



Detailed Trip Notes

Borneo Rainforest World Music Festival **18 Days / 26th June 2010 to 13th July 2010**

We think that Borneo is one of South East Asia's best kept secrets, with incredible beauty and amazing diversity.

Our adventure begins in Sabah, a Malaysian state renowned for its abundance of flora, fauna and superb coral reefs. Our first stop is the amazing Danum Valley which hosts one of the most complex eco-systems in the world.



An express boat takes us to Sarawak – truly an adventurer's paradise. We begin with a stay in a traditional longhouse, as guests of the Iban people. Only last century these people were warring headhunters who killed their enemies with blowpipes! From here we trek along the ancient Headhunters Trail before making our way by boat into the pristine rainforests of Gunung Mulu National Park to explore the massive cave systems.

After the challenge of the trek to the Pinnacles at Mulu National Park we then head to beautiful riverside city of Kuching to visit the Semenggoh Orang-utan Rehabilitation Centre. The opportunity to see these amazing creatures swinging freely in the forest is an unforgettable experience.

Whilst in Kuching have three days to enjoy the world renowned Rainforest World Music Festival. You will have the opportunity to participate in informative workshops, lectures and jam sessions and enjoy the evening performances in the midst of the lush, tropical jungle.

the adventuretraveller

take the road less travelled

Day 1 / Saturday

26 June 2010

Kota Kinabalu

Your trip begins today at the airport in Kota Kinabalu. You are met by a representative of Gecko's and transferred to the hotel. There are no activities planned today so we encourage you to venture out and explore Kota Kinabalu. Make sure you are back at the hotel for your pre-departure briefing this evening.

Overnight: Hotel Shangri-La.

Day 2 / Sunday

27 June 2010

Kota Kinabalu

This morning we drive to Kota Belud which is located about 70km from Kota Kinabalu. It's known as the 'Land of the Cowboys of the East' and is rich in cultural history and scenery. The Sunday Market is the biggest open-air market in Borneo where farmers, fishermen and local vendors produce their best wares for sale to the public. Second only in size is the Tuaran Market. The name Tuaran is believed to have come from the Malay word 'tawaran' which means 'bargaining' or 'sale'. This presumably reflects on the towns' earlier role as a market where natives from the hillside villages brought their produce for trading with the coastal Chinese and other indigenous peoples.

Overnight: Hotel Shangri-La.

Meal: 1 breakfast

Day 3 / Monday

28 June 2010

Danum Valley

This morning we are transferred to the airport for an early flight to Lahad Datu. Upon arrival at Lahad Datu we will be transferred 83km by road to the Danum Valley, passing through selectively logged forest, cocoa and soft-wood plantations as we go. Whilst in the Danum Valley we will be staying at the Borneo Rainforest Lodge which sits beside the Danum River and on the edge of 428 sq. km of undisturbed lowland rainforest. The jungle in the Danum Valley is home to the full range of Sabah's lowland fauna including the rare Sumatran Rhinoceros, Elephants, Clouded Leopard and Orang-utan. So far some 275 species of birds have been recorded in the area. In the evening view a slide show and if weather permits one can go spotlighting to view some of the nocturnal animals.

Overnight: Tabin Wildlife Reserve

Meal: 1 breakfast, 1 lunch, 1dinner



Day 4 / Tuesday

29 June 2010

Danum Valley

The Danum Valley is recognised as one of the most complex ecosystems in the world, rich in both flora and fauna. The hot and humid jungle houses towering jungle trees and exotic flowers in a pristine environment, as well numerous species of animals and birds. You will have a full day to explore the area today – walk through the forest to search for animals, visit the site of some ancient burial coffins or trek to a waterfall for a dip in the refreshing rock pools there. In the afternoon take a walk through trails leading to a canopy walkway to marvel at the rainforest from a completely different perspective.

Overnight: Tabin Wildlife Reserve

Meal: 1breakfast, 1 lunch, 1dinner

Day 5 / Wednesday

30 June 2010

Kota Kinabalu

The morning is at leisure before we bid farewell to the Danum Valley and transfer to Lahad Datu for our return flight to Kota Kinabalu. On arrival we are met and transferred to our hotel.

Overnight: Hotel Shangri-La.

Meal: 1 breakfast, 1 lunch

Day 6 / Thursday

1 July 2010

Kota Kinabalu

Today we get up early and head out to the Tunku Abdul Rahman National Park. Named after the first Prime Minister of Malaysia, this National Park was created to protect the natural environment including marine life, coral reefs and flora and fauna. Made up of five islands, the exposed sandstone outcrops feature sheer cliffs, caves, honeycombs and deep crevasses along the shore. The reefs lie in shallow waters making it the ideal place for snorkelling to view coral gardens and sea life.

Overnight: Hotel Shangri-La.

Day 7 / Friday

2 July 2010

Limbang

Today we board an express boat and make our way to the island of Labuan, where we change to another boat bound for Limbang. Labuan was a place of much activity during World War II but today it is a place full of modern shops. The boat schedules can vary - sometimes we have a bit of time to walk around, but other times there is only enough time to transfer from one boat to another. Each journey takes between one-and-a-half and two hours.

Limbang is in Sarawak, sandwiched between the two parts of Brunei, and is where we spend our last night in a town before heading into the forested Mulu region. It is possible to send some of your heavy luggage (up to 18 kilograms) onwards instead of carrying everything on the Headhunters Trail trek and in Mulu National Park;

however, there is a fee of RM35 (US\$9.30) payable for this cargo service with the airlines.

Accommodation: Purnama Hotel.

Meal: 1 breakfast

Day 8 / Saturday

3 July 2010

Longboat

We travel overland to Medamit, where we continue our journey by longtail boat to our overnight accommodation in a traditional longhouse. Here, we spend a night as guests of our Iban hosts. Please don't expect any comforts and be prepared for the fact that the living conditions in the longhouse are extremely basic - this night is designed to give you a first-hand taste of how the Iban people live and also provide an insight into their unique customs. We will be sleeping on the ground, on simple mats and it is highly recommended that you bring your own sleeping sheet. The Iban are generally very reserved people unless, of course, they get on to their home-brewed rice wine!

Overnight: Iban Long House Home Stay.

Day 9 / Sunday

4 July 2010

Trekking - Camp 5

This morning we farewell our Iban friends and continue our journey on foot. Our trek takes us through a section of lowland forest, known as the Headhunters Trail. This trail was originally used by Kayan warriors, who made their way through the jungle to invade the people of the Limbang region. Although the path is well used by locals, few tourists get the opportunity to experience it. Following this route, we make our way to the Melinau Gorge and to Camp 5, where we stay overnight on the floor in very basic jungle hut accommodation. It is possible to hire simple mats to sleep on.

Overnight: Camp 5.

Day 10 / Monday

5 July 2010

Mulu National Park

The Pinnacles at Mulu National Park are a collection of 45 metre high limestone pinnacles that cling to the side of Fire Mountain. The Pinnacles Summit Trek is one of the most popular treks in the park. But be warned, the trek is a tough and challenging one. The trail is 2.4 km in length but rises some 1,200 metres. Vegetations vary following the changes of altitudes. A huge variety of wild orchids and pitcher plants which are scarcely seen elsewhere can be spotted along the trek before reaching the Pinnacles. The last section of the trail is near vertical, with rope sections and 15 aluminium ladders strategically positioned to help with the climb. The vegetation is sparse although orchids, rhododendrons and pitcher plants thrive in the area and can be seen at the side of the trail. The viewpoint area is made up of a number of pinnacles, rocks and vegetation and has excellent views of the silver-grey forest of stone that rises up from the surrounding vegetation. Be sure to pack some energy boosting snacks for the climb!
Overnight: Camp 5.

Day 11 - 12/ Tuesday - Wednesday

6 July 2010 – 07 July 2010

Mulu National Park

Given the spectacular nature of the park and its biological significance, it was not surprising that Mulu was successfully listed as a World Heritage site in November 2000. Mulu National Park (52,000 Ha) encompasses incredible caves and karst formations in a mountainous equatorial rainforest setting. Emphasis is also placed on promoting an awareness of the park's significance and its environment through activities that foster an understanding and appreciation of the parks values. There are over 3500 species of plants recorded in the park and a large diversity of fauna species that include deer, monkeys, porcupine and hornbills. Over the next two days we enjoy the natural wonder of Mulu National Park.

Overnight: Park Chalet.



Day 13 / Thursday

8 July 2010

Kuching

Today we fly to Miri then transfer to another flight bound for Kuching - one of the most attractive cities in South East Asia. We have ample time to explore this picturesque city and there is much to see. Fort Margherita was built by Charles Brooke in 1879 and sits on a hill opposite the waterfront – the perfect location to guard Kuching against pirates! The Istana is a shingle roofed white palace built by Charles Brook in 1870. Used during the Japanese occupation to house prisoners, it is today the residence of the Governor of Sarawak. You may also wish to visit the famous Sarawak Museum, one of the best in South East Asia, as well as take a relaxing stroll along the beautiful waterfront.

Overnight: Telang Usan Hotel.

**Day 14 / Friday
9 July 2010**

Kuching / Rainforest World Music Festival

This morning we visit the Semmenggoh Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre, outside Kuching, where we have the chance to spot some orang-utans, which are being rehabilitated for re-introduction back into the wild.

Overnight: Telang Usan Hotel.



In the early afternoon we will be transferred to the site of the 3-day Rainforest World Music Festival. The annual Rainforest World Music Festival is a unique festival which brings together renowned world music artists from all over the globe, as well as indigenous musicians from the interiors of the mythical island of Borneo. Its' formula of afternoon informative workshops, ethno-musical lectures, jam sessions and mini concerts is followed by evening performances on the main stage and it has proven to be a hit with the audience who come from far and wide to attend the festival. Held in a beautiful rainforest setting at the foot of Mt Santubong, the Rainforest World Music Festival is a not to be missed event held in the jungles of Borneo. A return transfer back to the hotel will be provided late this evening at the conclusion of Day 1 of the festival.

Overnight: Telang Usan Hotel.

*** The 3-day ticket to the Rainforest World Music Festival must be purchased online prior to departure and is not included in the cost of the tour. Please visit <http://www.rainforestmusic-borneo.com/> to purchase your ticket.

**Day 15 - 16 / Saturday - Sunday
10 July 2010 – 11 July 2010**

Rainforest Music Festival

Over the next two days you have the mornings at your own leisure. In the late afternoon you are transferred to the Rainforest World Music Festival. A return transfer back to the hotel is also provided.

Overnight: Telang Usan Hotel.

**Day 17 / Monday
12 July 2010**

Kuching

This morning we have the unique opportunity for a behind the scenes tour of Matang Wildlife Centre. Located about 45 minutes drive from Kuching, the Matang Wildlife Centre houses endangered animals in large enclosed areas of rainforest. The main attraction is the Orang Utan training programme, where young Orang Utans, who were either orphaned or rescued from captivity, are taught how to survive in the wild. As well as the Orang Utans, the centre includes spacious enclosures housing sambar deer, crocodiles, sun bears, civets and bear cats, and three large aviaries featuring hornbills, sea eagles and a host of other birds native to Sarawak. We return to Kuching where the afternoon is yours to make your own discoveries.

Overnight: Telang Usan Hotel.



Day 18 / Tuesday

13 July 2010

Kuching

After breakfast, we check out of our hotel and transfer to the Kuching Airport for the ongoing flight.

About Gecko's

Gecko's is designed for younger travellers, on a budget, who want the freedom and flexibility of independent travel, with the safety and fun of a small group. You travel with a highly-trained local tour leader, who was raised in the region and can show you a side of their homeland that other travellers miss out on.

We visit the 'must see' sights, and on many trips we venture off the beaten track for some unforgettably unique and unusual experiences. Gecko's trips are great fun, highly interactive and designed to immerse you in the culture of the place you're visiting.

Trip grade

Active

These trips involve some activity and occasional hard travelling days. Accommodation can sometimes be quite basic. Physical preparation is important and a flexible, open-minded approach is essential. On treks you may be hiking up to six hours a day through steep terrain, sometimes at altitude, and a good level of physical fitness is required.

Fitness

Please note that the Pinnacles climb requires a good level of fitness, and we recommend that you build up your walking stamina before departure. Specialist equipment is not required, however you must have comfortable, strong shoes with good grip and be prepared for a steep climb. The final section involves climbing steep exposed rock - if the weather is wet or your tour leader feels your fitness is not sufficient you will not be allowed to summit.

Included

An experienced local leader, and there will be the services of local guides at some sites. All transportation, accommodation, sightseeing and meals as indicated. The flights from Kota Kinabalu to Lahad Datu (return), Mulu to Miri and Miri to Kuching are included in your tour and will be provided locally.

Not included

International flights, arrival and departure transfers, departure and airport taxes, visas, all other meals, all optional tours or activities during free time, transfers outside of the tour program, travel insurance, tips and items of a personal nature.

Meals

Allow US\$270 for additional meals. On tour we generally do not include all meals, as this gives you the flexibility to go out and make your own choices as far as what to eat and where to go and eat. This flexibility reflects the very nature of Gecko's tours. Your tour leader will always be on hand to offer recommendations and, in many cases, organise group meals that introduce you to the local specialities. These meals are optional. Please note that many places we visit on this tour are fairly remote and choices for vegetarians will be quite limited.

Transport

Bus, longboat, ferry, plane and on foot.

Single travellers

Most of our travellers are single and like the thought of travelling with a few like-minded souls. As part of Gecko's core philosophy, we do not charge a single supplement. You'll probably be sharing your accommodation with a travelling companion of the same gender, but even if you do get your own room, you won't be charged extra, unless the tour has a minimum of one person. Because many of our travellers come on their own, your tour will probably have a strong social element and you'll almost certainly come home with some great new friends.

Travelling responsibly

At Gecko's, we take our global responsibilities seriously. After all, we are passionate about the places we visit and want to help preserve them.

Gecko's Community Trust

The Gecko's Community Trust, a division of Peregrine Adventures, provides funds for local community projects and initiatives that promote responsible and sustainable tourism development in the destinations in which we operate. First and foremost, but not exclusively, the Trust supports projects and initiatives that advance education and employment within the tourism and hospitality industry. The Trust operates on a not-for-profit basis, with funds donated by Gecko's, our staff and our travellers, with every cent going to the nominated projects.

By donating to one on the projects supported by The Gecko's Community Trust you will help promote responsible and sustainable tourism and make a positive difference for communities and travellers right now, and for the future. For online donations go to: www.geckosadventures.com/trust

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Detailed country and trip information

For information about the countries that this trip travels to, refer to the relevant Country Notes online at www.geckosadventures.com.

With your booking confirmation, you will be sent a detailed pre-departure pack which will contain information on visas, medical issues, what to pack, money matters, vaccinations and other important trip specific information.

About these trip notes

The information provided here is given in good faith and has been compiled with all reasonable care. However, things change and some of the information may become out of date. Please keep this in mind when you read it and check with us if you want to be sure about something. You can check the most up-to-date version of the trip notes online at www.geckosadventures.com. If you have any queries, please contact your travel agent or your nearest Gecko's office. We are here to help you!