



Borneo



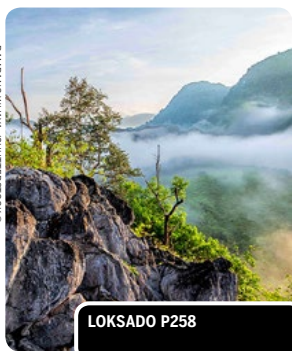
Paul Harding,
Brett Atkinson, Anna Kaminski

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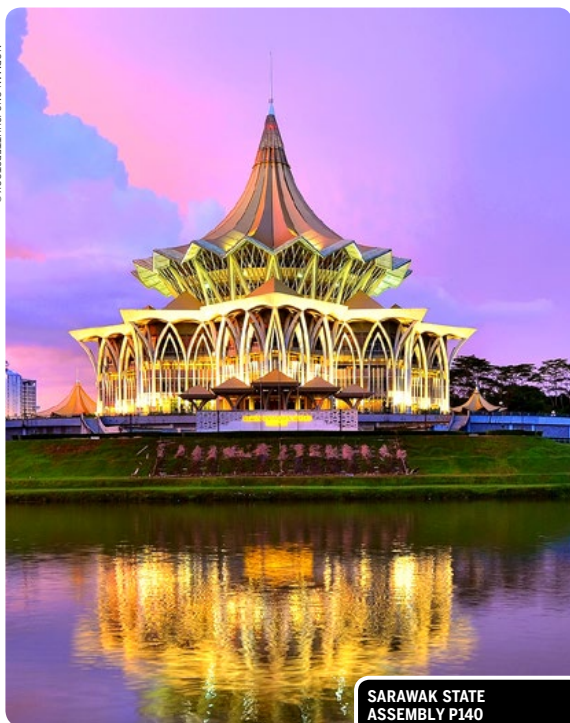
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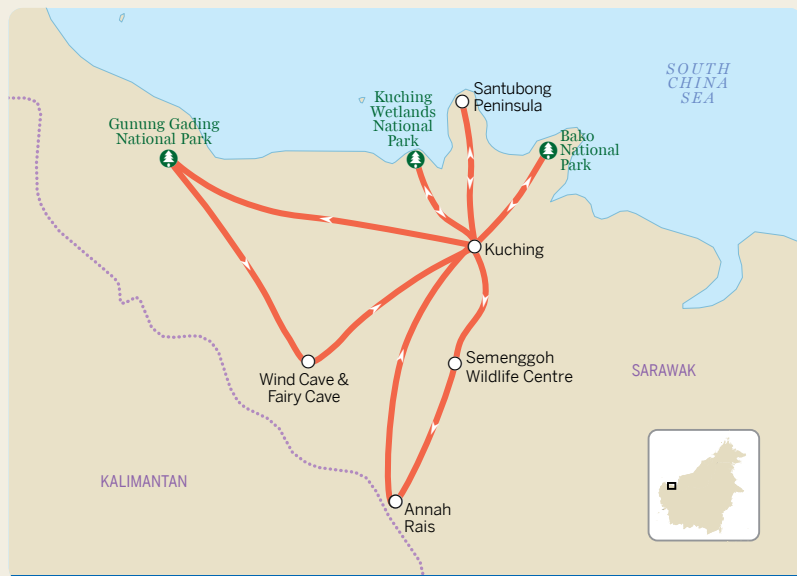
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Plan Your Trip

Itineraries



Kuching Excursions

Borneo's most sophisticated city is surrounded by first-rate nature sites that can easily keep you occupied for a week or more. A renewed focus on the heritage of the Brooke family, Sarawak's White Rajahs from 1841 to 1946, is showcased in Kuching's interesting galleries and museums.

Spend your first day in **Kuching**, tuning into the vibe of the city's kaleidoscopic mix of cultures and cuisines. After exploring the narrow streets of Old Chinatown, ride a tiny passenger ferry or walk across the

city's spectacular Darul Hana pedestrian bridge to the English Renaissance-style Fort Margherita. Inside the fort the excellent Brooke Gallery presents the thrilling story of the Brooke dynasty, while back across the river, the Raneé Museum presents the fascinating life of Margaret, Lady Brooke and Raneé of Sarawak.

End the day with a sunset stroll along Kuching's Waterfront Promenade, stopping to snack at the various food stalls along the route. If a giant rafflesia flower happens to be in bloom in **Gunung Gading National Park**, drop everything and rush over before it starts to spoil. On the way





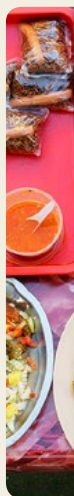
Darul Hana bridge (p131), designed by Ng Chun Chien and Kamal Fozdar, and Indian Mosque (p138), Kuching, Sarawak

back explore the **Wind Cave** and **Fairy Cave**, near the provincial town of Bau. Back in Kuching experience the flavours of Sarawak's indigenous communities at Lepau restaurant, before plugging into the city's after-dark energy in the bars around Jalan Wayang.

Be sure to also allow half a day to spot orangutans at **Semenggoh Wildlife Centre**, then drive further inland to the longhouse community of **Annah Rais**, where you can stay overnight before returning to Kuching. From here take a bus then a boat to **Bako National Park**, keeping an eye out for proboscis monkeys,

cheeky macaques and pitcher plants. For the best opportunity to experience Bako, stay at least a night at the national park's simple but comfortable accommodation and spend a day or two hiking around the peninsula. Back in Kuching balance the ledger between relaxation and exercise by enjoying more of the city's fine eateries and buzzing nightlife.

On your final day relax on the beach or enjoy fresh seafood around the **Santubong Peninsula**, then spend the sunset hour on a cruise around **Kuching Wetlands National Park**, keeping alert for fireflies and crocs.



3
WEEKS

Sabah Loop

Strolling city streets, climbing tall peaks, relaxing on beaches, hiking through rainforest and diving deep into the ocean – most highlights can be covered in a three-week trip.

Arrive in **Kota Kinabalu** (KK) and spend a couple of days exploring. Visit the Sabah Museum to get a taste of Borneo's indigenous cultures, sample the city's diverse dining scene at the A-Square Night Market and elsewhere and spend a day island hopping and possibly diving in **Tunku Abdul Rahman National Park**.

Next, head to the **Tip of Borneo** for a couple of days of relaxing on beaches and visiting friendly Rungus villages, with an extra day or two if you want to visit remote **Pulau Banggi** and the caves and beaches of adjoining islands. If you have your own wheels and are set to climb **Mt Kinabalu**, you can drive to Mt Kinabalu National Park via a new road from **Kota Marudu**.

Allow two or three days for the mountain – there's the climb itself, and the day of rest you'll need afterwards, which you can spend around **Poring Hot Springs**.

Give yourself three days at **Deramakot Forest Reserve** for some excellent wildlife-spotting opportunities before heading to **Sandakan** for a day's exploration of the city's historical sights and to sample its great seafood. Next, spend a day watching orangutans and sun bears at **Sepilok** before heading to the **Sungai Kinabatangan** for two days of river cruises and more glimpses of Borneo's fabled wildlife.

Head south to **Semporna** for some of Borneo's best diving in the **Semporna Archipelago**, then chow down on Sabah's best seafood in **Tawau**. Finally spend a couple of days looking for pygmy elephants and other wildlife on the **Softwoods Plantation** and in **Tawau Hills Park**. If not a diver, skip Semporna and spend four to five days exploring Borneo's 'Lost World' in the **Maliau Basin Conservation Area** before returning to KK.

If you're more into indigenous culture than nature, an alternative to the Maliau Basin is a three- to four-day stay at **Orou Sapulot**, immersing yourself in Murut culture, swimming in waterfalls and trekking in the jungle.



Top: Sabah Museum (p52), Kota Kinabalu, Sabah
Bottom: Hawker stall (p63), Kota Kinabalu, Sabah

YUSMANIUSOF/SHUTTERSTOCK ©

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3
WEEKS

Kuching to Brunei

PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES

This trip across Sarawak and Brunei by road, river and air passes through remote rainforests and modern urban centres.

Fly into **Kuching** and spend a few days exploring this multicultural city, delving into its cuisine scene for breakfast (Sarawak laksa), lunch and dinner. Take day trips to nearby national parks in search of orangutans, proboscis monkeys and exotic flora. Then hop on the express ferry to the river port of **Sibu** – don't miss the Foochow specialities on offer in the vast Central Market and the river city's excellent night market.

Sibu serves as the gateway to the mighty Batang Rejang (Rejang River). Board an early morning express boat and head upriver to **Kapit**, a bustling trading centre founded in the days of the White Rajahs. If the river level is high enough, continue on to back-of-beyond **Belaga**, jumping-off point for hikes to a number of **Orang Ulu longhouses**.

A jarring 4WD ride will get you down to the coastal city of **Bintulu**, Borneo's natural-gas capital. Avoid the city centre and head straight to the beaches, rainforest trails and bungalows of **Similajau National Park**.

Hop on a bus heading northeast to Batu Niah Junction, situated just a few kilometres from the vast caves, chirping bat colonies and pre-historic archaeological sites of **Niah National Park**. Next stop is the shiny petroleum city of **Miri**, home to some excellent dining options. Chilling here amid mod cons is a great way to spend a day or two before flying into Borneo's interior for a few days – prepare to be wowed by the epic caves and pinnacles of **Gunung Mulu National Park** and the indigenous hospitality in the gorgeously green **Kelabit Highlands**.

After flying back to Miri take a bus to **Bandar Seri Begawan**, the surprisingly laid-back capital of the tiny, oil-rich sultanate of Brunei. Several museums showcase Bruneian culture, and international culinary creations can be enjoyed at BSB's numerous excellent restaurants and hawker centres. End your Bornean odyssey by taking a speedboat, a car and finally a longboat to the pristine jungle of **Ulu Temburong National Park**.

ANNA TUDJAK/SHUTTERSTOCK ©



THANAC SHUTTERSTOCK ©



Top: Rice field, Kelabit Highlands (p197), Sarawak
Bottom: Sarawak laksa (p300)





4
WEEKS

Around Kalimantan

Kalimantan is big and cloaked in jungle, with many places accessible only by boat. With a bit of planning, however, it's possible to pack a great deal into a four-week journey.

Start at **Balikpapan** before flying to **Berau**. From there explore the nearby **Derawan Archipelago**, home to some world-class diving. Spend the night swapping stories with travellers on **Pulau Derawan**, or head to the little-touristed outer islands such as **Pulau Maratua** or the resort islands of Nabucco and Nunukan.

Once back in Berau, head south via karst mountains and the village of **Merabu** to **Kutai National Park**, where chances of spotting a wild orangutan are high. Continue on to riverside **Samarinda**, gateway to the Sungai Mahakam (Mahakam River) and home to an eye-popping mosque. Head upriver by *kapal biasa* (public boat) via **Tenggarong**, with its resplendent *keraton* (palace), to **Muara Muntai** at the centre of the lake country, where you can hire a gaily coloured *ces* (longtail canoe) for an unforgettable backwater journey across Lake Jempang to **Mancong**. Continue up or down river – the *kapal biasa* goes as far as Long Bagun – before returning to Balikpapan.

Take a bus south to the pleasant market village of **Kandungan**, from where you can visit the water buffalo herders of Negara. Or hop on a pickup truck bound for **Loksado**, a quiet hamlet in the foothills of the Meratus Mountains, where you can equally enjoy hiking, bamboo rafting or simply relaxing. Continue on to **Banjarmasin** and visit the floating market in the early hours before travelling to Palangka Raya and the peat swamps of **Sebangau National Park**. Next stop is **Pangkalan Bun** or **Kumai**, the bases for visiting **Tanjung Puting National Park**, where you can cruise the Sungai Sekonyer in search of wildlife and watch orangutans feed at one of Indonesia's most popular ape-spotting destinations.

With your final week, fly north via **Pontianak** to **Putussibau** to visit Kalimantan's oldest longhouses and least-explored forests in the wild Kapuas Hulu, before capping off your tour by floating thorough the stunning seasonal wetlands of **Danau Sentarum National Park**.



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Top: Balikpapan (p260), Kalimantan

Bottom: Floating market, Banjarmasin (p254), Kalimantan

Behind the Scenes

SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK

We love to hear from travellers – your comments keep us on our toes and help make our books better. Our well-travelled team reads every word on what you loved or loathed about this book. Although we cannot reply individually to postal submissions, we always guarantee that your feedback goes straight to the appropriate authors, in time for the next edition. Each person who sends us information is thanked in the next edition – the most useful submissions are rewarded with a selection of digital PDF chapters.

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THIS BOOK

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Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping
- Hut/Shelter

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Subway station
- Taxi
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Dublin, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

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