ARTISAN TRAVEL

The Best of Borneo



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group
VISITING: Borneo

BROCHURE CODE: 4024
DURATION: 11 nights

In Brief

An epic adventure awaits you and your family on this trip, which showcases the very best of Borneo. From Kota Kinabalu, you will enjoy snorkelling and white-water rafting before heading into the tropical rainforest to seek out some of the world's most endangered species, all while enjoying a wealth of unforgettable experiences. The holiday price includes all activities.





What's included?

- **Travel worry-free** - fully organised and run by a trusted, fully regulated UK operator. Read more about our bonding and the types of financial protection that we offer
- Transfers: group airport and activity transfers (private airport transfers may incur a supplement)
- **Accommodation:** 11 nights in hotel or lodge accommodation: 6 nights in a 5* hotel in Grandis Hotel, 3 nights at Tanini Sepilok and 2 nights in Tanini Kinabatangan
- **Meals:** 11 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 5 dinners
- **The following activities are included:** Island cruise by boat, snorkelling, white-water rafting, Orangutan Rehabilitation Sanctuary, Sun Bear Conservation Centre, Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary, Rainforest Discovery Centre, jungle night walk, rainforest boat trip, local cooking class, Batik painting activity, traditional dance class, tree planting, Gomantong Cave visit, Sandakan City tour, scuba diving, mountain biking **(the order of activities is subject to change)**
- All equipment, tuition and supervision from fully qualified instructors/guides
- Services of our representatives or local guides
- Tourism tax at a flat rate of RM 10 per room per night

Please note: international flights and internal flights between Kota Kinabalu and Sandakan are not included in the holiday cost. Please contact us for a quotation. Please do not make any flight arrangements until your holiday has been confirmed.

Trip Overview

Few places can compete with Borneo when it comes to adventures, activities, and wildlife. The Malaysian Sabah region is the base for our Activities Abroad family holiday adventure and the itinerary has been designed to ensure you see the very best that Borneo has to offer. All activities are included in the holiday price.

Your family adventure starts in and around Kota Kinabalu. Here you will enjoy taking a boat ride past tropical islands, snorkelling along coral reefs and white-water rafting. Outside of the activities you can relax in wonderful accommodation and sample truly delicious food.

Next, it's into the tropical rainforests for memorable encounters with some of the world's most endangered species which are indigenous to Borneo's rainforests. You'll have the chance to get close to proboscis monkeys, orangutans and sun bears at their respective sanctuaries before searching for them in the wild. There will be rainforest boat trips where you are almost certain to encounter some of the abundant wildlife, as well as a visit to the spectacular Gomantong Caves, famous as a nesting ground for swifts and some 27 species of bat. Immerse yourself in Bornean culture with a local cooking class, Batik painting activity and traditional dance lesson.

Back in Kota Kinabalu, you'll have the chance to scuba dive with our local experts and then go on an amazing mountain bike trip. You're sure to head home with some unforgettable memories of your tropical family adventure.

There are plenty of options to personalise and extend your stay in this vibrant corner of the world. For example, enjoy an additional three night's at the Shangri-La's Rasa Ria Resort to fully unwind and make the most of the hotel's stunning facilities before you return home. Day trips such as a day tour of Kinabalu Park are available too; soak up the history and local culture with a guided walk in Kinabalu Park, a visit to Kundasang War Memorial and a saunter through the market. Speak to one of our knowledgable Travel Experts if you are interested in enhancing your bucket-list trip to Borneo.

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Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY 1 ARRIVAL AND TRANSFERS

Upon arrival at Kota Kinabalu International Airport, a guide will be waiting to transfer you to your wonderful beachfront accommodation, around a 15 to 30 minute drive away, depending on traffic conditions. You have this evening to yourselves so you can relax and settle into your new surroundings.

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 ISLAND CRUISING AND SNORKELLING

There is no better way to become familiar with the tropical waters of Borneo than to spend the day exploring the stunning islands and coral reefs that sit just off Kota Kinabalu.

You will take a boat around the islands during the day with guided snorkelling tours during the morning and afternoon where you can get acquainted with some of the region's aquatic wildlife.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 3 JUNGLE RAFTING

The Kiulu River rapids are graded as level 1-2 and so it is ideal for families and perfect for a really fun day. After instruction you will take to the water for a very entertaining trip downstream, passing through stunning rainforest and passing small villages. After lunch, you'll return to the hotel around mid-afternoon.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4 FLIGHT TO SANDAKAN

This morning you will wave goodbye to the coast and take the short flight to Sandakan (not included in the holiday cost, please speak to our travel experts for a quotation). If you are lucky enough to get a window seat on the left of the plane (and it is a clear day) you should see spectacular views of the imposing Mount Kinabalu as you fly past.

On arrival, you will be transferred to Sepilok and your delightful lodge accommodation near the world-famous Orangutan Sanctuary. Take the afternoon to settle in and enjoy your surroundings before the adventure continues once again tomorrow.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 5 ORANGUTAN REHABILITATION SANCTUARY, LABUK BAY AND SUN BEAR CONSERVATION CENTRE DAY TRIP

After breakfast, you will visit the Sun Bear Conservation Centre and the famous Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Sanctuary where you will watch a feeding session. The sanctuary is world renowned for its efforts to save this magnificent animal through rehabilitating orphaned orangutans. You will watch a video about the work that is done here before feeding time. The orangutans are able to come and go as they please so there is no guarantee of a sighting, but close encounters are frequent and you must listen to the instructions of the local guides at all times.

After lunch, you will experience yet another wildlife encounter that is unique to Borneo; Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary which will allow you to experience these rather bizarre looking monkeys at close quarters.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 RAINFOREST DISCOVERY CENTRE AND TWO NIGHTS ON THE EDGE OF THE JUNGLE

Today encapsulates the essence of Borneo in terms of nature and wildlife. You will first explore the Rainforest Discovery Centre with a guide. There are some exceptional sights in the reserve and many trails to explore as well as the thrilling canopy walkways, which allow you to get up close to some of the biggest trees you are ever likely to see. It's a fascinating place.

After lunch, you'll be transferred by road (a ~ 2-hour transfer) to the Kinabatangan River. On arrival at Tanini Kinabatangan, you'll check-in to your room. Late afternoon, you'll join your first boat cruise along the river in search of wildlife along the river banks.

This evening your guide will accompany you for a night walk in the jungle when the forest takes on a very different appearance. These walks are guided by specialists who seem to have an unfathomable ability for spotting wildlife.

You will spend the night in a comfortable, en-suite chalet at the rainforest lodge and will fall asleep listening to the sounds of the jungle.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 — RAINFOREST BOAT TRIP, LOCAL COOKING CLASS, BATIK PAINTING ACTIVITY AND TRADITIONAL DANCE CLASS

Before breakfast, you'll enjoy a rainforest boat trip. There is the potential to see the proboscis monkey, as well as macaques and leaf monkeys, gibbons, the occasional crocodile and possibly a wild orangutan. You may even be some of the lucky few who witness the delightful Borneo pygmy elephant.

For lunch today, you will join a cooking class at Tanini Kinabatangan, which is led by some of the local villagers working in the lodge. You will be shown how to prepare a local dish before having the chance to savour the results of your efforts.

After lunch, you will also have the opportunity to take part in a Batik painting activity. It's then time for your second late afternoon river cruise in search of more amazing wildlife.

After dinner, you will join a traditional dance class led by the villagers from nearby Kampung Bilit.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8 — TREE PLANTING, GOMANTONG CAVES AND A TOUR OF SANDAKAN CITY

After early morning refreshments, you will head back out on the boat for another attempt to spot some of the rainforest's inhabitants. Upon your return to the lodge, you have the chance to take part in its environmental tree planting programme.

The Gomantong Caves are world-famous as the home of the swifts whose nests are harvested annually to make bird's nest soup. They are also truly spectacular in their own right. The sight of the birds, bats and creepy crawlies that inhabit the caves is definitely something you won't forget and the

scale of these caves is rather awe-inspiring.

From Gomantong, you'll travel to Sandakan and learn about the water village, St. Michael church, War Memorial and Puh Jih Sih temple.

It's now time to check out and head back to Sepilok.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9 RETURN TO KOTA KINABALU

Following transfers to Sandakan Airport, you fly back to Kota Kinabalu, where you will check-in, once again, to your wonderful seafront resort.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10 UNDERWATER EXPERIENCE

If you have never dived before, but fancy giving it a go, then today is your lucky day! You will enjoy a scuba diving discovery experience (amazing for a non-diver). This will be a truly memorable experience.

For those who are qualified divers, you can participate in a leisure dive with our expert team and for those who prefer to stay on the surface, there is snorkelling available. A spectacular array of coral and aquatic life, possibly even sea turtles and stingrays, await you. Both, the leisure dive and the snorkelling are subject to availability locally.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 11 MOUNTAIN BIKING

After breakfast, you will explore the villages and spectacular countryside that surrounds Kota Kinabalu by mountain bike. This trip will provide an insight into the daily lives of the local people as well as some stunning scenery. You will travel on front suspension mountain bikes, following a route that your guide will tailor to your group; this may include gravel tracks, quiet country roads and possibly even some jungle routes. Back at your hotel you can enjoy a final evening and reflect on all of the exceptional experiences you have had.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 12 DEPARTURE

Sadly it is time to wave goodbye to Borneo or we can arrange for you to extend your stay. We can arrange a relaxing island break, or a PADI diving adventure to expand on the basic skills you learnt earlier in the holiday. Borneo is one of the most popular areas in the world for diving and it's easy to see why. Please speak to one of our Travel Experts for further information.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Personalise this tour

Our pick



Coral Reef Conservation Day Tour in Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park

This snorkelling based activity is a truly unique educational experience. You'll gain insight into the fascinating world of coral reefs, threats impacting them and what we can do as individuals to protect them. You'll take part in three guided snorkelling sessions and learn about the complexity of the coral reef ecosystem and learn basic skills for measuring and assessing the health of a coral reef. Combined with informative, educational briefings you'll end the day taking away actions you can make as an individual to help protect our coral reefs and make a positive difference. This tour is suitable for guests who are extending their stay at the Shangri-La Rasa Ria and subject to availability.

Please note: Minimum of 4 people required and price includes return private transfer

Other options

ACTIVITIES



Kinabalu Park Day Tour

Escape the liveliness of the city and immerse yourself in nature at the spectacular Kinabalu National Park. On this private day trip, you'll enjoy a bespoke itinerary tailored to your interests and preferences. Wildlife lovers can join a guided walk along the trails within Kinabalu Park and those fascinated by the history and culture of Sabah can satiate their appetite with visits to Kundasang War Memorial and Kundasang Market. The perfect excursion to include in your extended stay programme.

Please note: This tour requires a minimum of 4 people.

The tour lasts approximately 10 hours

EXTENSIONS



Stay in Gaya Island Resort

Enhance your Borneo adventure with an unforgettable escape to Gaya Island Resort, an exclusive haven nestled within the pristine waters of the Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park. Just a short boat ride from Kota Kinabalu, this luxurious retreat is surrounded by lush mangroves, golden beaches, and coral reefs teeming with marine life. Guests can unwind in elegant accommodation, indulge in world-class spa treatments, and savour exquisite cuisine crafted from fresh, locally sourced ingredients. Please speak with one of our Travel Experts for information on what's included and a tailored quote.



PADI Open Water Diver Course

Are you ready to become a qualified diver? Having completed our Underwater Experience on day 10 of your holiday, you may wish to extend your holiday and embark on a further two days of underwater fun and adventure.

Day 12 (B/L): Day 2 of the PADI Open Water Diver Course

You will wake up bright and early in order to leave at 8.45 and make your way to Jesselton Point Jetty (walking time approximately 5 minutes). You will meet the Dive Crew

and board the boat ready to head out to the stunning Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine National Park and its clear, turquoise waters. As you already completed the first day of this course on day 10 of your trip, you will complete day two of the course today, which involves confined skills sessions, some small water stamina tests and ocean dives of up to 12m. You will enjoy a well-deserved lunch at a café on an island in the Marine Park. Then, it's time to put your new skills into practice during an afternoon of open-water diving. You will return to the Jesselton Point Jetty at 4 pm, then return to your hotel for your overnight stay.

Overnight at the 4* Grandis Hotel (Superior room)

Day 13 (B/L): Day 3 of the PADI Open Water Diver Course.

The final day of diving will begin at around 8.45am at the Jesselton Point Jetty and onto Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park once again. The whole day will be filled with open-water diving (with two boat dives up to 18m), as you practice your new skill and admire the underwater world and its incredible wildlife. Lunch will be enjoyed in a café. At 4 pm, you will return to your hotel in time for your final night of the trip.

Overnight at the 4* Grandis Hotel (Superior room)

Day 14 (B/L): Free day - to relax and ensure a minimum of 18 hours after your last dive before flying.

Overnight at the 4* Grandis Hotel (Superior room)

Day 15 (B): Depart Kota Kinabalu

You will have a last breakfast in the morning and take your transfer to Kota Kinabalu Airport in time for your flight home. Please note: your flight needs to depart from 11 am onwards, so there is an 18-hour safety window after your last dive!

ACCOMMODATION

The hotel for your three nights will be the Grandis Hotel (subject to availability).

With its central location, you'll be in the heart of the city so you can get out and explore Kota Kinabalu. You'll be right by the water's edge and within walking distance of the many different restaurants so you can try the varied local food on offer.

If you'd rather relax in the hotel, there are plenty of facilities to enjoy. Make sure you go up to the Sky Blu Bar for excellent views of the cityscape and out to sea. For those who want even more time in the water, there's also an amazing rooftop swimming pool.

HOTEL FACILITIES

- Double, twin or family rooms with upgrades to deluxe rooms available
- All-day dining in the Rosea Café
- Sky Bar and Piano Lounge
- Swimming pool
- Gym

Please note: in order to take part in this extension, **you must complete your online study BEFORE you come on holiday.** All the pre-study will be completed online, and it will take approximately 10 hours to complete. Following your booking (and full payment), a PADI eLearning Assess code will be sent via email. Once registered with PADI, you will have access to an Online eBook, Certification credit, Knowledge Reviews, Quizzes and Final Exam, eTraining Logbook and Digital RDP with instructions and certifying credit. This eLearning must be successfully completed before attending the course.

Please contact one of our Family Travel Experts for a quotation.

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Included Accommodation

Grandis Hotel (Nights: 1-3,9-11)





Hotel Grandis, located in Kota Kinabalu, was named after Ascidieria Grandis (Eria Grandis), an endemic orchid found on Mount Kinabalu. The hotel's prime location makes it an ideal retreat for those looking to explore the area's eclectic shopping, dining, entertainment sites, and tourist attractions. It is just a 15-minute drive from Kota Kinabalu International Airport and right next to one of the most popular malls in town.

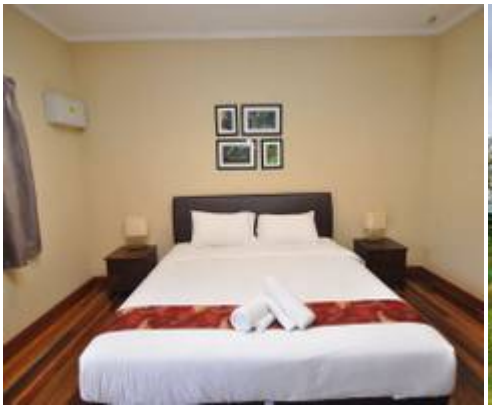
The hotel features 188 beautifully designed rooms, including superior rooms, deluxe rooms, and upscale suites, all furnished with tailored amenities such as LED TVs with satellite channels,

complimentary high-speed internet access, an in-room locker, and a power shower. All rooms have floor-to-ceiling panoramic windows that provide stunning views of either the city of Kota Kinabalu or the South China Sea and the tranquil islands.

Facilities
Hotel Grandis has three food & beverage outlets: the all-day dining Rosea Café, the Piano Lounge, and Sky Blu Bar, which serve mouthwatering Western and Asian cuisine. Two function rooms and a boardroom provide comfortable and convenient venues for community and business activities. The hotel is also a non-smoking property. The Sky Blu Bar, located on the hotel's rooftop, is an excellent spot to witness the city's famous sunsets.

Hotel Grandis offers several facilities and services to guests, including an adult and children swimming pool, a business centre, gym, club lounge, and Surau, as well as laundry and dry cleaning services, taxi service, tour desk, and safe deposit boxes.

Tanini Sepilok (Nights: 4-5,8)


This small lodge with its comfortable chalets is situated near the Rainforest Discovery Centre and the world-famous Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre, home to some of the few remaining wild Orangutans of Northern Borneo.

The lodge is in a prime location when visiting the wildlife conservation sanctuaries located in the Sepilok area, and offers the chance to taste an array of traditional Sabahan dishes during your stay.

Lodge facilities

- Meals are enjoyed in the hotel’s on-site restaurant, Mango Garden Sepilok, which serves local and Western cuisine

Chalets

You will stay in very well equipped, air-conditioned chalet-style accommodation. Each private deluxe room has twin or double beds, a private bathroom, private balcony area with a garden view

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Tanini Kinabatangan (Nights: 6-7)





Tanini Kinabatangan is situated on the Kinabatangan River, a remote and beautiful region which is a real wildlife haven and sanctuary for many animals whose habitats have been lost through deforestation. Here visitors can sleep surrounded by the sounds of the jungle and the wildlife to which it is home. The lodge is on the edge of the tiny village of Kampung Bilit, a remote and traditional community that lives within this area of rainforest.

This is a unique experience for your family to get up close to some of Borneo's most incredible animals and the guides at the lodge will endeavour to ensure you can enjoy as many wildlife encounters as possible.

The lodge is built in the style of traditional Orang Sungai architecture, allowing it to blend into the environment. It is a simple place but this is all about the experience of spending time in the unique surroundings.

Hotel facilities

- There is a small on-site shop which is supported and run by local villagers where you can buy small snacks, bottled water and basic essentials. You can purchase additional insect repellent and items such as leech socks if you wish to use them during the hikes and all of the proceeds go to the local community.
- Tea and coffee are available for guests free of charge. Drinking water is provided in the main lodge buildings for guests as the water from the taps is not drinkable
- Families can enjoy home-cooked meals which are served buffet style in the central dining area which is open to the sounds of the rainforest
- The guides at this lodge are second to none and they will do all that they can to ensure that you experience as many wildlife encounters as possible
- The lodge has gumboots available to hire for the jungle hikes which are highly recommended

Bangkatan Room (named after the local language term for Proboscis Monkey)

These rooms offer guests a spacious and comfortable stay with a jungle view allowing you to feel truly close to the sights and sounds of the surrounding rainforest. The accommodation has an en-suite with shower and are all clean and simply furnished with double or twin beds.

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

Minimum 4 person and maximum 20 people (approximately)

Group Size

We always try to provide an approximation of the group size you can expect to be with for the duration of each of our holidays. It may be that you are joined by others for parts of your holiday (such as transfers and particular activities) but the above number reflects those you can normally expect to be with from beginning to end. If group size is something which is particularly important to you, please speak to our Travel Experts and they can suggest the best holidays for you.

Tailor-made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities as will the group size for any additional activities you book.

Minimum Numbers Required For A Holiday To Operate

Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: https://www.artisantravel.co.uk/booking-conditions

Minimum and maximum age

If a specific minimum age applies to this holiday, it can be found in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page.

Unless otherwise stated in the in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page, the minimum age for participation in an Artisan holiday is typically 8 years old (there may be younger children in some destinations who have booked with other companies). If an adult-only environment is important to you, then please contact our Travel Experts and they will advise on the best dates and destinations for you. If you are looking for a holiday designed specifically for families then please see our sister company www.activitiesabroad.com

Itinerary amendments

The order of activities listed in this agenda is provided for guidance only, your final and detailed itinerary will be provided either with your final travel documents (which are uploaded into your online account around a week prior to departure) or upon arrival.

Terms and Conditions

Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: https://www.artisantravel.co.uk/booking-conditions