.gov.my](mailto:mtpbkch@tourism.gov.my).

## Opening hours

Monday - Friday 0800 hrs - 1700 hrs

Closed Sat, Sun and Public Holidays

**AIR - Malaysia:** Regular **MAS** flights connect Kuching with Johor Bahru, Kota Kinabalu, Kuala Lumpur, Miri and Sibu. Malaysia's budget airline, **Air Asia** operates frequent flights to Kuching from Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru, Kota Kinabalu, Miri, Bintulu and Sibu. Like most budget airlines, prices vary depending on how far in advance you book. As a rough guide, one-way fares typically range between RM 80 and RM 200. Check out [www.airasia.com](http://www.airasia.com) for the latest prices and any deals, and please note that baggage allowance is only 15kg. **Fly Asian Xpress (FAX)** has taken over the old **MAS Rural Air Service**. Its Twin Otters (baggage allowance 10kg) & Fokker 50s (15kg) serve 40 routes across East Malaysia, including Kuching - Mukah.

**AIR - International:** **MAS** operates twice daily Kuching-Singapore services and flies from Kuching to Pontianak (Indonesia) five times weekly. Flights from Kuching to Guangzhou and Hong Kong are via Kota Kinabalu. Connections to other destinations are via Kuala Lumpur, Kota Kinabalu, or Singapore. **Silk Air** Operates four flights weekly from Singapore. **Batavia Air** operates daily flights to Jakarta via Pontianak. **Departure tax** is RM 6 (domestic), RM 20 (Within ASEAN) and RM 45 (international). MAS, Air Asia and FAX also levy fuel and insurance surcharges which vary based on the sector; contact airlines for the latest fees.

## Airport Information. Tel: 457373/454242.

**Air Asia.** Wisma Ho Ho Lim, Ground Floor, No. 291 Sub Lot 4, Jln Abell. Tel: 283222 Call Centre: 03-76512222. Online booking & enquiries: [www.airasia.com](http://www.airasia.com).

**Batavia Air.** 1 Padungan Arcade, Jln Song Thian Cheok. Tel: 244299 Fax: 240266.

**Fly Asian Xpress (FAX).** Lot GL, 20, Ground Floor, Main Terminal Building, Miri Airport. Call Centre 03-87754000 or 03-86604343. [www.flyasianxpress.com](http://www.flyasianxpress.com).

**Malaysian Airlines System (MAS)** - Lot 215, Jln Song Thian Cheok. Tel: 246622/244144. Fax: 411767. Online booking & enquiries: [www.malaysiaairlines.com](http://www.malaysiaairlines.com).

**Silk Air.** 7th Floor, Gateway Kuching, Jln Bukit Mata. Tel: 256772/256773 Fax: 239773 E-mail: [slkkch@streamyx.com](mailto:slkkch@streamyx.com). Online booking & enquiries: [www.silkair.com](http://www.silkair.com).

**ROAD:** The Trans-Borneo highway connects Kuching to all major cities in Sarawak. Kuching to Sibu takes about 5 hours by car. Roads in and around Kuching are generally good.

**BUS SERVICES:** There is no main bus terminal in Kuching. Departure points depend on destination and company used. **Sarawak Transport Company (STC)** (Tel: 451573/242579) serve the Kuching area and south-west Sarawak. Their green and yellow buses depart from Jalan Barrack (near the Court House). **Chin Lian Long's** blue and white buses serve the city and its suburbs. Major bus stops at Jln Mosque and the Post Office. **Petra Jaya City Bus** (Tel: 429418) serve Bako, Buntal and Kota Samarahan. Their white and yellow buses depart from the open air market near Electra House. **Bau Transport Company** (Tel: 763160) buses depart from the near the Saujana Car Park for Bau Town. Long distance buses depart from the **Regional Express Bus Terminal** on Jln Penrissen. The most convenient place in the town centre to buy tickets is the **Biaramas Express** booking office (Tel: 429418) on Jln Khoo Hun Yeang (near Electra House). Biaramas also have an office at the terminal (Tel: 456999, open from 6 am to 10 pm) and post their latest bus schedules on [www.biaramas.com](http://www.biaramas.com). Other long distance bus companies include **Vital Focus Transportation** (Tel: 453190 or 461277) which operates the **PB Express**, **Suria Bus Express**, **Borneo Highway Express** (tickets also available at Borneo Interland, 63 Main Bazaar, Tel: 413595), **Kirata & Sapphire Pacific Express** and **Sri Merah Express** bus services; **Syarikat Bus Baram** (Tel: 576700); **MTC Express** (Tel: 463161); **Sungei Merah** (Tel: 571888); **Borneo Express Bus**

(Tel: 452717); **Eva Express** (Tel: 576761); **TransBorneo Resources** (Tel: 452271) and **ATS** (Tel: 457773). Buses to Sibu, Bintulu and Miri often involve a change of bus in Sarikei. Phone the bus companies for the latest timetables. The Visitor Information Centre has a display board with the latest bus schedules and prices.

**Kuching Airport.** STC bus No. 12A. RM 1.00, 45 mins. Every hour. First bus (from Kuching) 6.30 am, last bus 2.30 pm. First bus (from Airport) 7.30 am, last bus 3.30 pm. Or CLL bus No. 8A.

**Bako.** Petra Jaya bus No. 6, RM 2, 45 mins. First bus (from Kuching) 7.20 am, last bus 5.20 pm. Last regular bus back from Bako 5.50 pm. White minibuses (*bas sewa*) also go to Kampung Bako (RM 3 one way). They operate from 6 am to 5 pm and depart from the open air market. There is no fixed schedule - minibuses leave when they are full.

**Bau.** STC bus No. 2 or Bau Transport Co. bus No. 2, RM 4.60, approx. 1 hour. Every 20 mins. First bus (from Kuching) 6 am, last bus 6 pm. Buses depart from near the Saujana car park.

**Betong.** STC Bus No. EP10, RM 25. Buses at 8 am and 1 pm.

**Bintulu.** See Sarikei for departures. RM 60.

**Buntal.** Petra Jaya bus No. 2D. RM 2, 35 mins. First bus (from Kuching) 6 am. Last bus back from Buntal 6.40 pm.

**Damai/Sarawak Cultural Village (SCV).** A Kuching-Damai shuttle bus service departs regularly from outside the Holiday Inn Kuching with drop offs at the resort hotels and Sarawak Cultural Village. One way fare is RM 10 (adults), RM 5 (children), takes approx. 40 mins. First bus (from Kuching) 7.30 am, last bus 10 pm. Last bus back from Damai 9 pm. For the full timetable check with the bell counter at the Holiday Inn Kuching.

**Fairy and Wind Caves** (from Bau Bus Station). Bau Transport Co. Bus No. 3, RM 1.40, every 1/2 hour from 6.20 am to 6 pm.

**Kota Samarahan.** Petra Jaya Bus No. 10A. RM 2.20. First bus (from Kuching) 6.30 am, last bus 5.15 pm. Last bus back Kota Samarahan 5.30 pm.

**Kubah/Matang Wildlife Centre.** No regular bus service from Kuching. Take a white local minibus. These white mini buses wait at the alleyway next to the shops in the Saujana car park complex. There is no fixed timetable, mini buses leave when there are enough passengers. Fare is RM 5 (Kubah) and RM 7 (MWC).

**Lundu.** (for Gunung Gading) STC bus No. EP07. RM 10 (a/c), approx. 2 hrs. Buses at 8 am, 11.15 am, 2 pm, and 4 pm. Buses depart from the regional express bus terminal.

**Miri.** See Sarikei for departures. RM 80.

**Mukah.** TransBorneo Resources at 7.30 am and 10 pm, RM 56. Biaramas at 9 pm and 10 pm, RM 55.

**Penrissen Rd. Bus Terminal** (for long-distance services). STC bus Nos. 3A, 4B, 6, 9, and many more (ask at STC office near Jln India/Jln Barrack junction). RM 1.20. First bus (from Kuching) 6.15 am, last bus 7 pm. If you are catching an early bus you may have to take a taxi to the terminal (RM 10).

**Pontianak** (Indonesia). RM 45.00, approx. 8 hrs. Buses depart from Penrissen Rd. Terminal. Biaramas/Tebakang Express (Tel: 456999) at 7.30 am. SJS (Tel: 456999) at 8 am and 1.00 pm. The upmarket SJS 'Super Executive' departs 11.00 am and costs RM 70. This bus has more leg room and meals are included. Kirata Express departs 7 am, Sapphire Pacific at 11 am and Sri Merah Express at 7 am and 10 am - book through Vital Focus Transportation (Tel: 453190 or 461277) or Borneo Interland (63 Main Bazaar, Tel: 413595). ATS (Tel: 457773) departs 7.30 am, Eva Express (Tel: 576761) at 7 am (economy) and 11 am (super class, RM 70) and Damri (Tel: 572098) at 8 am, 11.30 am and 1 pm.

**Sarikei.** RM 32. 5-6 hrs. Biaramas Express - departs 7.30 am, 9 am, 11.30 am, 2 pm, 5 pm, 7 pm, 9 pm and 10 pm. Borneo Highway Express - departs 6.30 am, 10.30 am,

1 pm, 6 pm and 9 pm. PB Ekspres - departs 8.30 am, 2.30 pm, 4.30 pm and 8 pm. Suria Express departs 6.30 am, 7.30 am, 9.30 am, 12 noon, 1 pm, 3.30 pm, 6 pm, 9 pm and 10 pm. Syarikat Bus Baram departs 8 pm. MTC Express departs 4.30 pm and 9 pm. Borneo Express departs 8.45 am, 2.45 pm and 6.45 pm. TransBorneo departs 7.30 am and 10 pm. Sungai Merah departs 12 noon and 9.45 pm. Eva Express departs 10 am, 4 pm and 9 pm.

**Sematan** (via Lundu). STC bus No. EP07, RM 15. See Lundu for departure times.

**Semenggoh**. STC bus Nos. 6, 6A, 6B & 6C. RM 2, approx. every hour.

**Serian**. STC Express bus. No 3A. RM 4.00, approx. 1 hr. Every hour. First bus (from Kuching) 6.15 am, last bus 7 pm.

**Sibu**. RM 40. 7 hrs. See Sarikei for departures.

**Sri Aman**. STC Express bus No. EP09. RM 19, approx 3 hrs, departs 7.45 am, 9.45 am, 1 pm, 3.15 pm and 7.15 pm. Departs from regional express bus terminal.

**EXPRESS BOATS** (Kuching to Sibu): The fast and comfortable **Express Bahagia** service departs daily at 8.30 am. RM 40, 5 hrs. Tel: 464622. Tickets are sold at the Port Authority Jetty or at Lim Magazine Bookstore (off Jln Khoo Hun Yeang behind Electra House). It's advisable to get there 30 mins before departure. Taxi fare is RM 15.

**SAMPANS** (known locally as *Tambangs*): To get across river take one of the small ferries that connect the riverside kampungs to the town. Place the fare (30 cents) on the seat as you leave. Hiring a sampan (RM 20-25 per hour) is a great way to see the river and the waterfront villages. From the river you'll have great views of the city, get in close to the villages and get some good photos of river life.

**RIVER CRUISES: Aerotrain Charter** (Tel: 248800, 019-8478228 Fax: 244400) offer a selection of short river cruises plus buffet dinner cruises (3 days advance booking required).

**CPH Travel**, 70 Padungan Rd (Tel: 243708 or 013-8012826), offer morning river cruises (9 am) and sunset cruises (5pm) in high-powered pontoon boats. RM 40 (adult), RM 20 (child). Cruises last approx. 2-1/2 hours and offer a unique introduction to Kuching and life on the Sarawak River. Call CPH for full cruise itineraries.

**Harbour Cruises** (Tel: 240366 Fax: 240367) offer 11/2 hr afternoon (3.15 pm) and sunset (5.30 pm) cruises on a large double-decker boat, which is also available for charter.

## KUCHING CITY TRAM

The City Tram is an open-air sightseeing bus service that operates three daily tours around Kuching. The tours start from the Merdeka Palace Hotel and cost RM 12 (adults) and RM 6 (children under 12). Tickets can be purchased from the Visitor Information Centre, the Sarawak Tourism Federation office on the Kuching Waterfront and the Matahari Tours office in the Holiday Inn. For information contact the Sarawak Tourism Federation (Tel: 240620)

**TAXIS:** Airport to town is RM 17.50 - buy a coupon at the taxi stand at the airport. Town to the airport is RM 15. At the moment not all Kuching taxis use meters so agree the fare first. Taxis can always be found outside the big hotels and at the taxi stand where Jln Gambier becomes Leboh Jawa. Alternatively, call 343343/342255 or 348898 for 24-Hour Radio Taxi service (RM 1 surcharge). Short distances around town are RM 6-10.

**CAR HIRE:** This is a great way to explore in and around Kuching. A number of tour operators provide chauffeur-driven cars, vans or 4WD vehicles, but there are only a

few fully-fledged self-drive companies operating in Kuching. Be wary of unlicensed operators, as they (and you) will not be fully insured - look for the Hire & Drive Permit fixed to the windscreen. At peak periods it is advisable to book a car in advance.

**Borneo Interland**, 63 Main Bazaar, Tel: 413595, 426328 (24 hrs), 012-8083309 Fax: 411619 E-mail: [bitravel@myjaring.net](mailto:bitravel@myjaring.net) [www.bitravel.com.my](http://www.bitravel.com.my). Self-drive Proton cars & 8-seat Toyota vans, chauffeur driven Mercedes cars & 13-seat Inokom minibuses. Half-day rates available. Also at Merdeka Palace Hotel, Tel: 258000 Ext 8018.

**Cat City Holidays**, Lot 2537, 1st Floor, Central Park Commercial Centre. Tel: 412500 (24 hrs 019-8865282) Fax: 413500 E-mail: [catcity@streamyx.com](mailto:catcity@streamyx.com) [www.catcityholidays.com](http://www.catcityholidays.com). Airport counter Tel/Fax: 452200. Self-drive Perodua & Proton cars, Toyota MPVs, plus chauffeured Mercedes limos, van and coaches.

**Golden System Car Rental**, 58-1B, 1st Floor, Blok G, Pearl Commercial Centre, Jln Tun Razak. Tel: 333609, 019 8873357, 013 8113359 Fax: 343609 E-mail: [goldencr88@hotmail.com](mailto:goldencr88@hotmail.com) [www.goldencr.com.my](http://www.goldencr.com.my). Airport counter Tel/Fax: 611359. Wide selection of self-drive vehicles, from small saloons to large SUVs and MPVs and even 12-seater vans, all at attractive rates. Half-day and long term rates available.

**Hertz Car Rental**, Telang Usan Travel & Tours (Sales Agent), Jln Ban Hock, P.O. Box 1579, 93732 Kuching. Tel: 236945/6 Fax: 236589 E-mail: [kch@hertz.simenet.com](mailto:kch@hertz.simenet.com).

**Hornbill Car Rental**, Lot 99, Jln. Datuk Abang Abd Rahim Lorong 5B, Tel: 343469 Fax: 426692 E-mail: [hbcrsb@streamyx.com](mailto:hbcrsb@streamyx.com).

**Pronto Car Rental**, No. 98, 1st Floor, Jln Padungan. Tel: 237889 (24 hrs 013-8116778) Fax: 236889. [www.prontocarrental.com](http://www.prontocarrental.com).

**Mayflower Car Rental**, Travillion Mall, Jln Petanak,. Tel: 410110, Fax: 410115 E-mail: [matkc@mayflower.com.my](mailto:matkc@mayflower.com.my) [www.mayflower.com.my](http://www.mayflower.com.my).

**Wah Tung Travel Service**, 7K Ban Hock Rd, Tel: 248888 Fax: 419999 E-mail: [wahtung@streamyx.com](mailto:wahtung@streamyx.com) [www.wahtung.com.my](http://www.wahtung.com.my). Chauffeur driven limousines.

**TOUR OPERATORS:** Kuching has many licensed tour operators offering a wide choice of tours and excursions. Their prices are very competitive, especially if you are in a group, are often better value than organising the trip yourself, and you also have the benefit of a knowledgeable local guide to accompany you. Beware of unlicensed tour operators or individuals offering tours, as they and their vehicles will not be properly insured.



## *GOLDEN* SYSTEM CAR RENTAL & TOURS SDN BHD

KKKP / PLN 3595

(523792-P)

58-1B, 1st Floor, Blok G, Pearl Commercial Centre, Jalan Tun Razak, 93450 Kuching, Sarawak.

H/P : 019-887 3359 013-811 3559 016-888 3359

Office : 082-333 609 (Reservation) Fax : 082-343 609

Website : [www.goldencr.com.my](http://www.goldencr.com.my) E-mail: [goldencr88@hotmail.com](mailto:goldencr88@hotmail.com)



**Kuching Airport**

Tel/Fax: 082-611 359



**Miri Airport**

Tel/Fax: 085-613 359 013-808 5559

**Self-drive vehicle rental throughout Sarawak, Brunei & Sabah**  
**ALL major credit cards accepted. FREE collection & delivery (city area)**

# ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation ranges from budget hostels to luxury international class hotels. The premises listed below are located in the central area and within easy walking distance of major tourist attractions and the central business district, unless otherwise stated. Rates shown range from cheapest single to most expensive double, and are inclusive of 10% government tax and 5% service charge except where indicated (++) . Suites are indicated with (s). Where no postcode is given, all addresses are 93100 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.

## International Class Hotels

There are a number of de-luxe hotels in Kuching city centre. Promotional rates are sometimes available during low season or weekends. Enquire for details. The beach resorts at Damai are covered in the Damai and Santubong section.

**Crowne Plaza Riverside Kuching**, Jln Tunku Abdul Rahman, P.O. Box 2928, 93756 Kuching. Tel: 247777 Fax: 425858 E-mail: cprk@po.jaring.my (general), reservation@cprk.com.my (reservations) 241 rooms. Room rate RM 500 - 800, RM 950 - 4,200 (s) (++) . Outlets include *Cafe Majestic* (coffee house), *River Palace* (Cantonese cuisine), *Coca* (Thai steamboat), *The Club* (cocktail), *Blue Lagoon* (BBQ steamboat buffet, nightly), *La Patisserie* (bakery). Spectacular views of Kuching Waterfront and surrounding city. Features include Crowne Plaza Club Floor & Lounge, Cardio Exercise Room, in-room Massage Services, Tennis, Futsal & Squash Courts, Outdoor Swimming Pool, Non-smoking Floor, Rooms/Facilities for Disabled Guests, Business Centre, extensive Conference & Banquet Facilities. Cineplex, Shopping Centre & Bowling Centre located in same complex.

**Harbour View Hotel**, Lorong Temple, 93000 Kuching. Tel: 274666 Fax: 274777 E-mail: harview@po.jaring.my. 245 rooms. Room rate RM 150-300, RM 500 - 1500 (s). Outlets include *Cafe Harapan* (Asian & Continental Cuisine), *Zodiac Lounge* (Lobby Bar & Karaoke). Located next to Tua Pek Kong Temple overlooking Kuching Waterfront with spectacular views of Sarawak River & surrounding area. Features include In-House Movies & Satellite TV, Physiotherapy Service, Anti-Dust Mite Mattresses, In-Room Internet Port, Business Centre W/Secretarial & Internet Services, Extensive Conference & Banquet Facilities, Convenience Shop, Concierge & Shoe Shine Service, Seamless & One Stop Service Concept (guests need make only 1 phone call for room service, housekeeping, etc.).

**Hilton Kuching**, Jln Tunku Abdul Rahman, P.O. Box 2396, 93748 Kuching. Tel: 248200 Fax: 428984. E-mail: kuching@hilton.com. Website: www.hilton.com. 315 rooms. Published rates RM 470 - 575, RM 995 - 3,765 (s). Outlets include *Waterfront Cafe* (Coffee House), *Caffè Cino* (Coffee, Cakes, Fresh Breads & Panini), *The Steakhouse* (Fusion Cuisine), *Tob Yuen* (Cantonese & Szechuan Cuisine), *Senso* (Cocktail Bar, Live Entertainment), *Matang Terrace* (Poolside Bar & Open-Air Restaurant), *The Bakeshop* (Bakery & Patisserie). Directly overlooking Sarawak River. Features include Executive Floor with Club Room, Executive Business Centre, Airport Desk (at Kuching Airport), Clark Hatch Fitness Centre, Flood-lit Tennis Court, Non-Smoking Floors, 24-Hour Business Services, Extensive Conference & Banquet Facilities. Twinned with Hilton Batang Ai Longhouse Resort (see Longhouse Tours section).

**Holiday Inn Kuching**, Jln Tunku Abdul Rahman, P.O. Box 2362, 93100 Kuching. Tel: 423111 Fax: 426169 E-mail: hikmy@myjaring.net (general), hikrsv@po.jaring.my (reservations) 288 rooms. Room rate RM360 - 600, RM700 - 3000 (s) (++) . Outlets include *Orchid Garden Coffee House* (open 24 hours on Fri, Sat & eve of public holiday),

## *Wesberly - A Place Where You Feel Like Home*

Our 2 & 3 bedroom apartments offer a choice of luxury accommodation for both short and long-stay guests.

Enjoy the ultimate comfort of a designer home, created by people who share your taste for the finer things in life.



### *Galleria - a showcase of Contemporary Asian Art*

Contemporary Asian Art

Even if you're not staying with us, please take the time to drop by at Galleria, where you can enjoy captivating original works by leading local and regional artists.



## *Wesberly Apartment*

*The designers' place, decorated with Sarawak handicrafts*

Lot 2812, Block 195, Rubber Road West, 93400 Kuching, Sarawak.

Tel: 246197 Fax: 243521 E-mail: siok60@streamyx.com, [enquiries@wesberly.com](mailto:enquiries@wesberly.com) Website: [www.wesberly.com.my](http://www.wesberly.com.my)

*For full details, please see our listing on page 47*

## *Small Is Beautiful*



From the moment you step inside, you realise that it's not just the unique Sarawak style that sets the Telang Usan apart. We offer all the comforts and facilities of a fine city hotel - at a price you can afford. With 66 well-appointed rooms, and a central location only minutes away from the business district and the city's tourist attractions, the Telang Usan is an ideal home-from-home for business travellers and tourists alike.



## **The Telang Usan Hotel Kuching**

*Value-for-money comfort with a touch of Sarawak style*

Ban Hock Road, P.O. Box 1579, 93732 Kuching,

Sarawak, Malaysia. Tel: 082-415588

Fax: 082-425316 E-mail: [ask@telangusan.com](mailto:ask@telangusan.com)

Website: [www.telangusan.com](http://www.telangusan.com)

*Serapi* (Western cuisine, closed Sundays), *Meisan* (Szechuan cuisine), *Rajang Lobby Lounge* (lobby bar), *Riverview Deck* (light meals & cocktails). Situated directly on the river bank overlooking Fort Margherita and Malay villages. Features include Executive Club Floor & Lounge, Cardio Exercise Room with Traditional Massage & Reflexology Services, Outdoor Swimming Pool & Children's Playground, Non-smoking Floor, Business Centre, Rooms & Facilities for Disabled Guests, Extensive Conference & Banquet Facilities, Shopping Centre Adjacent.

**Hotel Grand Continental**, Lot 42, Section 46, Jln Ban Hock. Tel: 230399 Fax: 230339/255099. E-mail: [kuching@ghihotels.com.my](mailto:kuching@ghihotels.com.my). [www.ghihotels.com.my](http://www.ghihotels.com.my). 192 rooms. Room rate RM 276 - 345, RM 529 (s) (++) . Outlets include *Brasserie Kuching* (Coffee House), *Grand Spa* (Resort Style Spa with Gym, Spa Pool, Massage Rooms, Sauna, Steam Room, etc.). Situated in city centre / business district. Features include Pool, Business Centre, Health Spa, Non-Smoking Rooms, Rooms & Facilities for Disabled Guests, Ladies Rooms, Baby Cots Available, Extensive Banquet & Conference Facilities. 2MBS WiFi broadband access (on Continental Comfort Floors).

**Merdeka Palace Hotel & Suites**, Jln Tun Abang Haji Openg, 93000 Kuching. Tel: 258000 Fax: 425400 E-mail: [info@merdekapalace.com](mailto:info@merdekapalace.com). [www.merdekapalace.com](http://www.merdekapalace.com). 213 rooms (incl. 99 Executive Suites & Apartment Suites). Room rate RM 180 - 250, Executive Suites RM 900 - 5,500, Apartment Suites RM 400 - 500. Outlets include *Aurora Court* (Coffee House, All-Day Dining), *Ristorante Beccari* (Italian Fine Dining), *Seattle Coffee & Tea Co* (Coffee & Tea Bar), *The Victoria Arms* (English Pub with Live Music), *YN Cellar* (Wine Bar), *La Habana* (Cigar Divan & Lounge). Situated in the city centre directly overlooking Padang Merdeka. Features include Health and Fitness Centre, Swimming Pool, Non-Smoking Floors, Executive Business Centre, Rooms & Facilities for Disabled Guests, Wireless Internet Throughout & Broadband Internet Connection Available, Extensive Conference & Banquet Facilities, Children's Playground, Satellite TV, Baby Sitting Service.

## Serviced Apartments

**Merdeka Palace Hotel & Suites** - see above.

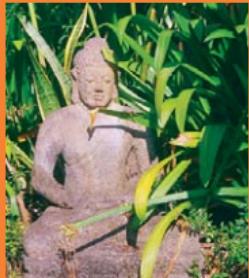
**Somerset Gateway Kuching**, 9 Jln Bukit Mata. Tel: 250958, 252958 Fax: 259958 E-mail: [enquiry.kuching@the-ascott.com](mailto:enquiry.kuching@the-ascott.com). [www.somersetgatewaykuching.com](http://www.somersetgatewaykuching.com). 72 deluxe serviced apartments. Daily RM 280 - RM 600, monthly RM 3,600 - RM 5,100. Rates include light breakfast. Pool, fitness centre & full facilities.

**Wesberly Apartment**, Lot 2812, Block 195, Rubber Road West, 93400 Kuching Tel: 246197 Fax: 243521 E-mail: [siok60@streamyx.com](mailto:siok60@streamyx.com). Small family-run apartment house in secluded location near the Sunday Market, with four huge, well appointed apartment suites. The ground floor houses the *Galleria* art gallery displaying work from some of Sarawak's leading artists. Apartments feature large fully-equipped kitchens, quality furnishings, local handicrafts and bold contemporary décor. Room rate RM 300 (2 bedrooms) RM 400 (3 bedrooms), monthly & long-term rates available.

## Medium Class Hotels

Kuching has a good selection of medium class hotels offering high levels of comfort and excellent value for money. Some hotels in the Budget Hotels section (see below) also have rooms belonging in this category. All hotels listed are centrally located except where otherwise stated, and most have in-house food outlets. All rooms have air conditioning, TV and telephone.

# Your home-from-home



## in the Sarawak Rainforest



Nanga Damai means "home of peace", and that's what you will experience when you stay with us. Enjoy the tranquility of a luxurious home set in an exotic tropical garden on the rainforest-covered slopes of Mount Santubong, just a short walk from Damai Beach and Sarawak Cultural Village.



Jalan Sultan Tengah, Santubong, Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.

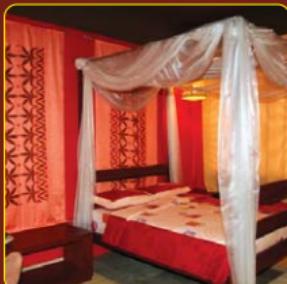
Tel: 019-8871017, 016-8871017

Fax: 082-414802 Email: [polseb@pc.jaring.my](mailto:polseb@pc.jaring.my)

[www.nangadamai.com](http://www.nangadamai.com)



For full details, please see our listing on page 20



"... the pristine dorms and traditional-style private rooms (sleeping 1 to 4 people) should appeal to all tastes. There's information and services galore, it's small enough to be sociable, and both staff and owners are happy to share their accumulated local knowledge, preferably over a beer. Highly recommended." - *Lonely Planet 2007*

"... this recently opened boutique backpacker lodge packs in dozens of themed and tastefully decorated rooms... It has quickly become a mecca for travelers visiting southwestern Sarawak. Excellent value." - *Rough Guide 2007*

## Singgahsana Lodge "The Sarawak Style Guest House"

1 Temple Street, 93000 Kuching  
Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo  
Phone: (60) 82 429 277  
Fax: (60) 82 429 267  
Email: [info@singgahsana.com](mailto:info@singgahsana.com)



Visit our website at [www.singgahsana.com](http://www.singgahsana.com)

**Arif Hotel**, Jln Haji Taha. Tel: 241211 Fax: 241212. Room rate RM 70, RM 90 (family room). Located near Kuching Mosque.

**Borneo Hotel**, 30 C-F Jln Tabuan. Tel: 244122 Fax: 254848. 65 rooms. Published rate RM 110-190 (++) , RM 290 (s) (++) , substantial discounts may be available.

**Hua Kuok Inn**, Lot 227, Jln Ban Hock. Tel: 429788 Fax: 424329. Room rate RM 70, RM 126 (s).

**Kingwood Inn**, Jln Padungan, P.O. Box 2842, 93756 Kuching (short taxi ride from centre). Tel: 330888 Fax: 332888 E-mail: kingwd@tm.net.my www.kuchinghotels.net. 90 rooms. Pool & full facilities. Room rate RM 125-200 (++) , RM 320 (s) (++) .

**Kuching Park Hotel**, Lot 606, Jln Padungan, P.O. Box 701, 93714 Kuching (short taxi ride from centre). Tel: 239888 Fax: 238799 E-mail: kuchingpark@hotmail.com. 108 rooms. Full facilities. Room rate RM 98 -128, RM 288 (s).

**Liwah Hotel**, Lot 187, Section 47, Jln Song Thian Cheok. Tel: 429222 Fax: 423690. 93 rooms. Room rate RM 70 - 98, RM 160 (s).

**Penrissen Inn**, Lot 382-386, Lorong 6, Section 10, KTLD, Jln Nanas, P.O. Box 2502, 93750 Kuching. Tel: 238400 Fax: 427400. 42 rooms. Room rates RM 69 - 90.

**Penview Inn**, Lot 3411, Block D, Jln Tun Razak (short taxi ride from centre). Tel: 341200 Fax: 341201. 112 rooms. Room Rate RM 64 (no window), RM 80.

**Regal Court**, Lot 45 & 66, Section 10 KTLD, Jln Tun Ahmad Zaidi Adruce, 93400 Kuching. Tel: 412211 Fax: 413211 E-mail: regal\_c@tm.net.my. www.borneohotels.net. 42 rooms. Room rate RM 120 - 140. Boutique-style hotel, close to Weekend Market.

**Regency Rajah Court Hotel**, Kuching By-Pass, Pending, 93450 Kuching (short taxi ride from centre). Tel: 484799 Fax: 482750 E-mail: rajcourt@tm.net.my. www.theregencyhotel.com.my/rajahcourt. 108 rooms. Pool & full facilities. Room rate RM 100 - 130, RM 160 - 250 (S).

**Supreme Hotel**, Jln Ban Hock. Tel: 255155 Fax: 252522. 68 rooms. Room rate RM 59 - 69, RM 137 (s) (including breakfast).

**Telang Usan Hotel**, Jln Ban Hock. Tel: 415588 Fax: 425316 E-mail: ask@telangusan.com. www.telangusan.com. 66 rooms. Room rate RM 80 - 150. Kuching's only Orang Ulu owned and managed hotel, reflected in its friendly, laid-back style and traditional Kenyah decor. Name means "Sweet River" in Kenyah language. Laundry, dry cleaning, safe deposit boxes, mail and postage facilities, onward reservations, room service, Hertz car rental. Includes *Dulit Coffee House* (6 am-12 midnight) offering local, international and Szechuan cuisine. Conference rooms available.

## Budget Hotels

Kuching's budget hotels offer excellent value. All rooms have air conditioning and attached bathroom (except where indicated), and most have TV and phone. The following premises have been visited by the authors and checked for acceptable standards.

**Chung Hin Hotel**, 74 Jln Padungan. Tel: 411678 Fax: 428343. Room rate RM 40 - 80 (family).

**Central Inn**, 172-3 Jln Tan Sri Ong Kee Hui. Tel: 417276/7 Fax: 417297. Room rate RM 45 - 55. 10 mins walk from city centre, rooms well-appointed for this price category.

**City Inn**, 275-276 Jln Abell. Tel: 414866 Fax: 414869. Room rate RM 45 - 69.

**Fata Hotel**, 1 Jln McDougall. Tel: 248111 Fax: 428987. Room rate RM 50 - 60.

**Furama Hotel**, 4 Jln Green Hill. Tel: 413561/416960 Fax: 417980. Room rate RM 50.

**Goodwood Inn**, 16-17 Jln Green Hill. Tel: 244862 Fax: 417980. Room rate RM 40 - 45.

**Green Mountain Lodging House**, 1 Jln Green Hill. Tel: 416320 Fax: 246342 E-mail: lingks@pd.jaring.my. Room rate RM 45.

**Kapit Hotel**, 59, Jln Padungan. Tel: 244179 Fax: 418516. Room rate RM 45 - 50.

**Kuok Pin Hotel**, 10 Jln Green Hill. Tel: 426822/3/4. Room rate RM 25 (fan, shared bath), RM 50 - 55.

**Laila Inn**, 149-151 Jln Datuk Alibah Abol, 93400 Kuching. Tel: 420930/1/2. Fax: 238960. Room rate RM 42-55. Near to Sunday Market & Malay kampongs.

**Longhouse Hotel**, 182 Jln Abell. Tel: 429333 Fax: 248812. Room rate RM 40 - 50.

**Mandarin Lodging House**, 6 Jln Green Hill, Tel: 418269/410139. Room rate RM 40 - 55.

**Marlin Inn**, 571-3 Jln Nanas, 93400 Kuching. Tel: 233500 Fax: 236500. Room rate RM 46 - 60. Near to Sunday Market.

**Motel Siangolila**, 200-204, Section 51, Jln Padungan, (behind Everrise Supermarket). Tel: 425221/2/3 Fax: 243567. Room rate RM 40 - 50.

**Orchid Inn**, 2 Jln Green Hill. Tel: 411417/25/27. Room Rate RM 35 - 45.

**River View Inn**, 22-23 Jln Green Hill. Tel: 412561. Room rate RM 45 - 75. Name somewhat misleading.

**Tai Pan Hotel**, 93 Jln Padungan, behind Hock Ping Cafe. Tel: 417363/418363 Fax: 427185. Rate RM 40 - 45.

**Thompson Inn**, Lot 496-497, Jalan Nanas, 93400 Kuching. Tel: 426885. Fax: 427895. Room rate RM 50. Convenient for Sunday Market.

## Guest Houses, Hostels and Homestays

**Anglican Guest House**, St. Thomas Cathedral, Jln Tun Haji Openg. Tel 414027. Room rate RM 20 - 25 (fan, shared bath), RM 30 - 35 (apartments, fan, private bath). Mainly for people on church business - rooms not always available to the public.

**B & B Inn**, 1st Floor, 30-1, Jln Tabuan (next to Borneo Hotel). Tel: 237366 E-mail: bnbswk@streamyx.com. RM 16 in a 6-bed dormitory, rooms RM 25-35 (fan), RM 30 - 40 (air-con). Family/group room RM 45 (3 pax) - RM 116 (8 pax) Prices include light breakfast.

**Borneo Bed & Breakfast**, 1st Floor, 3 Jln Green Hill. Tel: 231200, 019 8674500 E-mail: bidasbuan@yahoo.com. RM 15 in a 5-bed dormitory, rooms RM 32 - 45 (fan), RM 38 - 50 (air-con). Kitchen for guests' use. Prices include light breakfast.

**Carpenter Guesthouse**, 94 Carpenter St. Tel: 256050 Fax: 256049 E-mail: rsvn@carpenterguesthouse.com. www.carpenterguesthouse.com. Room rate RM 28 (dorm, a/c), RM60 - 115 (family room). Prices include light breakfast, free Internet access. New, well-appointed, family-run guesthouse

**The Fairview**, 6 Jln Taman Budaya. Tel: 240017, 013-8011561 E-mail: thefairview@gmail.com. www.thefairview.com.my. Room rate RM 20 (in 5-bed dorm), RM60 (twin/triple), RM 100 (suite). Family-run heritage guest house in large garden, offering living & dining rooms, TV room and use of fully equipped kitchen.

**Kampung Mongkos Homestay**. Community homestay programme with cultural activities in Bidayuh village/longhouse approx 90 min from Kuching. Contact Great Leap Tours,, Tel: 420818 Fax: 425818. www.greatleap.com.my.

**Nanga Damai**, luxury homestay, see Damai & Santubong section.

**Rom Orchid Garden**, 33A, Lorong 5, Jalan Siol Kandis, Petra Jaya, 93050 Kuching. Tel: 447001, 016-8625999 E-mail: kakrom@hotmail.com. 5 rooms in a Malay kampung house (RM 50), plus self-contained bungalow (RM 70). Rates include breakfast. Take a sampan (tambang) to Pengkalan Sapi jetty, then 10 mins walk or get the waiting minivan to drop you off.

**Singgahsana Lodge**, No 1 Temple St. (30 m from Waterfront), Tel: 429277 Fax: 429267 E-mail: info@singgahsana.com. www.singgahsana.com. Kuching's first boutique backpacker lodge, with guest lounge, breakfast bar and Internet access. Stylish, well appointed rooms with individual air-con. RM30.80 in a 10-bed dormitory, Rooms RM80.30 (twin, shared bath) to RM115.50 (family, en-suite bath). Shared bathrooms (separate M & F) are 5-star hotel standard. All rates include continental breakfast. Surcharges apply at peak periods.

Kuching has a great deal to offer the adventurous gourmet. As well as typical Malaysian and Western fare, there is a whole range of local delicacies worth trying - see *Sarawak Specialities*. At the last count there were more than a thousand food outlets in Kuching. As we can barely scratch the surface in this guide, we have generally focused on popular, well known and centrally located outlets. We strongly recommend that visitors who have a little time get out and about in Kuching's suburbs and make their own dining discoveries. More dining possibilities are covered in the Damai and Santubong Section.

## COFFEE SHOPS

Coffee-shops with their attendant food-stalls are dotted all over town. Some of the most interesting and traditional ones are found around Jln Carpenter, Main Bazaar and Padungan Road. The coffee shops on Lebuh Temple are conveniently located near the budget hotels on Jalan Green Hill, and serve a wide selection of dishes, including good roasted chicken rice (Green Hill Cafe). At lunchtimes, many coffee shops serve *economy rice*, *mixed rice*, *fast food* or *nasi campur*. These are four different names for the same dish - a plate of rice with portions of meat, fish, curry and vegetables selected from the delicacies on display. Cheap (RM 3-5), delicious and very filling.

## COFFEE BARS

**Bing**, 84 Pandungan Road. Kuching's trendy cafe hangout. Stylish interior, serves a range of coffees, teas and light snacks. Air-con lounge area at front, open smoking area at the back. WiFi access. Tel: 421880.

**Caffe Cino** in the Hilton serves up a range of continental coffees, specialty teas and fresh fruit juices, plus a variety of panini, bagels and sandwiches as well as freshly baked breads and pastries. WiFi access plus two PC terminals for customers' use.

**Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf** - the Kuching branch of this international chain can be found on the terrace outside Sarawak Plaza.

**Deli Cafe**, 88 Main Bazaar. Ground floor coffee bar and patisserie with an art gallery in the 1st floor. WiFi access.

**The Seattle Coffee & Tea Co**, Merdeka Palace Hotel. Local branch of this famous chain, featuring a very wide range of freshly roasted coffees and freshly brewed teas served with cakes and pastries. WiFi access.

## FOOD CENTRES

These are the most popular eating places amongst locals. There is always a wide selection of value-for-money stalls and you can select food from as many as you like. If you are not familiar with a dish, just be adventurous and try it. Nine times out of ten you will be delighted, and if you don't like it, nobody will be offended.

**Chinese Food Centre**, Jln Carpenter (opposite temple). A wide range of Chinese food stalls. One sells excellent fish balls (afternoons only), while another sells superb fish and prawn soup from late afternoon until late at night.

**Kubah Ria** (across river near suspension bridge). A bit difficult to get to unless you have transport. If you can make it, try the delicious *Sop Kambing* (mutton soup) at Doreen Abdullah's, served with noodles, rice or crusty French bread.

**Medan Pelita Food Court**, Basement of Star car park complex, Temple St/Wayang St. Air conditioned food court with stalls selling the full spectrum of hawker favourites. Convenient location near Main Bazaar.

**Open Air Market**, (near Electra House) Jln Market. Oddly named, as the whole area is covered. A wide selection of Chinese and Malay food stalls. Some very reasonably priced seafood and noodle stalls operate late into the evening. Famous for beef noodles, rice porridge and fresh soya bean milk.

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**Petanak Central Market**, Jln Petanak, above the central wet market. Head here early in the morning to soak up the previous night's liquid refreshment. Light snacks, full seafood indulgences, it's all here. While the night-owls tuck in and attempt to stay awake, the market comes alive and a new day begins. Take a taxi - but check with the driver first as the market may be closing for renovation sometime during 2007.

**Sarawak Plaza Food Court** (next to Holiday Inn). Good selection of Malay, Chinese, Japanese and Western food stalls in the basement of this busy shopping centre. 10 am to 10 pm.

**Satok Bridge**, on river front below Satok bridge (any Petra Jaya bus or take a taxi). Excellent barbecued chicken and seafood.

**Satok Road**, left side of road heading out of town. Lots of Malay food stalls - busiest during the Weekend Market. Evenings only.

**Saujana Food Centre** (5th floor of the car park near the Mosque). Take the lift to reach the food centre. Mostly Malay cooking with some stalls selling seafood.

**Top Spot Food Court**, Jln Bukit Mata Kuching. A wide range of food stalls set in landscaped surroundings on the breezy top floor of a car park. Choices include Malay curries, Malay and Chinese seafood, claypot dishes, satay and even steaks. Unusual and very popular.

**Tun Jugah**, Jln Tunku Abdul Rahman. Modern food court on the 2nd floor, with a good choice of food including a selection of Chinese dishes and Malay hawker-stall favourites.

## CHINESE

Kuching has a huge selection of Chinese food outlets, from simple noodle stalls to full-blown banqueting palaces. Many of them feature regular food promotions - see local press for details.

**Bla Bla Bla**. See Continental/Western.

**Cafe Harapan**, Harbour View Hotel. As well as the usual hotel coffee shop favourites, Cafe Harapan serves an interesting selection of Foochow-style noodle dishes originating from Fuzhou in Southern China.

**Fook Hoi** in Jln Padungan is an old-fashioned coffee shop, famous for its *Sio Bee* and *Ha Kau* (pork dumplings). Daytime only.

**Jong Siang Teng**, 68 Carpenter St. Serves Hokkien-style pork leg rice and chicken rice. Daytime only.

**Juat Siang Cafe**, 34 Carpenter St. Good beef noodle soup. Daytime only.

**King Top Cafe**, Taman Sri Sarawak. Noodles, grills, satay, barbecued chicken and fish served until early morning.

**Li Garden**, 1st Floor, Hock Lee Centre, Tel: 340785. Famous for its Peking Duck and Cantonese dishes served for lunch and dinner. Booking essential in the evening. Take a taxi.

**Life Cafe**, 108 Ewe Hai Street, Tel: 411754. 11 am - 10 pm (closed Tuesdays). Chinese tea house serving inexpensive food (RM 4-6) plus wide range of coffees and teas. Good place to stop whilst exploring Old Kuching.

**Links**, Civic Centre Tower, Jln Budaya, offers a Cantonese fine-dining restaurant and a coffee shop serving local favourites, both with spectacular views of Kuching and surroundings. Opening end of March 07. See Entertainment listings for contact details.

**Lok Thian**, 1st Floor, Bangunan Bee San, Jln Padungan. Tel: 331310/335042. 11 am - 2 pm, 6 - 10 pm. Gourmet Chinese cuisine, pleasant surroundings and good service. Thai and Japanese restaurants on ground & top floors. Booking advisable, especially weekends. Take a taxi.

**Meisan** in the Holiday Inn is an old Kuching favourite, offering high quality Halal-certified Szechuan cuisine in elaborately decorated surroundings..

**Min Joo**, corner of Carpenter & Bishopsgate St. Small but very popular coffee shop selling Chinese noodle dishes. At breakfast time the place is packed.

**Ming Heng Café**, 6 Carpenter St (Next to Wah Tat Bank). This old-style Chinese coffee shop is another popular breakfast hangout. A choice of *laksa*, chicken satay and *kolo mee*.

**Mansion Canteen**, end of Jln Chan Chin Ann, turn right to the stall with the red sign and Chinese characters - the home of Foochow noodles. The 'Daud Special' is one of the heartiest breakfasts in town - thick noodles served in a delicious herbal soup with enormous chunks of chicken.

**River Palace** in the Crowne Plaza Riverside is the place to go for Halal-certified Cantonese banquet fare.

**Ting Noodle House**, 117B, Lot 132 Ban Hock Road. This lunchtime favourite serves spicy Taiwanese beef noodles, dumplings and a range of noodle and rice dishes. 8 am - 8.30 pm. 8 am - 2 pm on Sun.

**Toh Yuen**, in the Hilton, serves gourmet Cantonese and Szechuan cuisine, evenings only.

### CONTINENTAL / WESTERN

All major hotels serve continental cuisine, usually in their coffee houses. Diners have a choice of a la carte or all-you-can-eat buffets. Most also feature high tea buffets on Saturdays or Sundays. Look out for food promotions advertised in the local press. Some coffee shops and food centres have stalls selling Western food.

**Continental or American Breakfast** is normally served in hotel restaurants (and Nori 10 Cafe on Jln Ban Hock), but most Chinese coffee shops will serve eggs with toast and jam or honey if you ask for them.

**Beccari's Ristorante**, Merdeka Palace Hotel. Beccari's chef prepares authentic dishes from all over Italy, including proper Italian thin-crust pizza. The consistently good food and friendly and efficient service add up to a very pleasant dining experience. Open 12 noon - 11 pm daily.

**Bla Bla Bla**, Tabuan Road (opposite Fata Hotel). Tel: 233944. Popular new restaurant with an interesting mix of Chinese and fusion dishes. Booking advised at weekends. 6 pm - 11.30 pm. Closed Tuesdays.

**Casa Davide**, 229 Jln Padungan. Serves a good selection of authentic Italian pizza and pasta dishes.

**The Cottage**, Jln Bukit Mata Kuching. Western grills and snacks, plus local specialities including *pansoh manok* (chicken cooked in bamboo). Open 11 am - 1 am (food served until 10 pm). Closed Sundays.

**Dulit Coffee House**, Telang Usan Hotel, a pleasant terrace cafe serving generous portions of western and local food, including delicious French oxtail stew, plus a full range of Szechuanese dishes.

**Hani's Bistro**, Jln Chan Chin Ann. Asian and Western cuisine in a cafe-style environment.

**Ipanema**, Jln Padungan (next to Soho). Stylish new wine bar with a wide range of draught beers, snacks and light meals, plus an imaginative selection of Latin and Mediterranean inspired a-la-carte dishes .

**Jambu**, 32 Crookshank Rd, Tel: 235292. Sprawling colonial style bungalow conceals a stylish restaurant offering Mediterranean cuisine with local ingredients and "modern Borneo cuisine" plus a pleasant garden terrace cum tapas bar for chilling out. 15 mins walk from city centre, or take a taxi. Open 11 am - 2 pm, 5.30 pm - 12.30 am, closed Mondays

**The Junk**, 80 Wayang St, Tel: 259450. Rustic Chinese ambience and Italian influenced cooking. 6 pm - 12.30 am . Closed Tuesdays. Booking advised at weekends.

**Lunch & Such**, upstairs at Artrageously Ramsay Ong, 94 Main Bazaar. Tasty home cooked western dishes (meatballs, pies, oxtail stew) plus local specials, tea and coffee served up at modest prices in an elegant gallery setting. Free wi-fi and broadband.

**Magenta**, 32 Lot 141 Jln Nanas, 93400 Kuching, Tel: 237878. Fashionable fine dining restaurant offering modern Italian & fusion cuisine, located in an elegant Malay wooden house. 6 pm - 11.30 pm Closed Mondays. Take a taxi.

**One Tree Hill**, Jln Ong Kwan Hin (near Civic Centre). Large restaurant serving a wide selection of Western, Malaysian and Chinese food, al fresco or indoors. Live band on Saturdays. 10 am - 2 pm and 6 pm - 11 pm.

**Orchid Garden**, Holiday Inn Kuching, serves Western and local specialities, and claims to have the best roti canai in town. Sun - Thu 6.00 am - 1.00 am, Fri, Sat & eve of public holiday 24 hours.

**Patience Daily**, 3 Wayang St. Tastefully decorated restaurant offering a mix of local and western main courses and snacks, coffees, smoothies and juices. 3 pm - 11 pm.

**Room 205**, No 205, Jln Padungan. Serves Chinese dishes during the day, and an adventurous choice of western dishes in the evening (non-halal). 11 am - 11 pm.

**The San Francisco Grill**, Jln Ban Hock. Popular if old-fashioned steak-house, with attentive service.

**Serapi**, Holiday Inn Kuching. Air-flown steaks, continental cuisine (including great *Crepes Suzettes*). Open for dinner only, 7 - 11 pm. Closed Sundays.

**Soho**, 64 Jln Padungan. Tasty snacks and light meals served in the lively bar (see Entertainment), plus an imaginative selection of a-la-carte dishes in the restaurant.

**The Steakhouse** in the Hilton. Substantial portions, stylish presentation and great cooking add up to asophisticated eating experience. The 3-course and 4-course specials (any starter, any main course and any dessert, etc.) are fantastic value. Also offers a *flambé* menu. Open for dinner only, 6 pm - 10.30 pm.

**Tao Gallery Café**, Padungan Road. Ground floor café serving juices, teas, coffee, finger food and snacks, with an art gallery on the 1st floor. 11 am - midnight.

**Victoria Arms**, Merdeka Palace Hotel, serves a wide range of traditional pub food throughout the day.

**The Waterfront Café** in the Hilton serves great buffet spreads with a different theme every day. The all-day buffet on Sunday and high tea on weekdays are both very popular - come early (or book) to get a table.

## FAST FOOD & FRANCHISE OUTLETS

The golden arches of **McDonalds** are on Jln Tunku Abdul Rahman, opposite Sarawak Plaza. **Pizza Hut** is on the other side of the street a little further down.

**KFC** has branches in Sarawak Plaza (next to Holiday Inn) and Riverside Shopping Centre. Local chain **Sugar Bun** is located in the Riverside Shopping Centre.

## INDIAN

It is not easy to find authentic Indian food in Kuching. Many of Kuching's "Indian" restaurants actually serve a mixture of Indian and Malay food. Saying that, there are a few places well worth trying.

**Azreen Café**, 351 Lorong 12, Off Rubber Road (Near Weekend Market). Good Muslim Indian restaurant serving authentic home-cooked dishes, as well as curries, *roti canai*, *tosai* and *pillau* rice.

**Curry House**, Lot 409, Section 10, Lorong 3A, Rubber Road. Good range of curries and other mixed rice dishes plus *chapati*, *roti canai* and *biryani*.

**Biryani Café**, 16 Main Bazaar. 8 am - 8 pm. *Rojak*, *murtabak*, *biryani* rice, *roti canai*, *tosai*, curries etc., if you can squeeze past the souvenir racks.

**Bismillah Restaurant**, on Lebuh Khoo Hun Yeang near the Central Police Station, serves North Indian Muslim food. Good *tandoori* chicken, *naan* bread, curries and *biryani* rice.

**Bollywood Café**, 66 Carpenter St. Good North Indian curries, a range of tasty Indian breads including potato *roti*, and home-made Indian sweets.

**Buhari Café**, 157F Jalan Satok, near Sunday Market. An old Kuching favourite, famed for its chicken and mutton *biryani*.

**LL Banana Leaf**, 7G Lorong 1, Rubber Rd. Tel: 239404. 7.30 am - 9.00 pm (Mon. - 5 pm). Authentic South Indian banana leaf meals from RM 4.50 (vegetarian RM 3.50). If the fish curry is available (+ RM 3), don't miss it. Also serves *dosai*, *puri* & *murtabak* breads, plus a great mango *lassi* and Indian confectioneries. Near the Sunday Market (RM 6 by taxi).

**Lyn's Tandoori**, Lot 62, No. 10 G, Lg. 4. Nanas Rd. Tel: 234934. North Indian *tandoori* cuisine, *naan* and *kebab* dishes. Just outside the city centre (RM 6 by taxi).

**Sri Sham** on Jln Ban Hock serves Indian style banana leaf meals and a range of South Indian snacks.

## INDONESIAN

**Gamelan**, Wisma Gaya, off Jalan Simpang Tiga, Tel: 410026. Tasty and unusual Indonesian dishes, including regional cooking from Sulawesi. Short taxi ride from centre.

## JAPANESE

**Akina Sushi Bar**, Lower ground floor food court, Sarawak Plaza (next to Holiday Inn). Self-service sushi from the conveyor belt, plus noodle dishes cooked to order.

**Cafe Majestic**, Crowne Plaza Riverside. Popular for its Japanese BBQ buffet dinner on Wed & Sat, 6.30 pm - 10.00 pm. Reservations necessary.

**Minoru**, Lot 493-G, Section 10, Rubber Road. Tel: 251021. 11.30 am - 2.30 pm, 6-10.30 pm. Set lunch from RM 16, set dinners RM 20 - 45. Good service and extensive menu. Near Sunday Market.

**Ten-Ichi**, see Lok Thian listing under "Chinese" for details.

## KOREAN

**Koreana Restaurant**, Taman Sri Sarawak Mall. Tel: 255072. Open daily, 11 am - 2 pm and 5.30 - 10 pm.

## MALAY

Malay food served in Sarawak is generally not as spicy as that served in Peninsular Malaysia. If you like your food really spicy, just ask for extra chilli. There are not many Malay food outlets in the city centre, but adventurous gourmets can take a taxi or white minibus to the Jln Semariang - Jln Santubong area of Petra Jaya, where there are literally dozens of small family-run Malay restaurants, mostly operating from their own homes (evenings only).

**Madu Medani**, Main Bazaar (opp. Waterfront Amphitheatre). Spicy Malay buffet at lunchtimes, rice and noodle dishes served throughout the day.

**Jubilee, Madinah** and **Malaya** restaurants (all on Jln India) serve a range of Malay curries and vegetable dishes. The Jubilee also serves good *roti canai* and *murtabak*.

**Rex Cafe**, Main Bazaar. Good mixed rice, *rojak*, *mee Jawa* and *laksa*.

**Rom Orchid Garden** (see Accommodation - Homestays for location & contact nos.) offers authentic spicy Malay cuisine in a kampung garden setting. Open 8 am - 10 pm daily.

**Satok Road Food Stalls**. See Food Centre listing.

**Top Spot Food Court** (see Food Centres) has a few good Malay food stalls.

## MALAYSIAN

**Aroma Cafe**, Jln Tabuan (opposite Borneo Hotel). Bidayuh-owned and run restaurant cooking up a selection of traditional Sarawak longhouse food for buffet lunch (from 11.30 until about 1.30, Mon - Fri), and Western and local a la carte dishes until 11 pm.

**Home Cook Restaurant**. Jln Song Thian Cheok (opp. MAS). Excellent selection of traditional mixed-rice dishes. RM 3-6 for a good feed.

**Khatulistiwa Café**, Kuching Waterfront. Local and international dishes served in one of the best locations in town. Open 24 hours, the best time to go is around sunset to enjoy the perfect river view.

**Lake Park**, Reservoir Park. Popular cafe style restaurant located in the grounds of the city's Reservoir Park. Serves a range of teas, coffees and juices plus local food, including a range of Malaysian favourites. Open daily from 5 pm - midnight.

**Miami** (see Pubs). Chef Teo cooks up popular Malaysian and Western dishes from 3 pm until late. The *laksa* and the (pork-free) *won-ton* noodles are superb.

**Nori 10 Café**, Jln Ban Hock (near Jln Song Thian Cheok junction). Bidayuh family-run cafe offering authentic Malay and Dayak favourites, plus Western breakfast served all day.

**SCR Food Centre**, Jln Song Thian Cheok (opp. MAS). Malaysian-style fast food restaurant serving mixed rice dishes and noodle favourites. Excellent value (RM 3-5 for hearty meal). Also has a branch in Satok, near the Sunday market.

**Singapore Chicken Rice**, Jln Song Thian Cheok and branches throughout town. Generous portions of chicken rice and freshly cooked vegetables. 10 am - 9 pm.

**Suan Chicken Rice**, Jln Tunku Abdul Rahman next to Sarawak Plaza, has mouth-watering steamed or curried chicken served with rice and vegetables. Lunchtime and early evening.

## MIDDLE EASTERN

**Little Lebanon**, 1st Floor, Japanese Building, Sarawak Tourism Complex (Old Court House). Tel: 247523. A selection of Middle Eastern Cuisine and local Malaysian favourites. 11.30 am - 3 pm, 6.30 pm - 10.30 pm. Closed Mondays.

## PHILIPPINES

**Haw Haw Grill Café**, 143 Jln Padungan. Popular meeting place for the local Pinoy community, famed for its deep-fried pork leg. Lunchtimes and Evenings. Closed Mondays.

## SARAWAK SPECIALITIES

Sarawak *laksa*, a spicy noodle dish laced with beansprouts, shredded chicken and prawns in coconut gravy, is the great Borneo breakfast, and can be found in many coffee shops. Everyone in Kuching has their favourite *laksa* stall - some of the best in the city centre are **Kapit Cafeteria** (below Kapit Hotel), **Chong Choon** (Abell Rd, opp. Maybank), and **Choon Hui** (Ban Hock Rd.). *Umei*, a spicy salad of raw marinated fish, limes and shallots, is the traditional dish of the Melanau people, and is often found in hotel buffets or Malay food stalls. Local vegetables are served widely, particularly the two types of crispy jungle fern, *midin* and *paku*. Good local venison (ask for deer meat) is available from some Chinese restaurants. *Pansoh Manok* (Chicken cooked in bamboo) is a great Bidayuh and Iban delicacy, and can be found at **Aroma Café**, the **Cottage** and **Nori 10 Café**.

## SEAFOOD

Kuching has superb seafood. One treat that should not be missed is steamed *pomfret* or *manchong* fish. Assam prawns, sambal prawns and slipper or rock lobster (bax) are other local favourites. One dish that you are unlikely to find elsewhere is *ambal* (bamboo clam), which is usually cooked as a mild dry curry or steamed in Chinese wine. Unusual appearance (looks like a worm in a bamboo shell!) but tastes superb.

**Ah Ka Su Seafood**, 17 Jln Green Hill. Open for lunch and dinner daily. Excellent fish head curry and also well known for its BBQ suckling pig.

**Batu Lintang Food Centre**, tucked away behind junction of Jln Batu Lintang & Jln Rock. The stalls here serve Kuching's cheapest seafood. Evenings only. Very popular so be prepared to wait for a table.

**Benson Seafood**, Jln Abell. Tel: 255262. Well-established riverside restaurant serving a full range of Sarawak seafood. Very popular at weekends.

**Buntal Seafood Village** (see Damai and Santubong section).

**New Happy Café**, Lorong 1, Jln Ang Cheng Ho, is famous for its Foochow prawn and fish noodles. RM 12 upwards for fresh river prawns and catfish (*tapah*). Open daily 6.30 am - 4 pm (2 pm Sundays). 5 mins walk from Cat Statue.

**Open-Air Market** (see Food Centre listings).

**Pending Seafood Centre**, behind Kuching Port in the industrial area. A wide range of stalls selling seafood and local specialities. If you go by taxi arrange a pick-up time.

**Rock Road Seafood**, 2nd Mile, Jln Rock, Tel: 241575. Popular outlet where you select your dinner from the fish and crustaceans swimming in the tanks lining the walls. Take a taxi. Booking advisable at weekends.

**See Good**, off Ban Hock Road, opposite Hua Kuok Inn. Tel: 251397/012-8832629. The authors' favourite seafood restaurant (but don't take our word for it, try it yourself!). The cooking style is robust rather than fussy, with strong-flavoured sauces and lots of herbs. Friendly hosts Mr & Mrs Kong will happily guide you through the extensive and exotic menu, and can make some interesting suggestions. Also has the biggest (and cheapest) selection of wines in Kuching. Open all day. Closed 4th and 18th of every month.

**Top Spot Food Court** offers a wide choice of popular seafood outlets (see Food Centre listings).

## STEAMBOAT

A local favourite - an all-you-can-eat seafood buffet which you cook yourself in an enormous, gas-heated stewing pot bubbling and sizzling in the middle of your table. If you have never tried before, the staff will show you how it's done. Very Malaysian, excellent value (RM 15-30 per person) and great fun.

**Blue Lagoon** at the Crowne Plaza Riverside. Poolside BBQ Steamboat Buffet every night.

**Coca**, see Thai below.

**Hornbill's Corner Café**, 85 Ban Hock Road, Tel: 016-8565495. Come early as this place really gets busy. The steamboats (RM 16 per person) have a barbecue plate attached for you to grill stingray, marinated beef, lamb and chicken.

## THAI

**Bangkok Thai Restaurant**, see Lok Thian listing under "Chinese" for details.

**Coca Restaurant**, 3rd Floor, Crowne Plaza Riverside Hotel. Tel: 232133. 11.30 am - 2.00 pm, 6.30 pm - 10.30 pm. Closed on Sundays. A la carte or buffet, with the Thai-style steamboat the popular house speciality.

**Mango Tree**, Jln Crookshank, Tel 235353. Local branch of the well-known Thai franchise, in a pleasant garden setting.

## VEGETARIAN

If you're a strict vegetarian, be careful when ordering vegetable dishes in non-vegetarian outlets - dried prawns, *belacan* (shrimp paste), shredded chicken, etc., are often used in vegetable dishes. Most cook-to-order restaurants can prepare vegetarian dishes on request.

**Bollywood Café**, see Indian section.

**China Street Vegetarian**, Leboh China, off Main Bazaar. Chinese coffee shop set-up serving a wide selection of exclusively vegetarian dishes. 7.30 am - 2.30 pm.

**Perfect Vegetarian Food**, Jln Green Hill. Vegetarian hawker stall dishes from morning to late afternoon.

**LL Banana Leaf**, see Indian section.

**Zhun San Yen Vegetarian**, Lot 165, Jln Chan Chin Ann. Tel: 230068. 7.30 am - 2.30 pm, 5 pm - 8.30 pm. Self-service vegetarian buffet with food sold by the gram. 100 g for RM 1.10 and RM 0.50 for rice. Good selection of tasty dishes.

Kuching has entertainment and nightlife to suit most tastes. As this guidebook has been produced with tourists in mind, we have not included places that concentrate on lavish business entertainment or where female visitors would feel uncomfortable. Socialising in Kuching is also done in restaurants and coffee shops. Normal pubs usually charge around RM 8 for a beer and close around 1-2 am. Live music pubs, hotel bars, plush karaoke lounges and trendier bars are usually RM 10 upwards, and are open later. Most places have "happy hours," with discounts or 2-for-1 offers. The main city-centre areas to find pubs and bars are in and around **Taman Sri Sarawak** (across from Hilton), **Padungan Road**, the **Travillion Mall** (Jln Petanak), the **Riverbank Suites** (facing the river opposite Crowne Plaza) and **Jalan Bukit Mata**. The listings below are only a small selection of city centre pubs and bars - the inquisitive will make their own discoveries.

## PUBS

**BarZing**, Travillion Mall, Jln Petanak. Stylishly designed chill out bar, playing a selection of chill-out, pop and house music.

**Cat City**, Taman Sri Sarawak, opposite Hilton. Breezy open-air balcony bar & a well-equipped karaoke lounge. Open daily from 4.30 pm. Happy hour 4.30 - 9.30 pm.

**The Club**, Crowne Plaza Riverside. Cozy English-style lounge bar, ideal for enjoying a quiet, relaxing drink. 5 pm - 1 am.

**Club Nest**, Jln Bukit Mata Kuching. Small, friendly bar popular with a more alternative crowd than its neighbours.

**The Cottage**, Jln Bukit Mata Kuching. Large, comfortable bar with draught Guinness and Kilkenny, plus a large selection of wines. Lunchtime till late.

**Discovery**, Taman Sri Sarawak. Open-air corner pub playing top 40 music. Busy at weekends.

**Eagle's Nest**, Jln Bukit Mata Kuching. With 2 pool tables, a good selection of beers and wines, and food at sensible prices, you can't go wrong. Open from 4 pm daily. Happy hours until 9.30.

**Grappa**, Pandungan Road. Located a few doors down from Soho, similar set up with a slightly younger and mixed crowd. Music is a mix of House, 80's and R&B.

**Jambu Tapas Bar**, 32 Crookshank Road. Tel: 235292. Cosy terrace bar (with very reasonable prices) located in the garden of a colonial style bungalow. Big projector screen for watching football and other sports events. Open 5.30 pm - 12.30 am, closed Mondays. 15 mins walk from city centre or take a taxi.

**Links**, on top of Civic Centre Tower, Jln Budaya. Hip bar and dance club offering stylish surroundings and great panoramic views of Kuching. Dance and club music at weekends, with lounge, jazz, chill-out and retro nights weekdays. Free wi-fi access. Frequent guest DJs and special events. Phone 417575 (bar), 255225 (office) or check out [www.links-entertainment.com.my](http://www.links-entertainment.com.my) for full details and schedules.

**Miami**, Taman Sri Sarawak, opposite Hilton. Loud music, a big island bar and dance floor downstairs, with a relaxing lounge bar and balcony upstairs. Friendly and helpful staff, plus drinks (including draught Guinness) at sensible prices. 3 pm - late.

**Mojo @ Denise**, junction of Padungan Road and Abell Road, opposite Pizza Hut. Cosy wine bar and lounge that frequently stages alternative events such as live music evenings, poetry readings and so on.

**Monsoon**, Riverbank Suites, next to Holiday Inn. Friendly waterfront bar - the perfect place to enjoy sunset over the Sarawak River.

**Piccadilly's**, Jln Bukit Mata. Friendly if slightly chaotic family-run corner bar. Huge TV If you are looking for a place to watch live football.

**Rainforest**, Taman Sri Sarawak, opposite Hilton. Noisy, sweaty hip-hop and R&B bar, hugely popular at weekends with a very young and boisterous crowd.

**Rajang Lobby Lounge**, Holiday Inn Kuching. Pleasant cocktail lounge whose bartender knows how to mix a perfect martini. Open 4 pm - 1 am.

**Senso** at the Hilton is a stylish lounge bar with a selection of specialty martinis and cocktails. The resident band performs a mixture of jazz and standards. **Soho**, 64 Jln Padungan. Still Kuching's most fashionable pub, located in an attractive downtown area. The simple earthy décor and jazz/latin/dance-oriented music selection attract a friendly, up-market crowd.

**The Victoria Arms**, Merdeka Palace Hotel. English Pub featuring excellent live bands and serving a wide range of local & imported beers and genuine pub food. Open daily from 11 am to 1 am. Live bands Mon-Sat, 10 pm onwards. Ladies-only session every Friday from 7 - 9 pm, first few drinks on the house.

**YN Cellar**, Merdeka Palace Hotel, wine bar stocking a selection of wines from around the world.

**KARAOKE LOUNGES** are dotted all over Kuching, a clear indication of Karaoke's popularity. Songs in Chinese dialects, English, Iban, Malay, Japanese and Korean. City centre karaoke lounges include **Cat City** (Taman Sri Sarawak, opposite Hilton) and **Dai Ichi Karaoke** (Jln Tunku Abdul Rahman (above Pizza Hut). The suburban **Third Mile Area** is teeming with Karaoke lounges, whose names seem to change on a weekly basis. The only area in Sarawak where customers order beers by the case. Take a taxi (RM 6-7) for a Karaoke pub crawl and take pot luck.

## CINEMAS

**Riverside Cineplex** (427061/427064), Riverside Complex, next to Crowne Plaza Riverside Hotel. Check local press for details.

**Star Cineplex** (234077), Level 9, Medan Pelita, top floor of the car park on Wayang/Temple Street.

**enjoy kuching from a different perspective**



**links**  
restaurant • café • bar  
Civic Centre Tower, Kuching  
Tel: 082 417575 (Bar), 082 253585 (Office)  
Fax: 082 255225  
email: [info@links-entertainment.com.my](mailto:info@links-entertainment.com.my)  
[www.links-entertainment.com.my](http://www.links-entertainment.com.my)

Kuching is an excellent place to buy Borneo arts, crafts and curios. Particular items to look out for are Iban *pua kumbu* (hand-woven rugs), wooden hornbill carvings used in rituals, and silver jewellery, Bidayuh basket weaving, Orang Ulu beadwork and woodcarving, and Penan blowpipes and mats. Most of the antique and curio shops are scattered along **Main Bazaar**, with a few in the **Padungan area**. Whilst a few are laid out like elegant galleries, most are crammed full with every possible variety of Sarawakian bric-a-brac, and items from Brunei, Kalimantan and Sabah. **Fabriko**, set in a lovingly restored Chinese shophouse on Main Bazaar, has interesting souvenirs, exclusive textiles and fashion items downstairs whilst the upper two floors house a gallery and showroom. Other well-established outlets on Main Bazaar include **Native Arts**, **Nelson's Gallery**, **Rainforest**, **Sarawak House** and **Arts of Asia**, all offering quality antiques and handicrafts at reasonable prices. The **Telang Usan** hotel has a small outlet specialising in Orang Ulu and Penan crafts, including some excellent modern beadwork and traditional headgear.

Prices of handicrafts are not always fixed so you may have to bargain. If you have the time it's best to shop around and get a rough idea before buying. Certain antiques require an export permit from the Sarawak Museum. The more established shops can assist with this and with shipping arrangements (if required). Most art and craft shops close on Sundays. **Note:** Australian and New Zealand authorities insist that wood and bone handicrafts are fumigated upon arrival.

For more general shopping, the main malls are **Riverside Shopping Centre** (next to the Crowne Plaza), which includes a Parkson department store, **Sarawak Plaza** (next to the Holiday Inn) and **Tun Jugah** (opposite Sarawak Plaza) which has a good range of outlets selling men's and women's fashions. Other good places to go bargain hunting are **Electra House** (next to the Covered Market), **Wisma Hopoh** (Jln P, Ramlee) and **Wisma Satok** (Jln Satok).

**Artrageously Ramsay Ong** (94 Main Bazaar, Tel: 424346 E-mail: artrageouslyramsayong@hotmail.com. www.artrageouslyasia.com. Showcases the talents of Ramsay Ong, one of Malaysia's leading painters, as well as a range of work from local artists (and occasionally international artists working in Sarawak). Ramsay's bark paintings, Narong Daun's exquisite silk paintings and Wong Neng Lee's bold realist workss are amongst the highlights here, and they also stock a fine selection of prints, cards, handicrafts and other collectibles.

**Atelier Gallery**, 104 Main Bazaar (opposite Chinese History Museum), has an unusual and eclectic selection of handicrafts, objets d'art, hand-made furniture and antiques from all over Southeast Asia. Visitors are welcome to browse through the extensive library of art and design books. The place just oozes style, and proprietor Lucas Goh describes himself on his business card as "curator," which should give you a good idea of what to expect. Tel: 243492, Fax: 236675, E-mail: balihai@streamyx.com.

**Galleria**, Wesberly House, Rubber Road West, Tel: 429361 E-mail: siok60@streamyx.com. Well lit and spacious gallery displaying the work of some of Sarawak's most interesting painters, including Melton Kias, Sylvester Jussem, Raphael Scott Ahbeng and Magdalene Tai. Also displays the work of emerging artists from throughout Southeast Asia. Well worth a visit. Short taxi ride from city centre.

**Kuching Waterfront Bazaar**. Located in the historic Sarawak Steamship Building, this handicrafts centre is a shopper's paradise, with dozens of stalls selling all kinds of Sarawak handicrafts, souvenirs and memorabilia. Open daily until 10 pm, long after the Main Bazaar outlets have closed. Ideal for last minute gift and souvenir shopping.

# SARAKRAF PAVILION

SARAWAK ARTS & CRAFT HERITAGE CENTRE

- Live Craft Demo Session
- Traditional Welcoming Dance
- Sarawak Traditional Snacks
- Arts & Craft Courses
- Sales Of Handicraft & Souvenir

Lot 78, Jalan Tabuan, Kuching, Sarawak.  
Tel: 082-258771 Fax: 082-232771  
E-mail: [sarakraf@tm.net.my](mailto:sarakraf@tm.net.my)  
[www.sarakraf.com.my](http://www.sarakraf.com.my)



## ATELIER GALLERY

Furniture  
Ethnic Arts  
Textiles  
Antiques  
Homeware

Lot 104, Main Bazaar, Kuching 93000,  
Sarawak, Malaysia. Tel: (60-82) 243492  
E-mail: [balihai@streamyx.com](mailto:balihai@streamyx.com)



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### ARtrageously Ramsay Ong - The Art Gallery

94 Main Bazaar, 93000 Kuching,

Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo

Phone: (60)82 424 346

Fax: (60)82 422 926

Email: [artrageouslyramsayong@hotmail.com](mailto:artrageouslyramsayong@hotmail.com)

[www.artrageouslyasia.com](http://www.artrageouslyasia.com)



### Lunch & Such

98 Main Bazaar, 93000 Kuching,  
Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo  
Phone: (60)82 410 051

### Lunch & Such the coffee corner

Complementing the gallery is *Lunch & Such*, a secluded coffee corner serving great local brewed coffee and drinks. If you are feeling a little hungry, the artist Ramsay's sister Darling serves up some of her home-cooked specialities.

We also offer free wifi access, and two wired broadband terminals are available for a nominal charge.

**Sarakraf**, Pavilion at 78 Jln Tabuan (see Museums), Ground Floor Sarawak Plaza, plus outlets in Damai and Kuching Airport, Tel: 258771 Fax: 232771 E-mail: [sarakraf@tm.net.my](mailto:sarakraf@tm.net.my). [www.sarakraf.com.my](http://www.sarakraf.com.my). Traditional and contemporary art and handicrafts with a built-in "feel-good factor." Sarakraf was set up to help develop Sarawak's handicrafts industry and improve the economic situation of rural craftspeople. Most of their products are guaranteed "made in Sarawak," and you can be sure the producers have been fairly rewarded for their creative efforts. Also stocks a selection of photography books and cassettes and CD's of indigenous music.

**Sarawak Handicraft Centre**, Round Tower, Sarawak Tourism Complex. Tel: 425652 Fax: 445311 E-mail: [kedoh@sarawakhandicraft.com](mailto:kedoh@sarawakhandicraft.com). Website: [www.sarawakhandicraft.com](http://www.sarawakhandicraft.com). Indoor showroom plus outdoor stalls featuring top quality Sarawak handicrafts, whose authenticity is guaranteed by the Sarawak Craft Council. Some of the items on sale are produced by the craft demonstrators who showcase their skills here. They also have a stylish range of ceramic bead jewellery, which can be customised to order. Open Mon - Fri from 8.30 am to 5 pm (12 miday on Sat, Sun and public holidays).

**Serikin Border Market**: The Bidayuh village of Serikin, just over an hour's drive from Kuching, holds a bustling weekend market where Indonesian traders cross over the border to sell their wares at bargain prices. Popular items include *batik* fabrics, clothing, traditional medicines and handicrafts (especially bamboo and rattan mats and baskets). **Harbour View Hotel** frequently arranges day trips on Saturdays and Sundays, and mini-vans leave from the lane behind the Saujana Car Park. Contact Dorothy Ling (Tel: 016 8887000) for further details.

**Pepper**: Malaysia is a major world producer and exporter of pepper, producing around 25,000 tonnes annually, of which 98% is grown in Sarawak. This valuable cash crop provides an important source of income for over 60,000 rural families. Visitors travelling outside Kuching should not miss the chance to visit a pepper garden. High-quality Sarawak pepper in various forms and packagings, and a host of pepper-based products, are widely available in Kuching.

**Pottery**: Kuching is well known for its unique, locally-influenced Chinese pottery. Most potteries are located out of town on Jln Penrissen. Visitors are welcome. Just take a bus (STC 3, 3A, 9A, or 9B from the bus station or outside the post office) or taxi and ask for the potteries. If you don't have time to go and watch the potters at work, many antique and souvenir shops stock their wares.

**Exotic Plants**: **Garden Friend** sells a range of rare and exotic local plants, including orchids, palms, shrubs and pitcher plants (*nepenthes*). They also stock gift items such as posters of pitcher plants and nepenthes gift vials. Lot 5, Section 34, Jalan Taman Budaya (near the Civic Centre). Tel: 236148.

**Bird's Nests**: For centuries Sarawak has exported top quality bird's nests to China. Today, a number of retailers in Kuching specialise in the sale and export of these exotic delicacies. Prices are significantly cheaper than elsewhere (e.g. Hong Kong, Singapore or West Malaysia) and the quality is excellent.

**Film, Processing & Camera Repairs**: Film processing and digital printing laboratories are found all over town. **Kingdom Photography** (Jln Green Hill) is centrally located and consistently produces good quality prints. **Anna Photo Studio** on Rubber Road is a bit further out of town but offers the best slide processing in Kuching. Call 242567 if you need directions. For camera repairs, **Empress Studios** (1B Jln India) are fast, reliable and reasonably priced. For good prices on digital video tape head to **Top Photo** (Jln Abell).

**Bookshops:** For books on Sarawak and Borneo try **Mohamad Yahia & Sons** (Basement, Sarawak Plaza & Holiday Inn - they also have some good maps and a selection of second-hand books), **Premier Bookshop** (Sarawak Plaza, 2nd floor), **Books Unlimited** (in the State Library lobby), **Benzamine Bookshop** (Jln Carpenter) and **Star Company** (30 Main Bazaar). For general books, novels etc., try **Premier, Popular Books** (Tun Jugah Centre), **Times Books** (Riverside Complex).

**Traditional Music:** CD's of traditional music from Sarawak can be found at Sarakraf outlets, handicraft shops on Main Bazaar and the shop at the Sarawak Cultural Village.



**Discover Kuching On  
A Sarawak River Cruise**

**Morning Cruise: 9 am**

**Sunset Cruise: 5 pm**

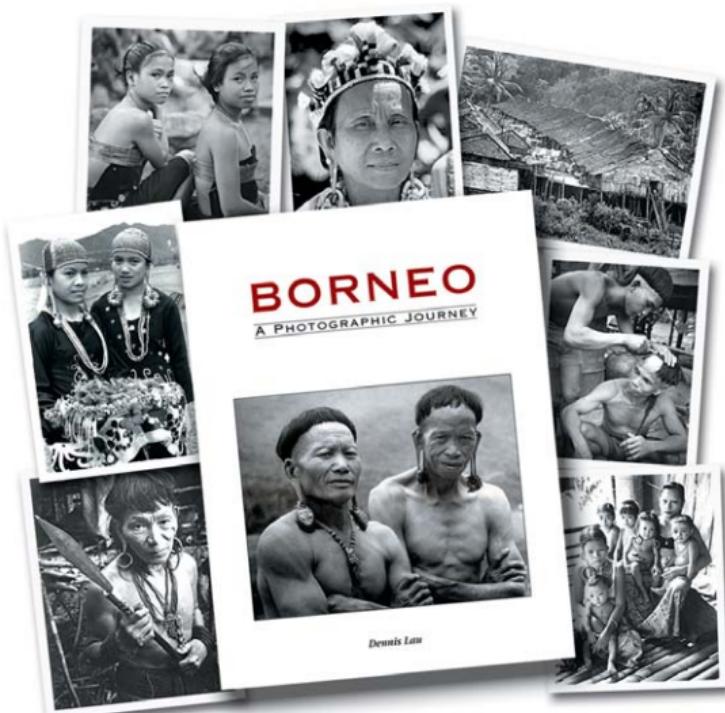
*For bookings or further details please contact: .....*

**CPH Travel Agencies (Sarawak) Sdn Bhd**

70 Padungan Road, 93100 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

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E-mail: [cphtrvl@po.jaring.my](mailto:cphtrvl@po.jaring.my) Website: [www.cphtravel.com.my/cph](http://www.cphtravel.com.my/cph)



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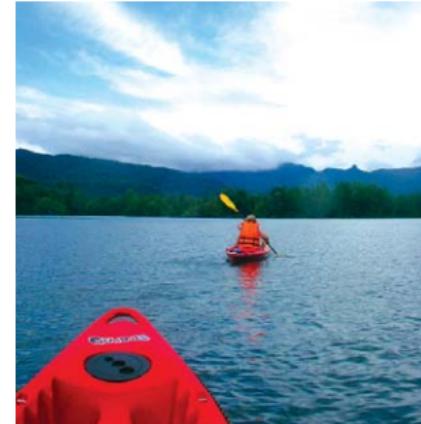
All the 4 & 5-star hotels have **fitness centres** with **tennis courts**. Crowne Plaza Riverside also has a squash court. There is a **public swimming pool** on Jln Padungan just past the Kuching City South Council office complex. Reservoir Park is a popular local jogging spot. Riverside Superbowl is a 24-lane bowling centre situated in the Riverside Complex. Damai Beach is the best area for **watersports** (jet-skiing, windsurfing, water-skiing) - see Damai and Santubong section for details.

Hotels and travel agents can arrange **fishing trips** just offshore from Santubong. If you are into **deep sea game fishing**, the place to go is Tanjung Datu at the western tip of Sarawak close to the Indonesian border. A number of fishing tackle shops can arrange these trips. Try Mr. Jong Joon Soon (Johnson) at Fui Lip Marketing, 15 Ground Floor, Wisma Phoenix, Jln Song Thian Cheok.

**Golfers** have a choice of courses. The 36-hole **Kelab Golf Sarawak** at Petra Jaya is strictly members only. Tel: 440966 for reciprocal membership details. The quaintly named **Prison Golf Club** on Jln Penrissen has 9 holes, green fees RM 30/50, caddies RM 6, Tel: 613544. The Arnold Palmer designed **Damai Golf Course** at Santubong is described in the Damai and Santubong section.

**The Hornbill Golf & Jungle Club** is located at **Borneo Highlands Resort**, 70 km from Kuching. Tel: 578980 E-mail: [enquiry@hornbillgolf.com](mailto:enquiry@hornbillgolf.com) Website: [www.borneohighlands.com.my](http://www.borneohighlands.com.my). This challenging par-72 course sprawls over rugged mountain terrain, offering the toughest of sporting challenges amidst magnificent rainforest scenery. Definitely not for hackers, this course suits golfers who can play straight, as it's just a single step from fairway to forest. Phone or E-mail for bookings and green fees.

Kayaking enthusiast Francis Ho offers a range of coastal and rainforest **Kayaking Tours** in the wider Kuching area, with prices around RM168 per person. Some of the most popular trips are on the upper reaches of the Sarawak River near Bau. Kayak down jungle streams and pass through some stunning upcountry scenery, whilst catching a glimpse of the life of the local Bidayuh communities along the way. Most tours are suitable for beginners. Tel: 253005, 016-5221358. More details at [www.kuchingkayak.com](http://www.kuchingkayak.com).



Sarawak is essentially pioneer territory when it comes to **Mountain Biking**. However, a few local riders have discovered some great trails just outside Kuching and further afield. If you need bike parts, or want to link up with local riders, contact Collin Tay at **WG Cycles**, 36A, 1st Floor, Nam Meng Building, Ban Hock Road. Tel: 238239. E-mail: [collin@wgcycle.com](mailto:collin@wgcycle.com). Brief details of popular local bike trails are found on colin's site [www.wgcycle.com](http://www.wgcycle.com).

**Rock Climbing:** The "Batman Wall", a climbing wall located at the Fairy Caves near Bau, offers a series of challenging rock climbs and abseiling routes. The wall is named after a huge roof section that rock climbers can opt to traverse before they continue up the main climbing wall. The main wall is 60 meters wide and reaches a height of 40 metres. The Batman Wall offers 20 climbing routes and both easy and difficult climbs.

**Kuching City Hash:** If your idea of fun is running through humid jungle, getting covered in mud, sweat, bites and scratches (and recovering over a few drinks afterwards), the Kuching Chapter of the **Hash House Harriers** would love to hear from you. An excellent way to make new friends. Harriers (Men Only) Tue 5.30 pm, Harlettes (Ladies Only) Wed 5.30 pm, City Hash (Mixed) Sat 4.30 pm. Contact Polycarp Teo Sebom (Tel: 019 8871017) or Jennifer Yap (Tel: 411694 Fax: 413700).

**Scuba Diving:** Although Kuching is not yet developed as a diving destination (unlike Miri in Northeast Sarawak, gateway to the Luconia Shoals), there are a number of dive sites within easy access of Kuching. For further details contact CPH Travel (Tel: 243708), Kuching Scuba Centre (159 Jln Chan Chin Ann, Tel: 428842, [www.kuchingscuba.com](http://www.kuchingscuba.com)) or Sematan Palm Beach Resort (Tel: 712388 or 711112).



## USEFUL INFORMATION

**Banks & Money Changers:** The following is a list of centrally located banks and money changers. Banks open Mon-Fri 9.30 am-3 pm. Most money changers do not accept travellers cheques or small denomination US dollar notes.

**Alliance Bank**, Wisma Ting Pek Khiing, 1 Jln Padungan.

**Bank Bumiputra-Commerce**, Wisma Bukit Mata Kuching, Jln Tunku Abdul Rahman.

**RHB Bank**, Head Office Branch, 363 Jln Kulas, Tel: 419294 (near Weekend Market).

**Everrise Money Changer**, Lot 199, Jln Padungan. Tel: 429354. Mon-Fri 10 am - 9 pm. Sat & Sun 10 am - 6 pm.

**Hong Leong Bank**, 8 Jln Carpenter.

**Hong Xi Enterprise Money Changer**, Ground Floor, Tun Jugah.

**HSBC Bank**, Bangunan Binamas, off Padungan Road (near Cat Statue).

**Majid & Sons Money Changer**, 45 Jln India. Mon-Sat 9 am - 7.30 pm Sun 9 am - 3 pm.

**Maybank**, 13 Jln Tunku Abdul Rahman.

**Mohamad Yahia & Sons**, LGF3, Sarawak Plaza. 10 am - 9 pm (closed Friday lunchtime)

**OUN Bank**, 1 Jln Tun Haji Openg (corner of Main Bazaar).

**Standard Chartered Bank**, Wisma Bukit Mata Kuching, Jln Tunku Abdul Rahman.

**Doctors, Dentists & Hospitals:** The **Clinic** on Main Bazaar (opp. Chinese History Museum, is excellent, well equipped, and very experienced in dealing with tourists' ailments. There are a number of other good clinics around the centre of town. Consultation and simple medication is usually around RM 20-30. Names are not given for legal reasons. **Dr Anthony Tan**'s surgery in Taman Sri Sarawak (opposite Hilton main entrance) is the most conveniently located dental clinic for visitors, although it can get very busy so be prepared to wait. **Sarawak General Hospital**, Jln Ong Kee Hui (Tel: 276666), has a first rate Accident and Emergency department, although foreign visitors are charged RM50 for consultation. Patients are treated according to medical priority, so please don't expect to go straight to the front of the queue. A cash deposit, insurance card or credit card will be required for in-patient treatment, but prices are low by international standards. **Normah Medical Centre**, a private hospital situated across river on Jln Tun Datuk Patinggi (Tel: 440055), is staffed by specialists with a good reputation both locally and internationally. **Timberland Medical Centre** (Tel: 234991) on Rock Road is also highly regarded, as is the **Kuching Specialist Hospital** at Tabuan Jaya (Tel: 365777). For traveller's stress and minor aches and pains, try the **traditional foot reflexology** at Sarakraf Pavilion (see Shopping). Prices of **prescription eyewear** (both glasses and contact lenses) are a fraction of those charged in many other countries, whilst the practitioners and their products are of international standard.

**Pharmacies:** Staff in most pharmacies speak good English and can advise on minor health problems. The following are centrally located, well stocked, and particularly helpful:

**Apex Pharmacy**, No 125, 1st Floor, Sarawak Plaza. Daily 10 am - 9 pm.

**UMH Pharmacy**, Jln Song Thian Cheok (opp. MAS) Mon - Sat 9 am to 6 pm.

**Laundry and Dry Cleaning Services:** Try **Easy Wash** on the corner of Jln Ban Hock & Jln Song Thian Cheok, **Mr Dobi** on Jln Abell (next block along from Pizza Hut), **City Laundry** (Taman Sri Sarawak) or **Spotfree** (105 Jln Padungan). All are centrally located and offer a fast, reliable service.

**Places of Worship:** The Muslim Council of Sarawak can provide details of Muslim prayer times throughout the state. Tel. 429811, Fax: 416855. Christian churches conduct services in a number of languages. Phone for details.

**Anglican**, St. Thomas's Cathedral, Jln McDougall. Tel: 240187.

**Baha'i Centre**, 1 Nanas Garden, Nanas Road. Tel: 252009.

**Borneo Evangelical Church (SIB)** Lot 1863 Block 10 Lorong 8, Jln Laksamana Cheng Ho, Tel: 425212

**Buddhist**, Sarawak Buddhist Association, Jln Ong Tiang Swee. Tel: 411906.

**First Baptist Church**, 5th Floor, Wisma Saberkas. Tel: 413462.

**Hindu**, Sri Maha Mariamman Temple, 11/2 Mile, Jln Rock, Tel: 257855, 240227. Sri Kaliaman Temple, Jln Ban Hock.

**Kuching Mosque**, Jln Masjid.

**Methodist**, Trinity Methodist Church, 57 Jln Ellis. Tel: 411044.

**Roman Catholic**, St. Joseph's Cathedral, Jln Tun Abang Hj. Openg. Tel: 423424.

**Seventh Day Adventist Church**, 3rd Mile, Rock Road. Tel: 247746.

**Sikh Temple**, Jln Masjid.

**State Mosque**, Jln Bako, Petra Jaya.

**Post Office and Telephone Facilities:** The main post office is on Jln Tun Haji Openg. Open Mon - Sat 8 am - 6 pm, Sun 10 am - 1 pm. From outside the Kuching area, the dialling code is 082. Malaysia's country prefix is 60. The overseas call prefix is 00.

**Internet Access:** Internet cafes are dotted all over Kuching. The following are well established, helpful and reliable.

**Cyber Borneo Internet Centre**, Lot No. 3, Upper ground floor, Star car park complex, Temple/Wayang St. Tel/Fax: 082-414003. RM 4 per hour. Daily 9 am - 10 pm. Convenient location (near Main Bazaar).

**Cyber City**, Taman Sri Sarawak (opp. Hilton). Tel: 243549 E-mail: cyber\_city@ hotmail.com. RM 4 per hour for 1st hour, RM 3 thereafter (with free tea & coffee), also offer printing and scanning. Daily 9 am to 11 pm. Central location with very helpful staff.

**Wireless Internet.** Wifi connections can be found at Bing Coffee Bar (Jln Padungan), Caffe Cino (Hilton), Deli Cafe (Main Bazaar), Lunch & Such (Main Bazaar), Links Bar and Restaurant (Civic Centre Tower) and in the main public areas of the Holiday Inn, Crowne Plaza Riverside, Harbour View and Merdeka Palace Hotels. Charges may apply.

## Useful Telephone Numbers

### **Tourist Police Unit**

(Kuching Waterfront, open 8am-midnight) 250522

**Central Police Station** (Opp. Padang Merdeka) 241222

**Police Emergency Service** 999

**Fire** 994

### **Immigration**

Federal Complex, Jln Simpang Tiga (bus No. 11) 245661

**Australian Honorary Consul** 233350

E-mail: diting@tm.net.my 233480 (Fax)

**British Honorary Consul** 250950

Outside office hours, c/o 24 hr British

High Commission duty line 012-3220011/22

**Brunei Consulate** 456515

No. 325, Lorong Seladah, Jalan Seladah, 93350 Kuching. 453616 (Fax)

**Chinese Consulate**, Lot 3719 Dogan Garden, 453344

Jalan Dogan, off Jln Batu Kawa 415588

**French Honorary Consul**, c/o Telang Usan Hotel 425811 (Fax)

E-mail: wanullok@tm.net.my 241734

**Indonesian Consulate** 424370 (Fax)

111 Jln Tun Abang Hj. Openg 482177

**New Zealand Honorary Consul** 482279 (Fax)

### **Polish Consulate**

Lot 154-156 Jln Sungai Padungan 413877

**South African Honorary Consul** 245587

411300 (Fax)

**Malaysian Nature Society**, Kuching branch, organises nature walks, trips and other nature-orientated events. E-mail mnskuching@gmail.com or visit www.mns.org.my.

**Sarawak Music Society**, organises several concerts each year, for information contact Ms. Yeoh Jun Lin, Tel: 016-8661145

**Tourism Information Centres** see page 40.

The Official Kuching Guide 2007 is available online at  
[www.borneotravel.com](http://www.borneotravel.com)

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# HarbourView Hotel

## The Frontier of Kuching's Golden Triangle



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