



## Borneo, Malaysia: Rainforest World Music Festival

### Specialist music and cultural tour

31st July – 9th August 2016

*Songlines Music Travel*, in association with Master Travel, invites music lovers and travellers alike on this wonderful trip to Borneo in Malaysia. This trip will give you a unique insight into the music, culture and wildlife of this fantastic region, as well as giving you the opportunity to experience the extraordinary Rainforest World Music Festival.

Accompanied by a Songlines Travel Leader, you will have plenty of opportunity to explore the tropical rainforest in Sarawak, before getting immersed into the magical and unique Rainforest Festival, which brings together world renowned musicians from all continents

as well as indigenous local musicians from the island of Borneo.

#### Highlights include:

- Getting to know the vibrant, capital city of Kuala Lumpur
- Discovering tropical Sarawak, including Kuching, Semenggoh Rehabilitation Centre and Bako National Park
- Experiencing the very best music from local and international artists and enjoying the vibrancy and atmosphere of the Rainforest Festival



### What to expect

Borneo is the third largest island in the world and the largest in Asia. It is best known for its stunning beaches, biodiverse rainforest and abundant wildlife including orangutans, hornbills and clouded leopards. Sarawak, on the northern coast of Borneo retains a strong cultural identity and is home to a diverse range of ethnic groups.

In August, the town of Kuching plays host to the annual Rainforest World Music Festival, a place to hear local artists as well as big international names. It takes place in the Sarawak Cultural Village, a living museum featuring traditional longhouses and dwellings of various ethnic groups. Many of the informal concerts and workshops take place inside these longhouses. Listen to the plucked sounds of the beautiful indigenous instrument, the sapé, while all around the rainforest forms a magnificent aural and visual backdrop.

In addition to the festival, our 9 day trip offers the chance to get a taste of the interior of the rainforest by staying in Bako National Park, encounter orangutans at Semenggoh Rehabilitation Centre, and visit a longhouse of the second largest ethnic group in Sarawak, the Biduyah tribe.

### Kuala Lumpur to Kuching

Our journey will begin in Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of Malaysia, where you will have time at leisure to explore the city or just to relax after your flight. The next morning, we will take the short flight to Kuching, where we will join up with a local guide for a walking tour of downtown Kuching. We will

see the Cat Statue (Kuching means 'cat' in the local language), and wander through the old part of the town. There are a number of markets to see – amongst them the spice market and the food market, before we see the Sarawak Museum. After lunch we can opt to take an afternoon river cruise for a chance to see the city from the water. In the evening there are some tasty restaurants and bars for us to try.

### Bako National Park

The next morning, we will take a short drive followed by a boat ride which will take us to the heart of Bako National Park. This park is one of the best places in Borneo to see wildlife. Proboscis monkeys, long tail macaques, wild boar and monitor lizards are commonly spotted amidst the rainforest, ranging from mangroves to swamp vegetation. We will spend two days exploring the park, hiking along the park's trails and learning about the flora and fauna.

### Semenggoh Rehabilitation Centre and Bidayuh Longhouse

Next up, we will head to Semenggoh, the biggest orangutan rehabilitation centre in Sarawak. The centre was established as a sanctuary for injured and orphaned orangutans, with the aim to train them how to survive in the wild. There are 26 semi-wild orangutans living and roaming free in the forest within the nature reserve. We will be able to witness the orangutan feeding and learn all about the problems that orangutans face with regards to destruction of their habitat.



Today we will also be able to visit the Annah Rais Longhouse, home to the Bidayuh tribe, also known as the Land Dayaks, who were once headhunters. Here, we will have a chance to learn about the traditional and communal ways of living that have remained untouched by modern development. We will see that the Bidayuh build everything out of bamboo, including their houses and musical instruments. Here there may also be an option to meet a local musician to hear about his way of life and musical style.

### Rainforest World Music Festival

The next day we will travel to the festival site, a stone's throw away from the quiet beach of the Santubong Peninsula, for the start of the World Music Festival. The afternoons at the festival feature workshops and lectures, and quite often jam sessions in the longhouses around the lake. This is a great opportunity to hear local musicians, playing for instance the beautiful Orang Ulu guitar, the sapé. As evening approaches, the focus moves to the two stages in front of the rainforest canopy for the evening concerts. We will spend three nights here, staying in the Cultural Village on the festival site.

### Kuching to Kuala Lumpur

After breakfast, with the festival over, we will be transferred to Kuching airport for the flight back to Kuala Lumpur. We will arrive in Kuala Lumpur late morning and will spend the afternoon on a guided city tour, where we will get an insight into the history, culture, lifestyle and architecture of Malaysia's capital city, including visits to temples, monuments and

palaces. Here, we will enjoy our last evening together, sharing memories and experiences from this magical trip.

All Songlines Music Travellers will receive an information sheet about the local music plus recommended recordings and DVDs.





## Top facts about Borneo and its music

- Borneo is home to Mount Kinabalu, the highest peak in South East Asia
- The estimated age of the Borneo rainforest is 130 million years, making it the oldest rainforest in the world
- Orangutans are the only apes in the world that are from Asia. The word 'orangutan' translates to 'man of the forest' and they can only be found in the jungles of Borneo and Sumatra
- Many of the indigenous people in Borneo were once headhunters, but the practice had largely stopped by the early 20th century. Once simply called Dayaks, the main indigenous groups in Sarawak are the Iban, Bidayuh, Orang Ulu and Melanau. Their very different styles of longhouses can be seen in the Cultural Village. The Sarawak Museum gives the following population statistics: Iban (29%), Malay (23%), Chinese (20%), Bidayuh (8%), Orang Ulu (5.7%) and Melanau (5.4%).
- Villagers typically live in longhouses which are elaborately decorated with murals and woodcarvings. Longhouses are divided into 'biliks' or apartments, with each family living in separate biliks. The main door to a bilik opens up to a long gallery; a communal area where families can socialise with each other and come together for communal activities and celebrations
- The Orang Ulu (literally 'remote people') are a diverse group of smaller tribes including the Kenyah, Kayan, and Kelabit. Their carving and artwork with long, colourful intertwining fronds is very distinctive. As is their instrument, the sapé lute which is probably the most well-known of Sarawak's instruments. The best-known players today, largely thanks to the Rainforest Festival, are Matthew Gnau and Jerry Kamit. In its amplified form, the sapé is very quiet – which is perfect for a longhouse – but electrified versions are used on stage. The sapé is also usually decorated with flamboyant Orang Ulu designs.
- The Bidayuh dwell inland, away from the coast. They are renowned for their use of bamboo – and if you visit one of their longhouses you'll see why. The longhouse and most of the tools, baskets and furniture inside are all made from bamboo. The same goes for their musical instruments too – zithers and flutes, although they do use gongs.



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31st July to 9th August 2016

### Key:

- b** Breakfast
- L** Lunch
- d** Dinner

*Please note that this is a provisional itinerary only. The final itinerary will be confirmed in your pre-departure pack which will be sent to you 2 weeks before departure.*

### Sunday 31st July – Kuala Lumpur

Arrive at Kuala Lumpur International Airport, where you will be met and transferred to the hotel. Time at leisure to relax after your long flight or to explore the city.

### Monday 1st August – Kuching **b**

Meet the rest of the group in the hotel lobby so that you can be transferred to the airport for the short flight to Kuching.

Upon arrival in Kuching, transfer to the hotel and check in before heading out on guided walking tour of the city. In the evening, sample some of the local restaurants and bars.

### Tuesday 2nd August – Bako National Park **b L d**

Travel to Bako National Park via a short drive and boat ride. Spend the day hiking along the park's trails, before having dinner and spending the night in the Forest Lodge.

### Wednesday 3rd August – Bako National Park **b L**

Early morning we will go bird-watching along Telok Assam Bay before returning for breakfast. Later in the morning we will explore the eastern part of the park, before heading back to Kuching to spend the night.

### Thursday 4th August – Semenggoh Wildlife and Rehabilitation Centre **b L**

In the morning we will head to Semenggoh Rehabilitation Centre to learn about the centre's activities and to catch Orangutan feeding.

After lunch, we will spend time at the Annah Rais Bidayuh Longhouse to spend time with the local community. In the evening we will head back to Kuching and stay overnight.

### Friday 5th – Sunday 7th August – Rainforest Festival

Friday and Saturday will be spent enjoying the atmosphere and vibrancy of the Rainforest Music Festival, including workshops, intimate jam sessions and evening concerts. We will spend these three nights staying at the Cultural Village onsite.

### Monday 8th August – Kuching – Kuala Lumpur **b**

At the end of the festival, we will be transferred back to Kuching airport in the morning for our flight back to Kuala Lumpur. We will spend the afternoon on a guided tour of the city, before spending the final night together as a group.

### Tuesday 9th August – Kuala Lumpur **b**

We will transfer you from the hotel to the Kuala Lumpur International Airport for your flight home or for your onward journey.

**Tour price excluding flights to/from Kuala Lumpur: £1250 per person**

Secure your place with a £115 deposit, with the remainder payable in instalments

**Single travellers:** A single supplement of £305 is payable if you wish to guarantee a single room. This does not apply if you opt to share a twin room with a fellow participant.

**The cost includes:**

- Accommodation: 9 nights' hotel accommodation in standard hotel rooms on a twin share basis
- Transfers between Kuala Lumpur International Airport and hotel
- Internal flights between Kuala Lumpur and Kuching

- All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary
- Meals as mentioned in the itinerary
- Three days at the Rainforest World Music Festival
- The services of a Songlines Tour Leader

**The cost excludes:**

- International flights to/from Kuala Lumpur
- Visas and travel insurance. Please ensure you purchase adequate insurance cover before you leave home
- Single room supplement

**Early Bird booking: £1145 per person valid only until 29th February 2016**

\*After 29th February the tour price will be fixed at £1250 for all travellers

- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Tips to hotel staff, drivers and guides
- Alcoholic drinks, dinners, snacks or any purchases of a personal nature
- Anything not specified in the inclusions and itinerary above

**International flights to/from Kuala Lumpur**

We would be delighted to arrange your flights to and from Kuala Lumpur if you wish. Please contact the Master Travel office on +44 (0)20 7501 6375/6741 or tours@mastertravel.co.uk for current prices and availability.

Please note that all itineraries in Malaysia are subject to change according to local conditions. Due to the nature of the tour, places are limited.

