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Trip Dossier for Borneo – Orang Utan Adventure

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You'll dine out on this trip for years – unless the locals dine out on you before! A wonderful adventure with plenty of variety: fishing villages, tropical plants and orchids, turtle watching on Selangan Island, a visit to the famous Orang Utan Centre at Sepilok, a look inside the huge caves of Gomantang and an unforgettable cruise on the Kinabatangan River in search of Proboscis monkey. The highlight is however likely to be your time watching the fabulous Orang Utans and learning about their protection and rescue. End your stay by relaxing on the shores of the South China Sea and enjoying the fabulous sunsets.

Day 1 Fly to Kota Kinabalu, Sabah

Depart from London via Kuala Lumpur to Kota Kinabalu on an overnight flight.

Day 2 Arrive Kota Kinabalu

You'll arrive in Kota Kinabalu at midday and will be met and transferred to your downtown hotel. Kota Kinabalu, (KK, as it is usually called for short) is the state capital and the gateway to the rest of Sabah. It has a population of about 300,000, and is a relatively new city because the original town was destroyed during the Second World War. There is time to freshen up before you take a city tour. You will visit the Sabah Foundation Building, a unique round building with no pillars. Then stop at one of the Chinese temples in the city – Poh Toh Tze, see the majestic state mosque, the museum and Tanjong Aru Beach. Return to your city hotel. **Hotel 2 nights (breakfast)**

Day 3 Rafting Kiulu River

Drive to the River (1½ hrs) passing through Inanam and Menggatal towns. When you arrive at your put in point you will be given a full introduction and briefing on safety and rafting techniques. Then you set off on your exciting trip down one of Borneo's scenic rivers, passing over gentle rapids, through lush green forests, Dusun orchards and villages. Lunch is included and you will return to your hotel mid afternoon. (The river grade is 1 to 2) **(breakfast & lunch)**

Day 4 Drive to Kinabalu National Park

This morning you'll make the two-hour drive to Kinabalu National Park. In this one small area you can encounter a complete ecological system: from lowland rainforest of the tropical zone at its lower level; montane oaks and fig trees, rhododendron shrubs and wild berries of the temperate zone at its medium level; and the conifers and other alpine-like associations of the summit zone at its upper level. There are thousands of species of flowers and plants – carnivorous pitcher plants and orchids abound. When you arrive in the park you can relax and enjoy the cooler weather of the park, explore some of the many trails or visit the botanical garden. Lunch is included and then there is time to relax before you transfer to your accommodation. **Lodge 1 night (breakfast, lunch & dinner)**

Day 5 Poring Hotspring, drive to Sandakan

This morning you spend will depart from your hotel to Poring Hot Spring, about an hour's drive. Poring is named after the towering bamboos that are endemic. You can take a dip in the hot spring pools, which were built by the Japanese in the Second World War for exhausted Japanese troops and reputedly have a medicinal effect. If you wish you can use one of the more private indoor pools for a charge. There will be an opportunity for you to take an aerial treetop hike through the canopy along rope walkways and hanging bridges. Here you can experience life at bird level with amazing views as you zigzag through the trees. After lunch you leave for Sandakan, about four and a half hours away on the northeast coast on the shores of the Sulu Sea. Driving across the tip of Borneo from West to East you will pass through mixed areas of forest as well as expanses of palm plantation which are a sign of the scale of deforestation in the region. You will see plenty of villages and small towns along the way and there is likely to be much of interest as so much life in this part of the world takes place along the roads. Sandakan is Sabah's second-largest city and once known as 'Little Hong Kong' because of its diverse ethnic mix (including many Cantonese). It is also the gateway for your wildlife experiences over the next three days. **Hotel 1 night (breakfast & lunch)**

Day 6 Boat to Selangan Turtle Island

After breakfast you will be taken to the jetty for an hour-long boat ride to Selangan Island, world famous for its green turtles, and home to a hatchery. As you approach, it seems deserted and only a limited number of visitors are allowed to stay on the island to witness the females laying their eggs. These turtles need quiet, dark beaches and sometimes can be fussy in locating a suitable nesting site, attempting several times and abandoning the pit. Nervous females have been seen to dump their clutch in the water on exit if they are disturbed or surprised at the beginning of their arduous task. Green turtles nest every three or more years. An average of three to five egg



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clutches are laid approximately twelve days between each nesting. Each clutch contains an average of 50 to 80 eggs, which requires approximately a 60-day incubation period. Unusually, turtles are laying here almost year round so your chance of sightings is good at any time. After lunch you can swim and snorkel or explore the island. Then after dinner the ranger will take you to see the turtles laying their eggs. No shoes (in case you step on a hatchling) and no flash photography that might upset the female. Once she is dug in and laying you can approach and watch the ranger remove the eggs as they are laid. He may have some hatchlings to show you before their release on their arduous trip to safety in the sea. *Please note that due to the lack of availability of accommodation on Selangan Island we keep our itinerary flexible.* **Chalet 1 night (breakfast, lunch & dinner)**

Day 7 Orang utans at Sepilok and monkeys on Kinabatangan River

An early start this morning. First you'll take the boat back to Sandakan, have breakfast and then drive to Sepilok Orang Utan Rehabilitation Centre. The centre was created in 1964 in a mangrove swamp to protect the orang utan, which is man's closest relative. Orphaned or captured orang utans are carefully acclimatized to their natural habitat in controlled stages. You see those that are in the first stage as they swing in to the feeding platforms twice daily. Later on they are moved deeper into the jungle and encouraged to forage for themselves. Hike through the tropical lowland dipterocarp forest to learn more about the incredible diversity of creatures that live on land in Sabah as well as underwater. You return to Sandakan once more to get back on the water, this time to take an hour's boat cruise to the Lower Kinabatangan River Sanctuary where you will have lunch. This is a wonderful journey of discovery through the magnificent scenery of the mangrove forest. Look out for macaque monkeys as you go. After lunch, cruise further up river into the jungle to Sukau village in search of more primates, especially proboscis monkeys, as well as other wildlife and birds. After checking into the lodge, you have an opportunity to take another evening river cruise to the Menanggul River, a small tributary of the Kinabatangan (optional). **Lodge 2 nights (breakfast, lunch & dinner)**

Day 8 Ox Bow Lake River Cruise and Gomantong Caves

You'll wake up in the rainforest to the glorious calls of gibbons and hornbills. Before breakfast, take a river trip to the Ox-Bow Lake to experience the early morning river atmosphere of the longest river in Sabah. You'll return for breakfast and the rest of the morning is free. After lunch you'll drive to Gomantong Caves, the largest cave system in Sabah, and home to the swiftlet. The swiftlet's nests are collected for the famous Chinese delicacy 'bird's nest soup', and twice a year they are perilously collected by scraping them off the limestone walls from ladders as high as 90 metres. You also can spot numerous bats, birds and butterflies. After your return to Sukau there is another opportunity to explore the river. **(breakfast, lunch & dinner)**

Day 9 Sandakan and return to Kota Kinabalu

After breakfast, you'll return down river to Sandakan. You can enjoy a panoramic view of the city and Sandakan Bay from the top of the hill at Puh Jih Syh Chinese Buddhist temple. After lunch drive to the airport for the short flight from Sandakan to Kota Kinabalu. You will be met on arrival and transferred to your beach hotel. **Hotel with swimming pool for 3 nights (breakfast)**

Days 10 & 11 Beringgis Beach Resort, Kota Kinabalu

How you spend your time here is totally up to you. You can use the resort as a base to explore more of the Kota Kinabalu area or just spend your time relaxing by the pool or the wide expanse of soft sandy beach and warm waters of the South China Sea. With just over 130 rooms this family friendly resort is just what is needed after seeing the highlights of Sabah. The pool has a water slide, you can hire a boat to go out for fishing or a mangrove cruise, there is beach football and volleyball and you can try out kayaking.

Day 12 Free morning, Evening flight via Kuala Lumpur to London

Have a free morning to on the beach before transferring during the afternoon to the airport and your overnight flight to London.

Day 13 Arrive London

Please note - dependant on group numbers, during some sections of the trip you may be with other international clients for some activities and transfers. They may not all be families. You will have a guide with you throughout, but there will most likely be different guides for each section of the trip.

This itinerary includes our group flights from London. If you are making other flight arrangements, please refer to your Confirmation Invoice and Joining Instructions for details of the start or end of the trip. Please remember international flights and trip dates do occasionally change, so please always purchase flexible tickets.

Each itinerary is planned many months in advance and although it is our intention to operate the itinerary as printed in the brochure and detailed here, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of alterations

to flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors which are beyond our control. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops may vary from those outlined but we will always endeavour to keep you informed of any such changes. Included meals are indicated in the daily itinerary.

Optional Extras Please note these prices are a guideline only and may be subject to change
Dip in Hot Spring Pool (Private) Deluxe room £5.00 per hour

Climate

It's warm (or hot) all year round and there's very little variation in temperature throughout the year. The two monsoon seasons are Northeast Monsoon from November to February, which brings heavier rainfall to Sarawak, and the Southwest Monsoon from May to September, characterised by relatively drier weather.

Average monthly temperatures are given below for Kota Kinabalu:

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Max °C	29	30	31	32	34	33	32	33	32	32	31	31
Min °C	22	22	23	23	23	23	22	22	22	23	22	22
Rainfall (mm)	610	510	328	279	262	180	196	234	218	267	358	462

Is this right for your family? Accommodation is in a mix of hotels and rustic lodges. Although these are comfortable, don't expect Western standards. Included activities are possible for children of almost any age (white-water rafting and tree canopy walks are both available but optional).

Lone Parents Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries, including the UK, require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the relevant country embassy for further information on exactly what may be required. These details can be found on the Foreign & Commonwealth Website under the appropriate country www.fco.gov.uk/travel

Accommodation Hotels used are 3-star standard. All have private facilities and are on a twin-share basis (mostly air-conditioned). The guesthouses and lodges are simple and rustic, but very atmospheric. Please note that at Selingan Resort only limited rooms have private facilities and the showers are cold water! The indication of a swimming pool at a hotel should not be taken as a guarantee but rather an indication. You should also be aware that swimming pools at the hotels are often unheated and so can be cold in the winter months or even closed.

Local Costs

A small bottle of mineral water (500ml)	£0.50
A large bottle of mineral water (1 litre)	£1.00
A can of coke (soft drinks)	£0.50
A carton or bottle of fruit juice	£1.00
A bottle of beer	£1.00
Tea or coffee	£0.50
A light lunch time snack – sandwich for example	£1.50
A two course meal* - excluding drinks	£3.00
A three course meal* - excluding drinks	£5.00

*Based on a mid range tourist restaurant.

Currency The unit of currency is the Malaysian dollar or ringgit (MYR). We recommend that you change money at the airport. Credit cards are accepted in larger hotels and some souvenir shops. At the time of writing UK£1 = 5.53 MYR and US\$1 = 3.47 MYR (Sept 2009).

Tipping is unusual in Malaysia; a 10% service charge is added to restaurant and hotel bills, plus a 5% government tax. It should be remembered that over-generosity could lead to jealousy in poor countries. However, a modest tip may be offered for personal service. Please remember that all tips should be a way for individuals to thank staff for good service.



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Security Whilst the vast majority of travellers never experience anything untoward it is worth taking precautions particularly in urban areas. You should take sensible precautions in crowded areas such as street markets and airports, where pick-pocketing is common, and keep clear of any street disturbances. Don't wear expensive jewellery, never leave your bags unattended, keep large amounts of money, cameras and mobile phones out of sight when walking in town centres, and avoid walking in city centres after dark. Keep copies of important documents, including passports, in a separate place to the documents themselves, together with details of credit cards. Leave copies at home with a friend too. Safeguard valuables, important documents and cash and deposit them in hotel safes, where practicable.

Language The official language in Malaysia is Bahasa Melayu, shortened to Bahasa. Nearly everyone also speaks English, except in the more remote rural areas.

Time Malaysia is GMT +8 hours

Packing List Please refer to our separate "packing list"

Clothing & Equipment List for Borneo – Orang Utan Adventure

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Western clothing is acceptable everywhere, but outside beach resorts people tend to dress conservatively. Out of respect for local culture we recommend that - particularly in rural areas - you dress accordingly i.e. no tight-fitting clothing, low-cut or sleeveless tops, etc. Shorts are OK in main tourist areas, but they (and skirts) should reach at least to the knee. Everyone should be prepared to cover bare arms and legs when entering religious buildings, women should cover their heads and everyone should take off their shoes. Lightweight cotton clothing is generally the best thing to wear. A sun hat, sunglasses and high-factor sunscreen are all essential.

The following list of clothing and equipment is intended to be fairly comprehensive and experienced travellers may well take a good deal less luggage than we recommend

CLOTHING	NUMBER PER PERSON	Check	EQUIPMENT	Check
Walking Shoes/trainers	1 pair - all purpose wear		Soft-sided bag 50 – 80 litres	
Strong Sandals	1 pair		Lightweight Daypack – 25 litres	
Waterproof Jacket	1 lightweight		Sunglasses	
T-Shirts	3+		Personal First Aid Kit	
Long Trousers or Skirt	2		Camera, Memory card & accessories	
Short Trousers (knee length)	2+		Torch and Batteries	
Long Sleeve Shirt	2+		Insect Repellent (with high DEET content)	
Sunhat / Baseball cap	Essential (styled to shade face, ears and neck)		Wash Kit – wet wipes and dry anti-bacterial handwash are useful	
Thin Fleece or Sweatshirt	1		Towel or Sarong	
Swim Wear	1			

ITEM	Check	ITEM	Check
Passport/ Visa		Universal travelling adapter	
Air Tickets		Binoculars – optional	
Cash Cards/Visa		Sunscreen – lots of it	
Insurance Documents		Reading Material	
Trip Information and Itinerary		Guide Book & map	

For details regarding **hand luggage restrictions**, please visit www.baa.com for details