

EXPLORE!

Discover Borneo
15 days

Borneo, Malaysia - Trip code BOO

Discover Borneo

This exciting trip showcases Borneo's culture, natural beauty and exotic animals. Our journey takes us through Sarawak and Sabah, the two states that make up Malaysian Borneo. On our way not only do we explore the cities of Kuching and Kota Kinabalu, we encounter the warm hospitality of indigenous tribes as we stay in rural villages. We end our adventure with time to relax on some of Borneo's beautiful beaches.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Wildlife** - Encounter proboscis monkeys and orang-utans
- ★ **Bako National Park** - Enjoy a wildlife walk and a beach picnic
- ★ **Tribal villages** - Meet and stay with ethnic minority people in their villages
- ★ **Beringgis Beach** - Relax on Borneo's beautiful beaches

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:

Full on

Full on paced trips are for travellers who like their holidays packed with activities and experiences, moving on quickly from place to place with lots of early starts and long, busy days. Some may find them tiring, but others get a buzz from packing their precious holiday-time as chock-a-block full of new experiences as possible!

GROUP SIZE:**10 - 16**

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join tour in Kuching

Arrive in Kuching and check-in at the hotel. Kuching is the capital city of Malaysian Borneo's Sarawak state. This colourful and bustling city is a great place to explore. Its kaleidoscopic history is on show at every turn, from Chinese temples to a south Indian mosque to colonial buildings from the era of rule by the White Rajas, a dynastic monarchy of the English Brooke family. The name Kuching means cat in Malay, so a feline statue is a common sight!



Accommodation: The Lime Tree Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - In Kuching, walking city tour; afternoon cruise on Sarawak River

This morning we head out on foot to see the main sights of the city including the Astana Palace, the official residence of the Governor of Sarawak; and the Sarawak Museum, home to some interesting archaeological and natural history exhibits. We see some of the buildings of the White Rajahs such as the Colonial Law Court, the Clock Tower, the Charles Brooke Memorial and the Square Tower; as well as the colourful streets of Chinatown. We take to the river this afternoon to gain a unique insight into the riverine life of Kuching and experience the historical tapestry of the city from a different vantage point. We gain a new perspective of the Governor's residence as well as pass by Fort Margherita, built to protect the city during the reign of Rajah Charles Brooke, now the Police Museum. And we see traditional 'tambang', small house-like boats that transport locals to and from coastal fishing villages outside of the city.



Accommodation: The Lime Tree Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 3 - From Kuching, travel to Bako National Park; wildlife walk and beach picnic

This morning we journey by bus and riverboat along the Bako River to Bako National Park, situated on the beautiful Muara Tebas Peninsula. Bako is the oldest national park in Sarawak and covers 16 square kilometres of primary forest holding seven distinct eco systems with a range of flora - beach vegetation, mangrove, cliff vegetation, peat swamp forest, mixed dipterocarp forest, heath forest and grasslands. A wide variety of fauna inhabit the park include proboscis and silver leaf monkeys, long tailed macaques, monitor lizards and wild boars, to name but a few. We plan to take a walk along one of the park's many trails, with the hope of spotting some of the wildlife. We enjoy a picnic lunch and a refreshing swim at Telok Beach. At the end of the day we return to Kuching.



Accommodation: The Lime Tree Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 4 - Drive to Mongkos Bidayuh village via a tribal market; explore village and meet local people

This morning we leave the city behind and head to the colourful covered market in Serian. Here we find Chinese, Malay, Uban, Bidayuh and other sub-ethnic groups selling various jungle products and jungle produce such as wild fruits, sago worms and ferns. We see a lively market selling fresh fish, snacks and much more. After spending a little time here we continue on our journey to Mongkos Bidayuh village, located near the Sarawak-Kalimantan (Indonesia) border. The village is home to some of the last remaining traditional longhouses in Sarawak. After a Bidayuh style lunch we have the chance to visit a traditional longhouse built from wood and bamboo before continuing our exploration of the village where we have the chance to meet the local people and learn about their way of life. After dinner, the Bidayuh ladies and gentlemen will perform a cultural dance telling the story of the Confrontation, the undeclared War between Malaysia and Indonesia in the '60s. We settle down in our simple guesthouses in the village.



Accommodation: Mongkos Homestay (or similar)



Simple Homestay



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 5 - Walk through farmland; afternoon drive to Kuching airport and fly to Kota Kinabalu

After breakfast we depart for a walk along some village trails passing through farmland to a picturesque picnic spot. The Bidayuh are mostly farmers growing rice, pepper, rubber, oil palm, vegetables. At the picnic spot we can relax and take a dip in the cool clear water of the river and enjoy a local style lunch of bamboo chicken, rice and jungle ferns. Afterwards we return to the village and say goodbye to our village hosts before departing by bus for Kuching Airport to catch our late afternoon flight to Kota Kinabalu in Sabah.



Accommodation: Hotel Shangri La Downtown (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 6 - In Kota Kinabalu, free morning; afternoon drive to meet the Cowboys of the East

The morning is free in Kota Kinabalu to explore. Kota Kinabalu is a burgeoning city with a blend of Malay, European and Chinese resulting in a unique mixture of architecture, culture, high technology and ancient traditions. At noon we head north to Kota Belud Town, from where we once again find ourselves in rural surroundings as we make our way to nearby Kampung Tuangsi village, where we meet the Bajau tribe, also known as the Cowboys of the East! After settling into our simple homestay accommodation, we can explore the village on foot. This evening we take a cruise on the river to see if we can spot any proboscis monkeys and see fireflies.



Accommodation: Kota Belud Homestay (or similar)



Simple Homestay



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 7 - In Kampung Tuangsi village; visit the Valley of the Paddy Field

We spend the day in and around the village. The Cowboys of the East are Sabah's only horsemen, known for their rearing and handling skills. They are known for the highly decorated horses, fine custom-made colourful fabrics can be seen draped over most of the horses to match the bright clothes of their riders. We will visit a beautiful area of terraced rice fields known as the Valley of the Paddy Field and enjoy a picnic lunch at a nearby river. We will also see how Bajau 'parang', the local machetes, are made. Back at the village we can relax after a full day by sharing dinner with our hosts.



Accommodation: Kota Belud Homestay (or similar)



Simple Homestay



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 8 - Scenic mountain drive to Kampung Kiau; explore the foothills of Mount Kinabalu, dinner with our hosts

This morning we leave the village and head along scenic mountain roads across the Crocker Range to Kampung Kiau village, located

in the foothills of Mount Kinabalu, home to about 750 Kadazandusun people of whom many work as mountain guides and porters on Mount Kinabalu.

Upon arrival we'll be introduced to our host families for the night and after settling in to our homestays, we'll take a walk of around 2 hours through the village and scenic valley to get a glimpse of rural life in a spectacular setting. Our guides will show us how to make an assortment of things from bamboo such as a blowpipe, the trusted weapon of the indigenous people of Borneo. You may also be tasked with making your own bamboo drinking cup! Returning to our homestays you'll be able to help prepare dinner with our host families. Then as the jungle comes to life with an array of sounds we will end the day by going for a night walk, keeping a look out for frogs, insects and other nocturnal creatures.



Accommodation: Kampung Kiau Village Homestay (or similar)



Simple Homestay



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 9 - Trek to Sambatangan Cave; canopy walk and a dip at Poring Hot Springs

We set off on a walking trail through the jungle this morning with ranger guides accompanying us to share their knowledge of the local flora such as the huge dipterocarp trees, strangler figs draped with lianas, orchids and pitcher plants. They'll also show us a variety of jungle survival skills and we'll learn to identify and collect wild jungle plants and herbs for food. We enjoy a picnic lunch before returning to Kiau Village, from where we drive to Poring Hot Springs. Here we take a Canopy Walk for an aerial view of the rainforest. If we are lucky, we might catch sight of small mammals, reptiles or insects during the walk. Finally we can take a much deserved therapeutic dip in naturally heated sulphured water in open-air tiled bathtubs. Refreshed we can continue on to Sabah Tea Plantation where we spend two nights.



Accommodation: Sabah Tea Plantation (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 10 - Visit tea factory and Lunathi Village fish spa; free afternoon

This morning we visit the tea factory to learn about tea production. We then take a drive out to Luanthi Village, located within TAGAL Tinopikon Park, which is protected by the Malaysian Department of Fisheries, where fishing is prohibited in order to preserve the environment as well as the eco system for future generations. Here we have the opportunity to experience a 'fish spa', where the Malaysian mahseer fish perform therapeutic nibbling.



Accommodation: Sabah Tea Plantation (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 11 - Drive to Sandakan; visit proboscis monkey sanctuary

Today we continue on our journey and spend the morning driving to Sandakan. We stop off at Labuk Bay Sanctuary, located in the heart of a mangrove forest, where we can see proboscis monkeys in time for the afternoon feeding session. This unusual looking monkey is found only on Borneo and has become an endangered species due to the deforestation of its native habitat. From here we continue on to Sandakan town.



Accommodation: Sepilok Jungle Resort (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 12 - In Sandakan, visit Sepilok orang utan sanctuary and sun bear conservation centre

This morning we make our way on foot to the Sepilok Orang-utan and nearby Sun Bear Conservation Centre. Sepilok is home to the largest of the three orang-utan rehabilitation centres in the world. Covering over 4000 hectares of forest, the centre was established in 1964 to rehabilitate captured, injured or abandoned apes. So far about 100 'wild men of the forest' have been brought to the centre, and there has been a remarkable success with up to 75% having returned to the jungle. The animals are taught how to make nests and how to survive in their natural habitat. About twenty regularly come to feed though not always at the same time. We plan to visit the centre in time for feeding when, along with the resident apes, females who otherwise live in the jungle, come to supplement their diet after the birth of their young. In the evening you will have the opportunity to visit the jungle for an optional night time walk with a ranger.



Accommodation: Sepilok Jungle Resort (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast


DAY 13 - Fly to Kota Kinabalu, drive to Beringgis Beach

This morning you can choose to either re-visit the Sepilok Rehabilitation Centre for a second feeding time or alternatively enjoy a visit to the nearby Rainforest Discovery Centre, where you can gain a fascinating insight to the conservation of the rainforest and the myriad of animals and plants that rely on this incredible habitat. From the canopy walkway you'll be able to see the beautiful rain forest of Sepilok from up to 28 m above the forest floor! You might even catch a glimpse of the Bornean bristle head bird, one of the rarest birds in Sabah! Apart from that, there are another 250 species of birds to lookout for, including hornbills, pittas, kingfishers and broadbills. Around midday we fly to Kota Kinabalu and drive on to Beringgis Beach for the rest of our stay.



Accommodation: Beringgis Resort (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast


DAY 14 - At Beringgis Beach; free time with option to explore Manukan Island

Today is left free for personal exploration. Many optional trips are possible including white water rafting, or a day out to Manukan Island, the second largest of the beautiful islands making up the Tunku Abdul Rahman National Park. This paradise island is the ideal place to relax for the day although there is also plenty on offer for the more active traveller. The snorkelling and diving opportunities are excellent.



Accommodation: Berringgis Resort (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

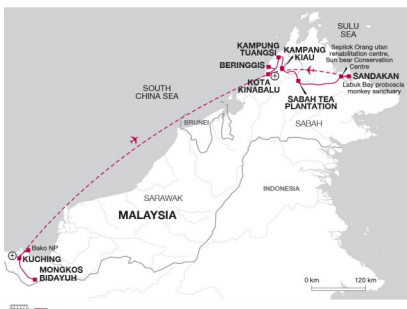
 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 15 - Tour ends Berringgis Beach

The tour ends this morning at Berringgis Beach.

 Meals Provided: Breakfast



Why book this trip

This adventurous journey into Borneo is perfect for travellers who want to experience more than the usual highlights. You will experience village life staying in tribal villages and encounter wildlife in conservation sanctuaries as well as hopefully in the wild.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 14
Lunch: 6
Dinner: 5



Transport

Bus
Boat
Flight



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)



Accommodation

4 nights simple homestay
6 nights standard hotel
4 nights simple lodge

Trip information

Country information

Borneo

Climate

Temperatures are high all year round, between 23°C at night to 32°C during the day. Borneo is tropical and only lies a few degrees north of the equator. Rainfall can be expected at any time of year though will be greater between November and January. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. For up-to-date information on the weather worldwide please visit www.bbc.co.uk/weather.

Time difference to GMT

+8

Plugs

3 Pin Flat

Religion

Islam, Christian

Language

Malaysian

Malaysia

Climate

Temperatures are uniform throughout the year, with conditions on the coast more humid. Day-time temperatures reach around 31°C and then drop at night to about 23°C. There is no clearly defined wet and dry seasons, though the southwest monsoon (September to November) and the northeast monsoon (November to February) bring rather more rain. On the west coast rain tends to fall mainly in short lived thunderstorms, and the sky clears quite quickly.

Time difference to GMT

+8

Plugs

3 Pin Flat

Religion

Islam

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Twin Island Excursion - £35 per person
Kiulu white water rafting - £30 per person
Kinabalu Park and Poring Day Trip with main Entrance £30 per person
KK by Night with Cultural Show - £25 per person

Clothing

Pack essentially for hot conditions as there is year round humidity in the lowlands. Lightweight rainwear/umbrella is essential all year. Plastic ponchos can be purchased locally. Don't forget your swimming costume.

Footwear

Light-weight walking boots or walking shoes are the best for time in the jungle though expect them to get wet and muddy as we may have to cross some streams. Also bring trainers or canvas shoes for wearing when travelling. Sandals are useful when relaxing.

Luggage

15Kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and a day pack. Please note: pack light. The international carrier will usually allow 44lbs/20kg or more and our preferred domestic airline in Borneo also allows 44lbs/20kg. However some domestic airlines allow a maximum of 33lbs/15kg for your checked in luggage and occasionally we may have to use these airlines so we recommend you stick to that limit to avoid excess charges. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourselves. Hard suitcases are not suitable.

Equipment

Bring a torch (preferably a head torch), a water bottle, insect repellent, suncream and a towel. Binoculars are useful for wildlife viewing. Bring a Camera for those unforgettable moments.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. Accordingly you should allow £20 for tipping.

Country Information

Borneo

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices

given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£3.5

Dinner price

£6

Beer price

£3

Water price

£0.25

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Malaysian Ringgit.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

It's easy to change British pounds and USD into Ringgit once in Borneo

Where To Exchange

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

In all major towns.

Credit Card Acceptance

In major restaurants and department stores.

Travellers Cheques

Can be exchanged at international banks in Miri and Kota Kinabalu.

Malaysia

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£4

Dinner price

£8

Beer price

£2

Water price

£0.8

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Malaysian Ringgit.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

GBP or USD.

Where To Exchange

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise on arrival.

ATM Availability

Major towns and cities.

Credit Card Acceptance

In major restaurants.

Travellers Cheques

Major towns and cities.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Boat, Flight

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

The homestays on this trip offer a very rewarding experience as we often stay in the same house as the host family. As the experience is very authentic, it is also fairly basic, meaning you may be sharing a common room with a number of other passengers, and the toilets will be shared within the house. Toilets tend to be a mix between Western-style and Asian-style depending on the home, and washing facilities are usually limited to a bucket of fresh water and scoop.

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Malaysia: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. All passports must have at least 6 months validity after departure from Malaysia.

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer click [here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Non refundable permits

Borneo

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, infectious hepatitis and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Malaysia

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, tetanus, infectious hepatitis, typhoid, diphtheria and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against Malaria. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

