

# Malaysia

## A Country in Southeast Asia

Site of the 2023 Associated Country Women of the World  
(ACWW) World Triennial Conference



### Leaders Guide

Revised 7-28-21



Designed for and Presented at the 2021 Oregon FCE State Conference  
Oregon Association for Family and Community Education  
Springfield, Oregon

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# Malaysia – A Country in Southeast Asia

## **Agenda:**

- Welcome and Introduction of Presenters ..... 1 minute
  - Review Goals and Objectives (Page 2)..... 1 minutes
  - Introduction to Malaysia (Page 4) ..... 1 minute
  - Main crops of Malaysia (Page 6) ..... 1 minute
  - Main exports of Malaysia (Page 6) ..... 1 minute
  - Why is Malaysia so rich? (Page 6) ..... 2 minutes
  - Clothing of Malaysia (Page 6) ..... 3 minutes
  - Summary of Malaysia's History (Page 9) ..... 8 minutes
  - Flag of Malaysia (Page 10) ..... 2 minutes
  - Food of Malaysia (Page 11) .....10 minutes
  - Things to buy as souvenirs in Malaysia (Page 16) .....15 minutes
  - 20 Reason to visit Malaysia (Page 20) ..... 20 minutes
  - Conclusion, comments, and questions (Page 34) ..... 5 minutes
- 70 total minutes**

**Note: PowerPoint presentation of this lesson is available. Contact Scott Teeples @ phone/text 541-891-6456 or [sfteeples@outlook.com](mailto:sfteeples@outlook.com)**

## **Goals and Objective**

- Participants will gain an understanding of the country of Malaysia and its location in Southeast Asia.
- Participants will gain an understanding and introduction of Malaysia, its culture, history, government, and people.
- Participants will gain an understanding of the foods of Malaysia.
- Participants will gain a knowledge of all of the great things to shop for and places to visit while in Malaysia.

## **Items That May Be Needed for Presentation**

- “Malaysia – A Country in Southeast Asia ” Leaders Guide
  - Various Activities and Handouts
  - Pencils or pens for each attendee
  - Blank paper for each attendee
  - \*PowerPoint Presentation on “Malaysia – A Country in Southeast Asia” (if needed)
  - \*Computer
  - \*PowerPoint projector
  - \*Screen or wall to project presentation on
  - \*Computer/projector table
  - \*Electrical cords/power bars as needed
- \*Only needed if PowerPoint presentation is used



## **References and Credit Given to:**

- Wikipedia – Malaysia, Country in Southeast Asia
- Carly Williams – 20 Reasons Why Malaysia is the Most Underrated Country in Asia – Published August 19, 2018

**Note to the Presenter of this Lesson: It is suggested that you read through this lesson and “Hi-Lite” the parts that you want to present and read. This lesson can be shortened or lengthened to meet various meeting times and presentations.**

**Use the PowerPoint presentation, if possible, so that all the participants can see the pictures.**

# Malaysia – A Country in Southeast Asia

## Introduction to Malaysia



Malaysia is a country in Southeast Asia. The federal constitutional monarchy consists of thirteen states and three federal territories, separated by the South China Sea into two regions, Peninsular Malaysia and Borneo's East Malaysia. Peninsular Malaysia shares a land and maritime border with Thailand and maritime borders with Singapore, Vietnam, and Indonesia.

East Malaysia shares land and maritime borders with Brunei and Indonesia and a maritime border with the Philippines and Vietnam. Kuala Lumpur is the national capital and largest city while Putrajaya is the seat of the federal government.

With a population of over 30 million, Malaysia is the world's 44th most populous country. The southernmost point of continental Eurasia is in Tanjung Piai. In the tropics, Malaysia is one of 17 megadiverse countries, home to a number of endemic species.

Population: 31.95 million (2019) World Bank

Fertility rate: 2.00 births per woman (2018) World Bank

GNI per capita: 28,830 PPP dollars  
(2019) World Bank

Life expectancy: 76.00 years (2018)  
World Bank

Population growth rate: 1.3% annual  
change (2019) World Bank

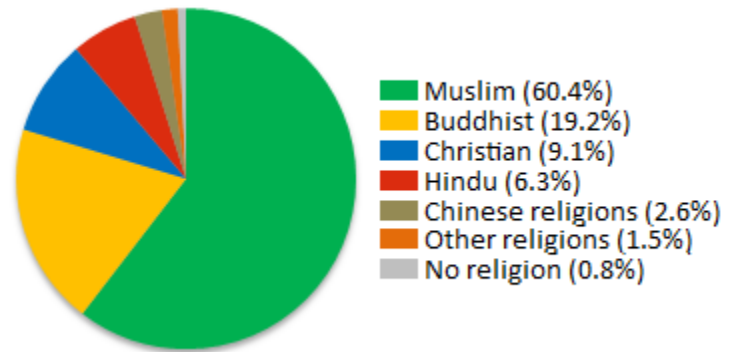
Calling code: +60

Official language: Malay

King: Abdullah of Pahang

Queen: Seri Paduka Baginda (ACWW member)

Government: Malaysia is a federation of 13 states operating within a constitutional monarchy under the Westminster parliamentary system and is categorized as a representative democracy. The federal government of Malaysia adheres to and is created by the Federal Constitution of Malaysia, the supreme law of the land.



Kuala Lumpur is the capital of Malaysia. Its modern skyline is dominated by the 451m-tall Petronas Twin Towers, a pair of glass-and-steel-clad skyscrapers with Islamic motifs. The towers also offer a public skybridge and observation deck. The city is also home to British colonial-era landmarks such as the Kuala Lumpur Railway Station and the Sultan Abdul Samad Building. — Google



It is at an elevation 217' above sea level.  
Area: 93.82 mi<sup>2</sup>

It has a population of 1.808 million.

## **What are the main crops grown in Malaysia?**

Oil palm, rubber, cocoa and rice have been and continue to be the major crops grown by the private and public sectors. However, other crops such as coconut, tropical fruits, vegetables, flowers, annual crops etc., are being grown by the smallholders and the private sector.

Since gaining independence in 1957, Malaysia has successfully diversified its economy from one that was initially agriculture and commodity-based, to one that now plays host to robust manufacturing and service sectors, which have propelled the country to become a leading exporter of electrical appliances, parts, and components.

## **What is the main export of Malaysia?**

Semiconductor & electronic products, palm oil, liquefied natural gas, petroleum, chemicals, machinery, vehicles, optical & scientific equipment, manufactures of metal, rubber, wood, and wood products. Exports: \$263 billion (2017 est.)

## **Why is Malaysia so rich?**

**Malaysia** is **rich** in mineral resources, and mining (including petroleum extraction) accounts for a significant portion of GDP, although it employs only a tiny fraction of the workforce. The major metallic ores are tin, bauxite (aluminum), copper, and iron.



# Traditional Clothes of Malaysia - Vibrancy and Diversity at its Best

The main communities of Malaysia are Malay, Chinese and Indian, each of which has its own traditional clothes. Most Malaysians dress like westerners. It is mostly on special occasions only that the citizens wear the traditional dress of Malaysia. All the multi-ethnic traditional clothes of Malaysia are multi-coloured, bespoke of their culture and radiating vibrancy.



Malay is the most prominent ethnic group in Malaysia. Pakaian is the word for clothing in the official language. The traditional dress is different for males and females and is usually in bright and loud colours.

**Men:** The traditional attire of Malay men is called baju melayu, which is a loose tunic paired with trousers and a sarong which is known as sampin. Men also wear the traditional hat, called songkok or kopiah with it. Some men prefer wearing batik shirts with trousers.



**Women:** The ancient traditional dress for Malay women was kembangan, which included sarongs tied above the chest. The current traditional dress for women is baju kurung, which comprises of a knee-length, full-sleeved blouse and a long skirt called kain. The skirt is pleated on one side. This attire is usually accompanied by a scarf on the head. A semi formal version is the kebaya, which is a skin-fit two-piece costume.

Traditional Clothes of Malaysia



National Clothes of Malaysia



Traditional Costume – Culture of Malaysia



National Clothes of Malaysia



Traditional Clothes of Malaysia



The Indigenous People of Malaysia





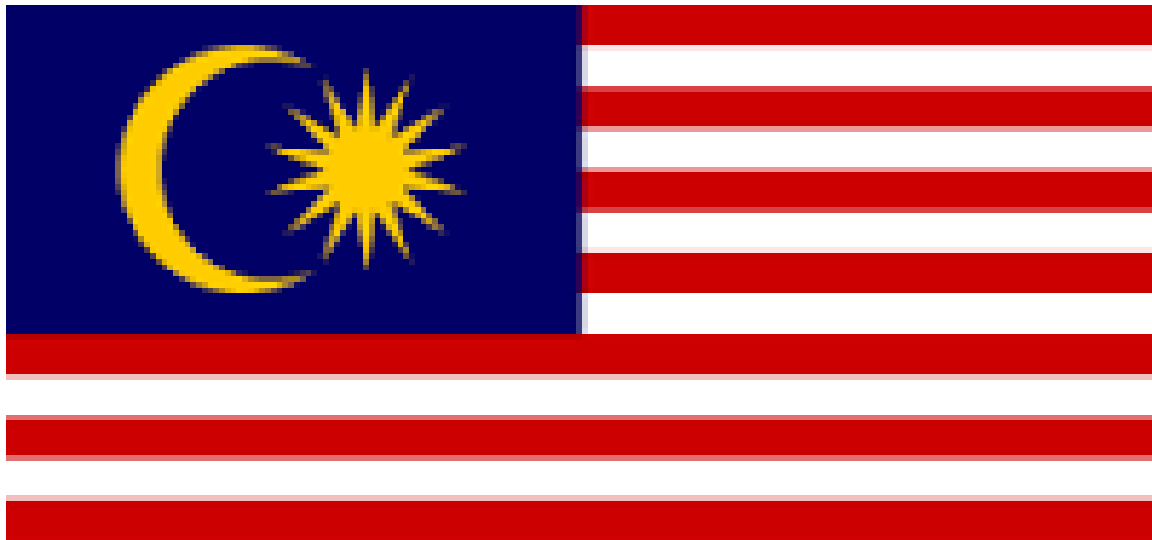
## **Brief Summary Of Malaysia's History**

- Malaysia's history is said to have started from the Sultanate of Malacca which was around 1400 AD
- At the time of its glory, the Sultanate Territories covered most of the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia and Sumatra. Malacca emerged as a glorious Government because of its strategic location which was the meeting point between East Asia and the Middle East.
- This situation allowed Malacca to emerge as a major trading center for spice trade, especially in Southeast Asia.
- Islam was the main religion which emerged and became the main religion of the residents because the Ruler himself had professed the religion.
- In 1511, Malacca fell into the hands of the Portuguese and that was the beginning of the colonial era in Malaya.
- Malaya fell into the hands of the Dutch in 1641
- Malaya moved into the hands of the British in 1824 through the Anglo–Dutch Treaty. British colonization was the longest compared to others.
- During the 1920s and 1930s, many residents of Malaya had started to receive education, either from the Middle East or local education. As a result, this educated group had appeared to fight in the name of nationalism.
- When the people of this country were so eager to end the invasion, they were jolted by the Japanese landing at the end of 1941 which brought Malaya to another colonial era.
- Japan occupied Malaya until 1945 before surrendering as a result of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- Japanese resignation had given space to the Communist Party of Malaya (PKM) to control Malaya
- In June 1948, Sir Edward Gent had declared an emergency over Malaya. PKM failed in Malaya and the British returned powerful. British Military Administration between the end of World War II and establishment of the Malayan Union
- On 1st April 1946, The British established the Malayan Union.
- The emergence of Tunku Abdul Rahman had given a silver lining to the struggle of the Malayan nationalists when his action of forming the Alliance Party had started to open the eyes of British to allow the Malaysians to govern their own country

- The unity between the three major ethnic groups namely Malays, Chinese and Indians led to the London Agreement that was signed on 8 February 1956 and had given signs that Malaya will achieve independence on 31 August 1957
- Upon returning from London, Tunku Abdul Rahman made a declaration of independence of Malaya on 20 February 1956
- On 27 May 1961, Tunku Abdul Rahman suggested the merger of five colonies namely the Malaya, Singapore, Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei to form a new country.
- On 9 July 1963, representatives of the British government, Malaya, Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore, except Brunei, caused that the matter cannot be avoided. The desire for forming a state called MALAYSIA is achieved on 16 September 1963.

Source: Malaysia 2016 (Department of Information)

## Flag of Malaysia



The flag of Malaysia, also known as Malay: Jalur Gemilang, is composed of a field of 14 alternating red and white stripes along the fly and a blue canton bearing a crescent and a 14-point star known as the Bintang Persekutuan. [Wikipedia](#)

**Use:** [State flag](#), [Civil flag](#)

**Adopted on:** May 26, 1950

**Proportion:** 1:2

**Country:** [Malaysia](#)

# Malaysia Food – 10 Amazing Dishes

If you're going to Malaysia, you're in for a real treat when it comes to food. Malaysia ranks very high for its outstandingly tasty food, and the mixture of what's available.

Malaysia is a country of diversity, and the food reflects that. Chinese, Indian, and local southeast Asian Malay flavors are the trio blend of ingredients and cooking techniques that have been adopted into Malaysian cuisine.

Across the country, in cities like **Kuala Lumpur**, Penang, and Malacca, you'll find authentic Chinese food, Indian food exactly as it's found in India, and home-cooked Malay specialties.



## 1. Nasi lemak

Possibly the national dish of Malaysia and beloved by all local Malaysians is a dish known as nasi lemak. It's something you most definitely must eat when you're in Malaysia.

There are a few different varieties of nasi lemak and many variations, but the basis of the dish is rice cooked in coconut milk, topped with spicy sambal chili sauce.



The most basic version is just a pocket of rice topped with sambal, perhaps a hard boiled egg on the side, and wrapped up in a banana leaf. More complex versions, like the one served at **RA Nasi Lemak**, include a buffet of delicious Malaysian curries and chili sauces which you scoop over your plate of coconut rice.

## 2. Ikan bakar

Ikan means fish, and bakar means grilled in Bahasa Malaysia, so ikan bakar is grilled fish – but it's amazing marinated grilled fish!

**Ikan bakar** is spiced up in a blend of chili paste, then grilled over charcoal on top of a banana leaf over the fire. The moist fish is then eaten with a plate of hot rice, sometimes some side vegetable dishes and curries, and dipped into kecap manis for extra flavor.



## 3. Banana leaf

As mentioned before, Indian food plays a major part in the diverse spectrum of the food in Malaysia, and banana leaf, as it's commonly known, is a local favorite.

The food served at Malaysia banana leaf restaurants is often of south Indian origin. You sit down at a table with a banana leaf as your plate, and it doesn't take long before the waiter dishes you a giant scoop of rice and a round of incredibly tasty vegetarian curries.

Banana leaf is often served vegetarian, but you can also normally order sides of meat to supplement the vegetable curries if you like.

No utensils are needed to eat banana leaf, you just **go in with your fingers** and devour!





#### 4. Nasi kandar

Another Indian influenced branch of Malaysia food, originally perfected in Penang, is known as nasi kandar.

Nasi, as you may already know, is rice, and a kandar is a stick or pole used as a support to carry things with. Formerly, in the Malaysian villages, the rice and curry was sold from mobile vendors who carried large pots of food using a kandar.

Nowadays, nasi kandar basically refers to rice and Indian style curry. You get a plate of rice, and dish yourself things like mutton curry, fried chicken, and some rotis on the side.



#### 5. Roti canai

Roti can mean different types of fried bread depending on where you are, and in Malaysia a roti canai is a thin piece of dough fried in lots of oil and served with a curry dipping sauce.

The dough is first stretched out, slapped across a counter top, then folded into a small square, and fried in oil. This gives it lots of flaky crispy layers.

You break off bits of the roti and dip it into the delicious curry gravy.



## 6. Curry laksa and Assam laksa

A great bowl of laksa will leave you stunned upon first bite.

There are two different kinds of laksa in Malaysia food, curry laksa and Assam laksa. Assam laksa is noodles in murky brown fish soup, while curry laksa is noodles swimming in a thick and extremely flavorful coconut milk curry.

There are many variations depending on what part of Malaysia you're in, but for the most part you get a bowl of noodles topped with spice filled soup, seafood and or chicken, and garnished with lots of herbs and **Vietnamese coriander**.



## 7. Char kuay teow

Malaysians absolutely love to eat! And if you really want to relate and make a Malaysian feel at home, start a conversation about char kuay teow.

The dish includes wide rice noodles which are stir fried on high heat with shrimp, bean sprouts, chives, and often an egg.

Char kuay teow is so good, you'll immediately order another plate after finishing your first.



## 8. Hokkien mee

Another giant in the scene of Chinese style fried noodles is Hokkien mee, a recipe derived from the Fujian province of China.

Like nearly all food in Malaysia, there are quite a few variations such as Hokkien hae mee, which is prawn noodles, and Hokkien char mee, which is dark colored fried noodles.

The noodles are normally fried in lard on an extremely high heat, and flavored with dark soy sauce. It's absolutely amazing!



## 9. Nasi campur

While nasi kandar is the Indian version and **economy rice** is the Chinese version of rice topped with a selection of different dishes, **nasi campur** is the Malay version.

You'll find stalls and restaurants set up all over the country where you're given a plate of rice, and it's your task to make sense of the assortment of dishes and scoop up whatever looks the best – and it's a lot of fun!





## 10. Bak kut teh

Translating directly to “meat bone tea,” this southeast Asian Chinese dish includes lots of pork, slow cooked until extremely tender in a broth filled with herbs and soothing spices. Buk kut teh is especially popular as a breakfast dish in Malaysia.



## 16 Malaysian Things to Buy as Souvenirs in Kuala Lumpur

"Malaysia, Truly Asia" is what you hear en route to Malaysia. Indeed, there's practically every bit of Asia to be found here, as the country's population is made up primarily of three groups: Malay, Chinese and Indians. Quite expectedly, the diversity of Malaysian handcrafts is reflective of this composition. This information is to help you find your way through numerous offerings tempting gift buyers in Kuala Lumpur.

### 1. Baju Kebaya

This traditional Malay attire for women is body hugging and can be worn for parties or formal functions, especially if made of high quality Songket or Batik fabrics. They come in various colors, light and dark, and different sizes. It is best try one on first before buying it, so as to ensure that it fits well. If need be, you can ask a tailor to alter it, so that it accentuates your curves to the maximum. Only some minor adjustment would be needed if you choose the right size. It is not necessary to buy the whole set of top (blouse) and bottom (long skirt). Buying a set may cost you around RM100 or US\$34, based on the quality and type of fabric. You can buy the top (blouse) only and wear it together with a long skirt or even pants of your choice. Depending on the quality, the top alone may cost from as little as RM50 or US\$17 to a few hundred RM.





## 2. Pewter Goods

Malaysia is famous worldwide for her Pewter goods, and you'll be tempted to select from a large variety of Pewter decorative goods on offer, including kitchenware and tepak sireh sets, all with their unique designs. Note: some items on sale in Kuala Lumpur are not made of pure Pewter and, therefore, are considerably cheaper. If your budget is limited, consider getting yourself a plain, small pure Pewter vase. It would cost around RM100 or US\$34 and serve you a good reminder of the trip to Kuala Lumpur. You could always put a single stem rose in it, or any other flower, to create a romantic ambiance. For something more elaborate, there is a pure Pewter tea caddy with a lovely design of gold colored horses, as an option. It costs around RM350 or US\$118.



## 3. Hand-Woven Crafts

For something uniquely Malaysian, there are hand-woven crafts, which are made of bamboo, rattan, mengkuang, coconut shells and pandan leaves. Bring back home a lovely bag, a cute basket or any other item as a remembrance of your visiting Malaysia. There is a cute mengkuang purse, which you can use to keep coins or any other small items. It costs only RM5 or US\$2. The coconut tree is Malaysia's national tree.



Nowadays, it is possible to purchase a purse made of coconut shells; a small one would cost you RM10 or US\$3.50, while a slightly larger one - RM15 or US\$5. If you prefer rattan, there are big purses costing around RM16 or US\$5.50, each of various colors for your pick. Buy one as a souvenir from Malaysia for any loved one back home or for your own self to remind you of Malaysia and her hand-woven crafts.

#### 4. Malaysian Dodol

Visiting Malaysia is not complete without trying Dodol, a local toffee-like sweet. The traditional Dodol is usually dark brown in color, but nowadays there are also other colors and flavors available, such as Pandan and Durian Dodol. Pandan refers to a kind of leave, renowned for its lovely smell. At times, Pandan leaves are crushed to give natural green color and peculiar flavor to food. You do not have to search all over the place for Pandan Dodol. Pak Lang Dodol offers you neatly packed Pandan Dodol of different weights. You can buy a large pack at around RM25 or US\$8.50 or a small one for RM15 or US\$5. Each pack, small or large, contains many small and individually packed triangle-shaped Pandan Dodols waiting to be consumed.



#### 5. Songket

Songket is a legacy from the state of Kelantan, resulted from trading between China and Malaysia, Malaysia and India during the 12th century and later. It represents gold and silk threads interwoven with threads of other material to create a unique fabric. Not surprisingly, this type of fabric is usually rather costly. You can buy a short length cloth for RM40 or US\$13 at Central Market in Koleksi Melayu. There are various lovely colors for your selection. The piece can be used as a hanging for one of the walls in a living or dining room. You may also use it as a tablecloth for a formal party. To keep some of the keepsakes from Malaysia and other places, there is a Songket covered jewelry box (only the top part is covered) for you, which is priced around RM90 or US\$30.





## 6. Pua Kumbu

Dyed threads are usually used to make this kind of cotton fabric. The fabrics usually have supernatural motifs, which are based on the artisan's surreal and real experiences. It might seem like a normal piece of cloth, which is commonly used as a blanket, but for the Orang Asli or Aboriginal Iban Tribe, this is something more. It is their sacred or ceremonial cloth, which they use for spiritual purpose rather than just practical. Pua translates as "blanket", while kumbu means "to wrap."



The price of Pua kumbu depends on various aspects, such as width and length of cloth, its quality and depicted motifs. The price can range from RM75 or US\$25 to a few hundred RM or US Dollars at Aseana Gallery. The latter is located at Suria KLCC, Kuala Lumpur, West Malaysia. Since Pua kumbu is from Sabah and Sarawak in East Malaysia, it is much cheaper in that part of the country.

## 7. Malaysian Batik

This type of silk or cotton fabric is usually made by using the wax and dye method. Malaysia offers a large variety of colors and designs, which are usually of flower, butterfly or bird motifs. Other than yards of fabrics, there are Batik clothes, decorative pieces and accessories, featuring garments for every choice. Get a Batik Silk Scarf, measuring 36x36cm, to wear along with your blouse at work or any other formal function. It might only cost you RM35, circa US\$12. If you do not like the idea of wearing a scarf, then there is a lovely Batik Long Skirt costing RM35. Another option is a Fine Batik Sarong, measuring 118x180cm, costing only RM20, around US\$7.



## 8. Kerongsang

Malay women normally wear a set of Kerongsang, which functions like a brooch, together with their Baju Kebaya or other clothing. Malay women usually use headscarf or tudung with their Baju Kebaya or other traditional clothing. A small Kerongsang is used to hold the tudung securely together. Another, larger-sized Kerongsang might be used to hold the top portion of the Malay Baju Kebaya or other traditional Malay clothing. The largest piece is usually used as a brooch. It is possible for you to purchase two pieces, one very small and a larger one, which can be used as a brooch, for RM15 or US\$5. Overall, prices range from RM15 to RM100.



## 9. Labu Sayong

This gourd-shaped clay jar is usually black in color. Water, that is kept inside it, remains cool in spite of the hot weather. The water from Labu Sayong is believed to have curing properties, which might be good for one's health. The whole of Malaysia, East and West, comprises 13 states and three Federal Territories. Kuala Lumpur is located in Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. Labu Sayong originates from the state of Perak. Until today, there are many manufactures in Perak producing Labu Sayong of various designs and sizes. From Perak they are distributed for sale to other parts of the country. You can purchase a lovely looking Labu Sayong with ornate design for as little as RM5 or US\$2. A larger one, without any fancy design, can go for RM20 or US\$7. Generally, the prices range from RM5 to RM50 apiece.





### 10. Nyonya Beaded Slippers

Nyonya beaded slippers, individually-sewn slippers with tiny beads of flower, bird or butterfly motifs, could be excellent reminders of visiting Malaysia. Baba and Nyonya refer to the descendants of Malays and Chinese who intermarried in the state of Malacca. Due to popular trading between Malaysia (Malaya, as it was known back then) and China, interracial marriages between the locals and incomers from China were rather commonplace. As a result, a group called Baba and Nyonya emerged in the region, with their own cultural and food traditions. Nyonya refers to the females of this group. It is possible for you to buy a pair of traditional Nyonya closed-toe beaded slippers for around RM80 or US\$27 at Kuala Lumpur Craft Complex. The modern version is the peep-toe type. The price of these slippers depends on various aspects, such as material used, beads and size, and ranges from RM80 to a few hundred.



### 11. Sabah Pearls

Found off the shores of Sabah, Malaysia, these natural pearls are usually of cream, pink, white or bluish-grey hues. Buying bracelets, rings, necklaces and earrings of Sabah pearls in Malaysia is usually cheaper than elsewhere outside the country. Sabah, the state located in the Eastern part of Malaysia, is famous worldwide for its lovely clear waters and marine life. It is possible to purchase high quality



Sabah Pearls here at a bargain price. The value of such pearls varies depending on several factors, such as size of each individual pearl, the number of strings, quality of pearls and their color. A pearl ring can go from as low as RM10 or US\$3.50 up to a few hundred RM.

## 12. Congkak

Malaysian population contains three major groups: Malay, Chinese and Indians. The traditional Malay board game is called Congkak. This game is usually played indoors by two players. Though it may seem simple enough, it does require certain tactical and mental calculation skills to win it. Usually, the game board features two rows of 6 to 10 holes (pits or "houses") with a large pit (hole or "house") at each end. Normally, pebbles, marbles or wood seeds are used to play it.



You can buy a large Congkak set with marbles for around RM45 or US\$15 at Ka50, Central Market. If you want something smaller, there is Congkak with wood seeds at G23, Central Market. This type of Congkak can be folded in two, which makes it more compact and easier to carry around. A simple set of instructions is attached. The price is around RM60 or US\$20.

## 13. Bamboo Handicrafts

Take your pick from a large variety of small bamboo boxes and containers, handcrafted and painted by local Malaysian tribes. Unlike some years ago, today, it is quite possible to obtain rather colorful bamboo items. A lovely multicolored pencil case, made of bamboo, would set you back just RM16 or US\$5.50 at Asli Kraft, Central Market. It is durable enough to last a few years, and will make a wonderful gift from Malaysia for anyone back home. Another possible choice of gift is a stationery holder for pens, stapler, pencils, ruler and a pair of scissors. You can buy a fairly large such holder for as little as RM16 or US\$5.50. The range of prices on bamboo items runs from RM16 to RM60.





#### 14. Durian Dodol, Sweets or Candies

Visiting Malaysia would not be complete without eating Durian, Malaysia's king of fruits. If the smell of fresh Durians puts you off, perhaps you should try Durian Dodol, sweets, cake or candies. There is a huge variety of them at Pak Lang Dodol, Central Market. Buy a few small, cylindrical packs of delicious Durian Cake, or Lempok Durian, as they call it in Malaysia, for as little as RM8 (circa US\$3) per pack, and you will have something good in hand to bring back home to your loved ones. The cake is made of flour, Durian fruit, sugar and other ingredients.



If you don't mind sticky food, then go for Durian Dodol, which is sticky both in hand and on your teeth. It might take you a bit of an effort to chew it all up, but still well worth the try, particularly noting that making quality Dodol demands substantial amount of time and energy to stir up all the necessary ingredients over low heat. You can buy a large pack of Dodols for RM25 or US\$8.50, containing a number of small, cute Durian Dodols inside, each individually packed in triangular casings.

#### 15. Cucuk Sanggul

Cucuk Sanggul is a traditional Malay hairpin made of gold, silver or some other material. It is usually long and thin, with decorative end. The latter might feature some mythological creature or any other form of traditional Malay art. Such hairpin was previously used for securing a Malay woman's bun, and was held at the back of her head during a traditional wedding ceremony. The practice is largely in use even today, however, modern-day Cucuk Sanggul hairpins are not necessarily made of gold or silver, nor elaborately adorned. You can buy a modern type hairpin for RM130 or US\$44. A traditional type may cost from RM200 to RM300 apiece, especially if categorized as antique.



## 16. Wau Kite

Wau is a traditional Malaysian kite, originated in the state of Kelantan of the Malaysian Peninsular. Since the old days, Malay men have been actively involved in Wau flying competitions in Kelantan and Terengganu, featuring various kinds of Wau, including Wau Bulan ("Moon Kite"), Wau Burung ("Bird Kite") and others. Wau Bulan, the most popular type, is one of the symbols used by the national airline carrier, MAS or Malaysian Airlines.



The Wau kite is quite large in size and it won't be possible for you to carry one on board en route back home. Understanding this, shops like Ka50 at Central Market offer miniature Wau's of different colors from RM20 or US\$7 to RM30 or US\$10 apiece. Certain kites may go for up to a few hundred RM.

## 20 Great Reasons to Visit Malaysia

(Based on Article by CARLY WILLIAMS PUBLISHED AUG 19, 2018)

Malaysia has so much to offer: amazing cuisine, stunning national parks, picturesque beaches, world-renowned aquatic life, rich history, and a vibrant culture. This country should be a top priority on your next globetrotting adventure. So, what are you waiting for?





## 20 The Wonderful Locals

The people in Malaysia are some of the friendliest you'll ever come across. Sure, you will get some that will be difficult and try to capitalize off you being a tourist, but you're always going to find that with any country you visit.

You should never feel unsafe or threatened travelling in Malaysia, as all the locals were constantly waving hello. They are always willing to give suggestions, lend a helping hand, or simply flash a friendly smile. Even with a language barrier, they are very warm individuals.



## 19 The Variety Of Cuisine

Malaysia offers some of the best food selections to be had in Asia, simply because they give so much variety. The cuisine has influence from India, Malaysia, China, Japan, and there is an abundance of fresh food markets in every place you visit, so you won't be eating the same thing all of the time.

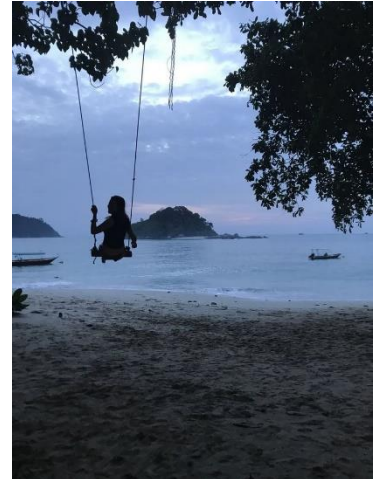
Specifically, if your taste buds are screaming 'India!', you're in luck, with a plethora of dishes and restaurants to suit, especially if you enjoy curry. Malaysian cuisine should obviously be something you should strive to eat everywhere you go in the country, from famous noodle and rice dishes, delicious traditional fruits, and decadent desserts.



### **18 The Lack Of Crowds**

Since Malaysia is not as popular as more mainstream destinations such as Thailand and Bali (which can get congested with tourists), you will find that there are generally fewer crowds of people. Even the capital city of Kuala Lumpur isn't crazy busy or overwhelming when you first arrive. There are a ton of secluded beaches to explore and national parks stretching for miles where you aren't going to bump into a million people.

It's a great intro city if you are thinking of travelling Asia and you are feeling a bit nervous or don't know what to expect.



### **17 The Unique Landscapes**

The amount of times you'll be wowed by the amazing landscapes of Malaysia will be countless. There are times when you feel like you are in the middle of a rainforest, surrounded by rolling hills, or absolutely stunned by amazing white sandy beaches surrounded by lush greenery.

The country is also generally extremely mountainous, with many people's expectation being that it was quite flat. This makes for amazing drives through the country that will have you staring out the window for hours on end, making those long trips very bearable.





## 16 It's Easy To Get Around

It's quite easy to get around Malaysia, even if you find yourself a little directionally challenged. The bus system is very organized and it's easy to book a bus at a moment's notice if you decide you want to go somewhere new.

The road infrastructure is also great compared to other countries in the area. There are also scooter and motorcycle rentals pretty much everywhere you go, and Malaysia is the perfect place to learn if you are new to it.

In most areas, the roads signs and dividers are clearly marked and there aren't too many places where you will find roads in too rough of a condition.



## 15 The Insanely Nice Beaches

Malaysia has some of the most spectacular white sandy beaches and crystal clear, turquoise waters. Some of the more touristy beaches can be over-crowded and dirty, but you just have to go off the beaten path.

The beaches on the islands, such as Tioman Island and Perhentian Island, are also significantly nicer than the ones on the mainland.



## 14 The Stunning National Parks

Malaysia is full of picturesque national parks with endless hikes (if you can handle the humid heat). The greenery in the country is so unique and vibrant, with stunning mossy forests and vegetation that you cannot witness anywhere else.

Bako National Park in Borneo is an amazing protected coastal area with pristine beaches and unusual rock formations. Kinabalu Park is a large forested nature preserve that is home to Borneo's highest mountain, which is worth doing for avid trekkers.



**Malaysia has nearly 100 parks and reserves to get that nature fix, so you will never run out of places to explore.**



### 13 The Proximity To Other Countries

The best part of travelling within Malaysia is that it's the perfect segue to travel the rest of the Southeast Asian countries like Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Kuala Lumpur is just a short bus ride away from the amazing city of Singapore, where you can live lavishly for a few days. Also, since it's on the border of Thailand it's the perfect transition to continue your travels there (you can actually see Thailand in the distance from the Malaysian island of Langkawi).



### 12 The Scuba Diving Is World-Renowned

Malaysia is known for having world-renowned aquatic life, which makes it one of the best places in the world to scuba dive. Specifically, the Perhentian Islands are one of the best (and also one of the cheapest) places in the world to get your scuba diving PADI certification, with the entire island consisting of solely dive shops. The water is calm and crystal clear, and the conditions are pretty much perfect for a beginner.



Seeing sharks and turtles are not uncommon, along with hundreds of types of fish and coral species. If you aren't keen to scuba, you can still see a ton of underwater life by grabbing a snorkel and exploring the depths of the ocean.

## 11 The Affordable Prices

Being a country in Southeast Asia obviously means you aren't going to break the bank on your travels. Despite travel from one place to the other being a little pricey (buses, flights, etc.), you will find the prices are insanely cheap to eat, drink, and sleep. **You can grab a meal for only a few bucks, a cold bev for a dollar or two, and a place to sleep for less than \$10 a night.**



## 10 The Capital City Of Kuala Lumpur

As far as capital cities go, Kuala Lumpur is up there as one of the favorites. While it can be touristy (like any major city), it is also rich in amazing architecture, great food, a ton of shopping outlets, and beautiful parks and outdoor spaces.

The Petronas Towers are a treat for the eyes in both the daytime and night, and the view from the top gives a spectacular 360-degree view of the city.

The KLCC Park, located right in the middle of the city center, is the perfect place to relax and recharge during a day in the city. There is also a canopy eco-park in the city where you feel as though you in the middle of the jungle, with the views of the city still present.



## 9 The Variety Of Accommodation

From city-view hotels with rooftop infinity pools, beachside bungalows, straw huts in the middle of the mountain ranges, and tent campsites on the beach, the accommodation options in Malaysia are out of this world.

There are a ton of luxury options that you can get for a non-luxury price, or alternatively, a great deal of cheap options for the budget-conscious traveler.

**You can get a dorm room for less than \$10/night, a nice private room for \$20-30/night, and a luxury hotel room for less than \$100/night.**



## 8 The Vast Wildlife

There are so many amazing species of wildlife throughout Malaysia. The country has invested a lot of money into conservation efforts, with wildlife being one of the key reasons why people venture to Malaysia every year.

Particularly in the Borneo area, you can get up close in person with native orangutans, lizards, monkeys, and wild deer. The orangutan reserve is a



must see when you visit Borneo, where they focus on protecting the species and at times saving them and rehabilitating them back into wildlife. There are also a ton of different species of monkeys, but be careful as they are sneaky animals and will outsmart you!



## 7 The Vibrant Shopping

Malaysia is retail heaven for the adventurous shopper. Whether you are hitting a street market or the high-end shops in Kuala Lumpur, you'll find it hard to not buy a thing or two.

The Kuala Lumpur Petronas Towers, the city's tallest landmark, is home to a shopping center with every big label retail name in the game.

Alternatively, If you are on a budget, you can head to Chinatown's night market to snag some bargains.

In more 'off the beaten track' areas, you will find authentic and homemade clothing items and artifacts that will probably beat some of the cheap tourist knockoffs you will find in more populated areas.



## 6 The Fascinating History

Being the arrival spot of Western colonial powers in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, there is historical influence everywhere you go. The country has a bunch of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, especially in George Town, which is home to an abundance of beautiful architecture, temples, and churches.



If you are really keen to learn about the history of the country, Kuala Lumpur is the place to do that, which is home to Independence Square, where the flag of Malaysia was first raised. However, everywhere you go in Malaysia you will have the opportunity to learn the history of the area if you take the time to ask and explore!

## 5 The Popping Art Scene

If you enjoy a bit of art, you have to make your way to Penang while in Malaysia. In 2012, the government hired a world-renowned London artist to breathe some new light into the city in the form of street art. In an effort to showcase the rich history of the city, the artist came up with some pretty wicked art displays. And this ain't your typical street graffiti.



You can easily spend a full day exploring the streets of Georgetown, discovering all of the street art on offer. There are also a ton of art museums in the area, as you will find in pretty much any major area you go to in Malaysia.

## 4 The Vibrant Culture

Similar to the variety of food, Malaysia is known as one of Asia's greatest cultural mash-ups when it comes to the rich culture. With influence and people from Malaysia itself, as well as China and India, it's a melting pot of traditions and styles.



Each culture exists harmoniously, and celebrates their own authentic traditions and beliefs. There is always something to celebrate, as the amount of celebrations from each culture give such a variety that it seems the country doesn't have much 'down time'.



### 3 The Exciting Nightlife

If you are keen on hitting the town, the Kuala Lumpur nightlife provides a vibrant and lively atmosphere with countless bars, pubs, and rooftop patios with stunning views of the city.

From laidback cocktail bars to more happening nightclubs, there is a ton of variety depending on what you are looking for on a night out.

Alternatively, the islands provide a more chilled, beachside nightlife, where you can sip on a cold beverage while watching the sunset and waves crashing onto the beach.

No matter what you are looking for, you will definitely find a hotspot in every town that you visit that won't break the bank.



### 2 The Cultural Festivals

Malaysia is a country of celebration, with so many festivals happening all year round that you are bound to be in the country for at least one of them. Chinese New Year, held in February, is the largest Chinese festival in Malaysia with vibrant costumes and decorations, exciting parades, and the famous Lantern Festival.

Another popular festival is

Rainforest World Music Festival in Borneo, which is a three-day event of traditional live music, dance, and craft workshops. This festival, held in July, attracts quite a few foreign tourists due to the exciting performances that take place.





## **1 The Stunning Mosques**

Because of the historic variety of migration to the country, Malaysia is home to a diverse collection of mosques. The mosques are unfortunately overlooked by a lot of tourists visiting the country, whereas religious tourists are often taken aback by the stunning architecture of the buildings.

In most cases, tourists are welcomed to explore the buildings and prayer rooms with the proper attire. It's fascinating to witness the mix of people attending the daily call to prayer, ranging from those in traditional garments to the latest modern fashion threads. While you are visiting, make sure to take the time to visit one of these traditional spaces and pay your respects.



## **So, who's ready to go to Malaysia?**

- Could be the greatest experience in your lifetime.
- Lots of fun to do and experience.
- Lots to new things to learn.
- Make new "life-long" friends from around the world.

**Make your plans to attend the Associated County Women (ACWW) World Triennial held in Malaysia during 2023.**

**(See: [www.acww.org.uk](http://www.acww.org.uk))**

## **Questions and Comments**