

# Borneo: Sabah & Sarawak exploratory tour (12 days)



Departs anytime (2018 -19)



**Please note: This itinerary can be modified in any way to best suit your school's particular aims, learning objectives and budget.**

**Please contact us detailing any changes you'd like to make.**

Asia's largest island, (and the world's third-largest) is a treasure trove of marine biodiversity, jungles pulsing with a menagerie unique creatures and home to tribes who actively headhunted until 1956!

Commonly referred to as *Borneo*, this island features incredible jungle expanses providing a myriad opportunity for those wanting to explore the world's largest accessible caves, learn of the country's rich indigenous cultures and get up close and personal with the region's most famous inhabitant, the orangutan. Borneo was the site of some of the most decisive battles and tumultuous events of World War II, making it highly interesting for students of History as conflict.

This very active trip will include white water rafting, hiking, and fun and safe snorkelling activity as well as an incredible excursion to Mulu National Park to experience the grandeur of some of the world's largest caves, subterranean rivers and Jurassic era jungle.

Whilst the trip is designed to be educational and service-learning nature, it is moreover intended to be highly enjoyable providing students with a very memorable introduction to this fragile and rapidly changing corner of Asia. *NB: This trip is designed for active students and staff who maintain a good level of fitness. Anyone of a good standard of fitness should be able to participate in all the activities.*



**David Eales**  
Asia Manager

## Day 1

### Arrive Sandakan



It's a jungle out there! Prepare for a journey into a corner of Asia unlike another. As we touch down in the remote town of Sandakan today, we will be greeted by our tour leader in the remote town of Sandakan in Sabah State and escort us to our centrally located hotel. Following this, our tour leader will run through the itinerary and answer any questions we may have before we wander down to Sandakan's bustling waterfront to enjoy the vibrancy of this friendly city and our first taste of Malaysian cuisine. There will be a short time after dinner for an escorted tour of the town before returning to our hotel. (dinner)

## Day 2

### Sandakan Memorial Park, Sepilok Orangutan Sanctuary, Local Village



After breakfast, we will visit the Sandakan War Memorial, site of the single worst atrocity suffered by allied servicemen during the World War II. When many thousands of British, Dutch and allied prisoners of war (POWs) perished during the infamous Sandakan Death March across Borneo. Following this, we will journey to the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre where young orangutans are coached to enable them to return to their natural habitat.

From here we will travel deeper in Sabah's jungle interior to a small Malay village where we will spend the coming days.

This region is home to what is widely acknowledged as home to the largest concentrations of wildlife species to be found anywhere in the world. Many rare and endangered animals are found here, such as the fascinating proboscis monkey, herds of Borneo's Pygmy elephant, the crocodile, the extremely rare Sumatran rhino and astounding bird life which we will enjoy on our afternoon river cruise. Later this afternoon we will enjoy a wildlife observation cruise to see more of the Island's famous animal species including the Langurs, Macaques, hornbills and a host of other wildlife. The area of Borneo is also home to one of the world's best-preserved primeval rainforests, long since vanished in other parts of Asia. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

## Day 3

### Service-learning activity (village stay)



**Option 1:** This morning we will board boats to travel up river where we will begin a short but vigorous jungle trek to learn of the various forest types and ethnobotany before later undertaking our community service's agricultural activity. This activity is intended to reforest an area of the hinterland surrounding the village. It is important to raise our awareness of the challenges facing this fragile habitat, which is under pressure from increasing population and government policies favouring the development of palm oil plantations.

**Option 2:** Whilst in the village we will spend one afternoon teaching English to some of the local children. NB: Students will require some Basic English teaching training to make this a beneficial program and to learn to properly elicit language and fostered an effective teaching outcome. Please contact us for further information. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

## Day 4

### Ranau (Nabutan) - Death March Walk

Today we will journey to the district of Nabutan to walk part of the Death March route along a jungle track. This section of the track was used by Japanese forces during the final months of World War II to march thousands of Malay, Thai, British, Dutch, Australian and other allied prisoners of war across Sabah. Historic records and subsequent interviews are taken from survivors as well as Japanese soldiers. They reflect that it was not the intention of the Japanese that any of the POWs survive the march, expecting most would perish en route as

indeed they did. After our leisurely paced hike of approximately four hours, we will visit the small town of Ranau and a memorial to the Australian and allied soldiers who died during this turbulent period in Malaysian history. Tonight, we will stay in a jungle lodge style accommodation.

*Please note: For schools seeking a more challenging hike this activity can be conducted over 2 days. (breakfast, dinner)*

### Day 5

#### Ranau (Jungle Adventure Centre)



This morning we will visit Mt Kinabalu National Park affording great views of Southeast Asia's tallest mountain, Mt. Kinabalu. Following this, we will continue our journey to a jungle adventure encampment.

We will continue our trip from here to our jungle camp, where we will spend the night. There will be ample opportunity to try out the camp's rope courses as well as zip lining, abseiling and outdoor rock climbing on the centre's training platform. After lunch, we will depart the training area to embark on a fun trek through the primeval Borneo jungle where we will spend the night. We will be required to cook this food ourselves in the evening as well as erect our own

jungle style hammocks, which we will sleep in tonight. All activities are supervised by our expert jungle guides and tour guides. (breakfast, dinner)

*NB: The shower, toilets and other facilities are all good quality. (NB: Students will buy their own lunch en route this day)*

### Day 6

#### Kota Kinabalu (rafting activity)



For a safe and fun adrenaline rush, there is nothing quite like rafting. We will transfer to our starting rafting point where we will undergo a comprehensive safety briefing before embarking on our trip down the grade 2 & 3 rapids of the Kiulu River, accompanied by our expert river guides. All students are required to wear life jackets/helmets. After about 2 hours on the river, we will arrive at the picnic area where lunch will be served and where we can clean up and get changed.

This afternoon we will travel about two hours to Borneo's premier city Kota Kinabalu. Urban allure meets rural charm as we set off to discover Sabah,

starting with a scenic drive through its capital, Kota Kinabalu (KK). The city, formerly known as "Singgahmata" or "the place where the eye lingers", rose from the destruction of World War II to become a vibrant and modern city that still retains its traditional charms. Time permitting, we will have a chance to see some of KK's places of interests including its state mosque, a Chinese temple and the Sabah Museum to learn of the region's indigenous people. (breakfast, lunch, dinner)

### Day 7

#### Kota Kinabalu, (alternative activity - snorkelling)



Borneo has some of the world's most wildlife-rich equatorial rainforests, incredible landscapes (above and below the waves) and rich indigenous culture. This morning we will set out for a guided snorkelling trip in the safe waters of Kota Kinabalu to learn of Southeast Asia's rich marine diversity in the Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine National Park.

Few destinations on earth offer the snorkelling opportunities that can be found in the waters surrounding Malaysia. With a variety of soft corals, tropical fish and several species of turtles, Malaysian Borneo (and neighbouring Indonesia) is home to some of the richest marine life to be found on our the planet.

Our program is specifically designed for students and intended to educate about the region's fragile and unique marine life.

We will return to Kota Kinabalu this afternoon to freshen up before heading out later to explore a bustling hawker market, where we will barter for our evening meal. (breakfast, lunch) (NB: Students will buy their own dinner this evening).

## Day 8

### Kota Kinabalu 🗺️ Mulu National Park



Mulu National Park is Borneo's most important and spectacular national park. It features fast flowing rivers and clear jungle streams, hidden underneath the forested slopes of the largest limestone cave system in the world.

This cave system, a breathtaking natural wonder, contains some record-breaking caves. It is not surprising to see why Mulu is world famous, as it holds the world's largest cave passage (Deer Cave), largest natural chamber (Sarawak Chamber), and the longest cave in Southeast Asia (Clearwater Cave). Over two hundred kilometres of cave passages have been surveyed, but this is thought to represent just 30-40% of the actual total.

Millions of years of heavy rain and the action of rivers and running water carved out the vast subterranean system that exists today.

We will depart early this morning boarding a short flight to Mulu National Park in Sarawak State – gateway to some of the world's biggest caves and caverns to have been discovered. With its deeply incised canyons, wild rivers, rainforest-covered mountains, spectacular limestone pinnacles, cave passages and decorations, Mulu has outstanding scenic values.

On arrival, we'll enjoy a quick local lunch before setting off to visit the Lang Cave. We will trek deeper into the Borneo jungle to visit an ancient cave, housing impressive stalactites and stalagmites. From here we will journey to the Deer Cave, which has the world's largest cave entrance. As dusk approaches, we will witness an exodus of millions of bats setting out for a night feeding before continuing a short distance to our rustic jungle.

accommodation. (breakfast, lunch) **FLIGHT: Kota Kinabalu - Mulu (morning)**

## Day 9

### Mulu Caves National Park



Zippering along a jungle river in a longboat is a terrific way to start the day! This morning, we will journey upriver to visit the Wind Caves and Clearwater Cave. The Wind Cave, named for the cool breezes blowing through, has several chambers; this includes the cathedral-like King's Chamber, filled with dreamlike forests of stalagmites and columns. Subsequently, we will enjoy a 200-step climb up to Clearwater Cave and its adjacent subterranean river where we will enjoy a picnic lunch and a dip in the natural pool outside the cave.

This stunning natural setting will be of interest to students of biology, owing to its excellent habitat rich in species and high in endemism. In the afternoon, we will visit a village belonging to the Dayak minority tribe, whose headhunting prowess and skills with blowpipes have main the legendary throughout the region. (breakfast, lunch)

## Day 10

### Depart Mulu 🗺️ Home

After a final morning spent in this pristine wilderness, we will again board a short flight to the coastal town of Miri, home to Malaysia's most important oil production facilities. This afternoon we will have ample time to explore this friendly town, visit its unique oil museum and possibly enjoy a swim before our afternoon flight to Kuala Lumpur on the Malaysian mainland from where we will join our connecting flight back home. Our tour leader will escort us to the airport and wave us farewell as we board the flight. (breakfast) **Flight details to be advised**

## Summary

### Grading

**Moderate - Challenging;** Students and staff will be required to be in a reasonable state of fitness to participate in the activities described on this trip. Students and staff will need to be able to walk long distances and will be expected to carry their own luggage but only for short distances.

### Accommodation

Student accommodation is on a twin/triple share basis. Teacher accommodation is on a single room basis. Hotels hold a 3-star equivalent rating.

### Transport

Modern air-conditioned bus, longboat, speedboat, plane.

### Group Size

Minimum group size 20 students & 2 staff members travelling *free of charge*.

▲ [Smaller group sizes can be quoted upon application](#)

### Your Tour Leader

Your tour leader is probably the person who most influences the success of your trip. Thus, Student Educational Adventures employs our own team of meticulously trained student dedicated, local tour leaders - not foreigners, imported at your students' expense with no language skills or insight into your host culture.

These nationals are not only the best folk to show you their country. They are your teachers, translators and an enthusiastic purveyor of authentic experiences. They are there to facilitate your immersion into new cultures and are the bridge between you and the world of education and new experiences.

Your tour leader is always with your students throughout your trip and is thoroughly versed in safety protocols and duty of care responsibilities. This ranges from assisting in the most basic of health and safety measures to ensuring that teachers & students are always safe during our trips. All have been chosen because of their ability to deal with the needs and unique issues associated with escorting young people through this wonderful and at times, most foreign of regions.

### Service Learning Program

All service-learning programs initiated by Student Educational Adventures are conducted after careful consultation with the local community and with the local People's Committees.

These projects are initiated based on a model of mutual learning and designed as an immersion experience. An understanding of the importance of an integrated approach to community development is useful to frame what students and teachers might see, learn or experience during a student immersion.

(12 days)

### Inclusions

- All accommodation, transport, activities, entrance costs and other programs as describe in the itinerary
- *Student Educational Adventures* tour leader throughout the trip & additional specialist guides
- **2 internal flights in Malaysia; Miri – Mulu NP return, Miri – Kota Kinabalu**
- Meals (+ drinking water) as listed in the daily itinerary
- Pre-departure support, briefings & planning meetings for students and parents
- 24/7 in-country support
- Tips for local guides & drivers
- **Cost of community project**

### Exclusions

- International flights to/from Malaysia
- Some meals
- Camera, video fee at some sites
- Malaysia visa (Not required by most nationalities)

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