



**MALAYSIA
MADE EASY**
The Compact Guide
for Travel Agents



An Introduction

Malaysia is a land where lush rainforests meet vibrant cities, ancient traditions blend seamlessly with modern lifestyles, and pristine white beaches stretch alongside majestic mountain ranges. The country presents a rich tapestry of cultural diversity, where Malays, Indians, Chinese, and other ethnic groups coexist harmoniously, weaving a fascinating cultural mosaic. This blend of contrasts makes Malaysia one of Southeast Asia's most all-encompassing destinations, especially for first-time travellers. With its top-notch infrastructure, including reliable transportation, excellent medical care, and a variety of tourist facilities, Malaysia ensures a smooth and enjoyable experience. Plus, its low crime rate adds an extra layer of safety.



Rawa Island, Johor

The Malay Peninsula, bordering Thailand, and the Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak on Borneo showcase an impressive range of flora and fauna. National parks, jungle treks, and wildlife reserves offer endless opportunities for hiking, wildlife watching, and ecotourism. Malaysia's coastline, adorned with powdery white sands and crystal-clear turquoise waters, is perfect for beach lovers. The many offshore islands provide idyllic settings for a tropical getaway.

Malaysians are celebrated for their warm and respectful hospitality, making the country a hidden gem for those seeking authentic and tranquil experiences away from the crowds.

Our expert team's concise Malaysia guide covers essential dos and don'ts for selling trips, along with practical tips and insights to help you plan the best itineraries for your clients.



Jalan Alor Street Food, Kuala Lumpur

Essential Dos and Don'ts: Practical Tips for Your Clients



DO embrace local customs

Malaysia's rich cultural tapestry means that respect for local traditions is paramount. When visiting places of worship, dress modestly by covering your shoulders and knees, and always remove your shoes before entering someone's home or a sacred site.



DO learn important Malay words

While Bahasa Malaysia is the official language, English is commonly spoken. Malaysians appreciate visitors making an effort to learn a few key phrases, such as "terima kasih" (thank you) and "sama-sama" (you're welcome). Both are pronounced just as they are written.



DON'T miss out on savouring the local flavours

Indulge in Malaysia's diverse and flavourful cuisine. However, remember that using your left hand for eating is considered impolite due to its association with hygiene. Always use your right hand.



DON'T point with your index finger

In Malaysian culture, this is seen as rude. Instead, use your whole hand to gesture or indicate.



It's a Match! A Destination for Every Discerning Traveller

Malaysia is a vibrant kaleidoscope of experiences, where every type of traveller can discover their ideal escape. For the **adventure-seekers** and **nature-lovers**, Malaysia's lush jungles offer endless possibilities. The Malaysian Borneo region is a paradise for thrill-seekers, featuring Gunung Mulu National Park in Sarawak — a UNESCO World Heritage site renowned for one of the world's largest cave systems. Close encounters with the majestic orangutans can be had at the Semenggoh Nature Reserve or the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Center in Sabah. Sabah's Kinabalu National Park, home to Malaysia's highest peak, Mount Kinabalu (4,095 metres), beckons hikers with its challenging trails and stunning vistas. Here, visitors can marvel at iconic proboscis monkeys and the rare rafflesia blooms. On the Malay Peninsula, the ancient rainforests of Taman Negara National Park, with its 530-metre-long canopy walk, offer a glimpse into one of the world's oldest ecosystems.

For the **relaxation revellers**, Malaysia's extensive coastlines and offshore islands are perfect for leisure experiences. The country is celebrated for its luxurious beach resorts and world-class spas, offering a tranquil haven for those looking to unwind in style.



Colonial houses in George Town, Penang



Orangutan family in Borneo

Cultural connoisseurs will find Malaysia's vibrant cities irresistibly captivating. Kuala Lumpur, the dynamic capital, showcases a stunning blend of tradition and modernity. Meanwhile, the UNESCO World Heritage cities of Malacca and George Town in Penang are celebrated for their rich cultural heritage and exceptional culinary delights, promising a feast for the senses.

Important Basics for Travelling in Malaysia



Best Time to Travel

Timing a visit to Malaysia depends on the region and the monsoon seasons. For the west coast of the Malay Peninsula, including Kuala Lumpur and Penang, the ideal travel window is from December to February, when the weather is relatively dry. The east coast, including Tioman and the Perhentian Islands, is best explored from June to September, when rainfall is lighter. In Malaysian Borneo, encompassing Sabah and Sarawak, the most favourable travel period is from March to October, offering more stable weather with reduced rainfall.

When planning trips, consider Malaysia's vibrant event calendar. The country hosts spectacular celebrations like Ramadan's end, Thai Pusam, Chinese New Year, and Independence Day. These festivals often lead to increased domestic travel, resulting in busier roads and fully booked accommodations. It's advisable to check if your clients wish to experience these festivities or prefer to travel during quieter times.



Transportation

Malaysia's excellent infrastructure provides diverse transportation options for easy travel. KTM trains offer comfortable connections between major cities like Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Johor Bahru. Domestic flights are efficient for covering longer distances, such as travelling from the Malay Peninsula to Borneo. Renting a car offers flexibility, especially in rural areas, while taxis and ride-hailing services like Grab are convenient for urban travel. Bicycles are available in many tourist spots, and long-distance buses are an economical option for overland journeys.



Book Early

Destinations like Sandakan, Tabin, Danum Valley, and Mount Kinabalu are exceptionally popular. They may experience limited hotel availability and visitor capacity especially during peak seasons. Early reservations are strongly recommended.



Religion

Malaysia is a diverse, multi-religious country where Islam is the predominant faith, practised by about 60% of the population. Significant Christian, Buddhist, and Hindu communities also contribute to the country's rich religious tapestry. Malaysia's constitution guarantees freedom of religion to all its citizens.



Local Travel Advisories

Be aware of travel advisories, particularly for the east coast of Sabah and surrounding islands. Check your country's foreign office website for the latest updates.



Mindful Modesty

Malaysians are renowned for their friendly and welcoming nature, but they also place a strong emphasis on modesty. It's advisable for everyone to be mindful of public displays of affection, and familiarise themselves with the local customs and laws to avoid any potential misunderstandings. This thoughtful approach ensures a respectful and enjoyable experience for all.



The Real Malaysia: Expert Tips from Our Team

Cultural Immersions and Celebrations

Malaysia, a vibrant blend of cultures, hosts a dazzling array of festivals throughout the year. Su Peng, our Reservation Manager in Sabah, encourages travellers to dive into these lively celebrations: "Join in the excitement of events like **Hari Raya**, **New Year**, **Thaipusam**, and **Borneo's Harvest Festivals**. These festivities offer an authentic peek into Malaysia's rich cultural heritage. Each celebration showcases the unique traditions of Malaysia's diverse ethnic groups, creating a vibrant street spectacle and a strong sense of community. To make the most of these cultural experiences, check the event calendar and tailor your itinerary accordingly."



Thaipusam Festival at Batu Caves

Borneo's Untamed Beauty



Sabah, North Borneo

Our Sales and Account Manager Syuhada Che Mat is captivated by the pristine nature of Borneo. She notes, "Borneo's Malaysian region is a hidden gem in Southeast Asia's natural landscape. It features dense rainforests, diverse wildlife, and rich ethnic traditions. My top recommendation is the **Kinabatangan River** in Sabah, renowned for its biodiversity and the chance to spot the '**Borneo Big 5**', including orangutans, proboscis monkeys, and pygmy elephants. Don't miss the **Bako National Park in Sarawak**, known for its mangrove forests, rare proboscis monkeys, and stunning beaches — a must-see for nature lovers."

An Expansive Culinary Odyssey

Ahmad Shahir, our Sales Support Executive and a culinary connoisseur, recommends savouring Malaysia's diverse food scene: "Malaysia's cuisine is a flavourful fusion of Malaysian, Indian, Chinese, European, and Middle Eastern influences. Street food is integral to this culinary landscape, with hotspots like Kuala Lumpur, Malacca, George Town, and Kuching offering mouthwatering dishes. Be sure to try classics such as **Nasi Lemak**, **Laksa**, and **Char Kway Teow** for a true taste of Malaysia."



National dish Nasi Lemak in banana leaf



The Real Malaysia: Expert Tips from Our Team

Conquering New Heights



Mount Kinabalu peak

Renee Osman, our very own General Manager and the team's adventurer, highlights Malaysia's thrilling offerings. Providing insight, she shares, "**Mount Kinabalu**, at 4,095 metres, is the highest peak in Southeast Asia and a haven for trekking enthusiasts. The two-day ascent promises breathtaking views and traverses diverse terrains, from lush forests to rugged landscapes. Kinabalu Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is home to over half of Borneo's plant species, including the remarkable **Rafflesia** flower. It's an unforgettable challenge for any adventure seeker."



The Rafflesia, one of the world's largest flowers, blooming in Kinabalu Park

Live Like a Local



Homestay in a "Baruk" (a traditional ceremonial hut)

Malaysia offers a wide range of accommodations that blend comfort with local charm," says Francesca Cheah, Product and Contracts Manager at DTH Travel Malaysia. "I recommend spending a night in a **traditional longhouse in Sarawak** for an immersive cultural experience. These homestays provide a unique chance to live with local families and learn about their daily lives. For those seeking luxury, remote **eco-lodges** offer exclusive comfort and an opportunity to experience nature up close, complete with guided tours and exotic wildlife sightings."



Wildlife watching on the Kinabatangan River



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We have offices in 14 countries, including Malaysia, China, Hong Kong, Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Bhutan, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Japan. With over 65 years in the industry, DTH Travel is proud to have been repeatedly recognised as Asia's Leading Destination Management Company by the World Travel Awards for multiple years.

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