BORNEO: TREASURES, TRADITIONS, AND NATURE’S BOUNTY

AUG. 28 – SEP. 10, 2022
$8,995 PER PERSON

Borneo is an amalgam of biodiversity that blends uncharted forests filled with yet-to-be discovered species, a plethora of endemic trees, orchids and other flora, and animals like you’ve never seen anywhere else. Currently, Borneo is home to 288 mammal species, 394 freshwater fish species, 100 amphibian species, 15,000 flowering plant species, 3,000 tree species, and 420 resident bird species. To put in another perspective, 40% of the world’s palm species, 50% of the world’s dipterocarp trees, and 20% of the world’s snakes are found only in Borneo.

The island provides the only natural habitat for the endangered orangutan, and is a refuge for forest species, such as Asian elephant, Sumatran rhinoceros, and Borneo clouded leopard. From the waters of the Kinabatangan River, to the primeval forests of Danum Valley, the romance and mystery of Borneo await you.
ITINERARY

DAYS 1/2/3 | AUG. 28/29/30
Depart home on your way to Kota Kinabalu. En route, you’ll cross the International Date Line and lose one calendar day. Depending on where you are flying from, you will most likely depart no later than early morning Aug. 28 and arrive on Aug. 30 at the Kota Kinabalu Marriott where you will enjoy your day and evening at leisure.

DAY 4 | AUG. 31
Today, take a scenic two-hour drive to Kinabalu Park. On arrival at Kinabalu Park, walk along the nature trails in the Botanical Garden, where you will notice a change in the temperature as cool and refreshing air fills your lungs. If the day is clear, you may even spot a majestic view of Mount Kinabalu, the highest mountain between New Guinea and the Himalayas! The park boasts an estimated 4,500 species of plants, which include 1,500 species of orchids (77 of which are endemic to Kinabalu) as well as 289 species of birds, and 290 different types of butterflies.

After lunch at a local restaurant, visit the Poring Hot Spring in search for Rafflesia. The Rafflesia is the largest flower in the world, with recent flowers found measuring up to three feet across. There are 55 species of Rafflesia, of which nine are found in Borneo. You can also try the canopy walk, comprised of over 500 feet of suspension bridges 130 feet above the tropical jungle. This evening, return to Kota Kinabalu and enjoy a welcome dinner with your group at Big Fish, overlooking the South China Sea. (B, L, D)

DAY 5 | SEP. 1
Your morning flight takes you to Sandakan, located on the east coast of Sabah. En route to your hotel, enjoy a visit to Sandakan Market, where the locals come to buy fresh produce, fruits, delicacies, crafts, sarongs, and seashells. The fish market here is perhaps the biggest and busiest in Sabah and offers a stunning array of fresh seafood.

Next, stop at the Sim Sim Water Village on the coast of Sandakan, located a couple of miles from the main city center. The water village sits on stilts and is reachable by plank walkways. It depicts the lives of some of the local fisherman families, their neat wooden houses, and their daily activities.

Stay at the Sepilok Nature Resort, near the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation center. This endangered species is only found in Borneo and northern Sumatra and is the only representative of the great apes outside central Africa. (B, D)

DAY 6 | SEP. 2
After breakfast, head to Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary, just a short drive from Sandakan, located among the mangrove forests of Samawang. As the name suggests, this is the place to see one of the most distinctive and unusual inhabitants of Borneo—the proboscis monkey. This privately-owned sanctuary is located within an Oil Palm estate, providing a chance to observe this unique primate at a very close range.
Later this morning, visit another endangered mammal—the Bornean sun bear (Malayan or honey bear) at the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre at Sepilok. Here, rescued sun bears will be housed and cared for in a natural setting with the goal to re-release them back into a healthy forest.

Finally, visit the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Center. Here, the orangutans undergo a three-step process to learn how to integrate socially and independently with the wild population of the forest. Following lunch, proceed to the playground area of the young orangutans. Return to your lodge in the evening for dinner. (B, L, D)

**DAY 7 | SEP. 3**

After checking out of your resort, return to the Orangutan Center for a morning feeding with these magnificent animals and then proceed to Sukau village. Relax by the river before embarking on a boat excursion along Kinabatangan River, Sabah’s longest river, with an opportunity to view wildlife and birds in the virgin mangrove and rainforest habitat. Search for some of the primate species, including proboscis monkeys as they settle down on treetops.

Nestled along the riverbank of Kinabatangan River lies Borneo Nature Lodge—an eco-friendly resort, offering comfort without compromising green standards. In honor of the indigenous people, many of the decorative items you find here are authentically handmade. The lodge also has a restaurant, giving diners a choice to eat indoors or al fresco. (B, L, D)

**DAY 8 | SEP. 4**

Wake up to the raucous calls of gibbons and hornbills and then take an early morning river cruise on the Kinabatangan River to view more wildlife. The evenings and early mornings can be a magical time for viewing wildlife. If the weather cooperates, go through a mystical channel to a wonderful oxbow lake teeming with bird activity. Along the way, you may see the fierce Stork-billed Kingfisher, the Oriental Darter (“snake bird”), and Gray-headed Fish-Eagles around the lake. Various reptiles may perch silently in the trees visible only to discerning eyes. The feeling of tranquility here is exquisite!

This afternoon, enjoy another wildlife river cruise and, after dinner, test out your wildlife spotting skills as you observe nocturnal mammals, crocodiles, and birds during a night safari cruise. (B, L, D)

**DAY 9 | SEP. 5**

After an early breakfast, proceed to Oxbow Lake to observe wildlife and experience the early morning ambience of the longest river in Sabah. Oxbow Lake is a crescent-shaped body of water lying alongside the Kinabatangan River. The lake separated from the main river as erosion and deposits of soil changed the river’s course. The lake is ideal for bird watching, and sometimes orangutans are spotted in this quiet and serene area. Later in the morning enjoy a special treat, sharing tea at one of the village houses. This is an opportunity to interact with the host and try your hand at playing a local musical instrument. After a tour of the village and a short jungle walk along the lake, return to the lodge for lunch. Later in the afternoon depart on another river cruise to observe the flora and fauna of the area. (B, L, D)
DAY 10 | SEP. 6
We’ll drive to Borneo Rainforest Lodge, located in the Danum Valley Conservation Area. This is Sabah’s largest protected lowland forest, comprised of 108,230 acres of pristine virgin rainforest. The dipterocarp forest found in Borneo is considered to be the world’s tallest and oldest, having existed for over 100 million years. It is also one of the world’s richest areas for species variation with more than 200 tree species per 1,000 square feet! Within this paradise is a lodge designed by naturalists with magnificent views of forest, mountains, and the Danum River just below.

Although very difficult to spot, the conservation area nonetheless shelters more than 270 species of birds and 109 species of mammals, including Asian elephant, orangutan, five species of deer, and Bornean rarities such as Sumatran rhinoceros, clouded leopard, and the impressive Bulwer’s pheasant. Danum Valley supports one of the largest remaining populations of wild orangutans. Although they are elusive, you will have a good chance of seeing them under the guidance of the lodge’s expert trackers. Do remember that in spite of the diversity and large numbers of animals, most are extremely well hidden. But you will nevertheless see an incredible diversity of flora and fauna, including some of the world’s largest butterflies and moths. It’s impossible to say which animals you’ll encounter but at some time during your visit, you’re sure to happen upon a delicate mouse deer or a snorting group of bearded pigs, or awaken to the haunting call of Bornean gibbons, and glimpse giant flying squirrels gliding through the canopy. (B, L, D)

DAY 11 | SEP. 7
Trek along the “coffin trail” to an ancient Kadazandusun burial site at Coffin Cliff. Hike 40 minutes to a magnificent lookout point for a bird’s eye view over the Danum Valley and the Borneo lowland forest, and then return to your lodge for lunch. Optional: Water tubing for an hour in the Danum River or trekking along the Segama River. In the evening, if weather permits, enjoy a night walk around the lodge in search of nocturnal animals. This evening, join your group for a farewell dinner. (B, L, D)

DAYS 12/13 | SEP. 8/9
Enjoy your morning at leisure before transferring to Lahad Datu airport for your flight to Kota Kinabalu. One last overnight at the Kota Kinabalu Marriott before making your way to the Singapore airport the next day. Flights can depart anytime on Sep. 9. (B)

DAY 14 | SEP. 10
Arrive home and reminisce about the wonderful memories of this incredible destination.

Registration
Reserve your place now at:
alumni.berkeley.edu/borneo

Pricing
$8,995 per person, double occupancy
$11,190 per person, single occupancy
Optional Pre-trip Extension: Singapore

DAYS 1/2/3 | AUG. 24/25/26
Late this afternoon board your overnight flight to Singapore. En route, you’ll cross the International Date Line and lose one calendar day. Depending on where you are flying from, you will most likely depart the US no later than early morning Aug. 24 and arrive in Singapore on Aug. 26. Upon arrival at Changi International Airport, you will be met by your guide and transferred to your hotel, the Fullerton Hotel Singapore, where the rest of your day is at leisure.

DAY 3 | AUG. 27
The morning is at leisure to explore on your own. In the afternoon, experience the various cultures as you explore each ethnic heritage enclave and the temples. At Kampong Glam, admire the quiet majesty of the Sultan’s Mosque with its unmistakable golden dome. Take a stroll along Arab Street, which was well known as a textile haven in the 1950s and 1960s. Travel to the heart of Chinatown and experience the rows of streets and traditional shophouses lovingly restored into tempting eateries, teahouses, and shops. Little India completes the cultural kaleidoscope with its bustling streets showcasing aromatic and exotic spices, colorful flower-garland shops, vegetable vendors, and busy curry houses.

End your day with Singapore’s famed Night Safari. As dusk falls over the tropical rainforest, the animals come alive at the world’s first open-concept nocturnal zoo. Experience it all via a tram ride, on foot, and during entertaining shows featuring an all-star cast of nocturnal animals. (B)

DAY 4 | AUG. 28
Start your day at the Singapore Zoo, spread over 70 acres, home to over 3,600 mammals, birds, and reptiles. Natural barriers such as streams, rock walls, and beautiful landscaping are used to separate the animals from visitors, thus creating an “open zoo” effect. Later, be dazzled by the magnificent sight of the Supertrees and let the music and lights entertain you during the daily Garden Rhapsody light and sound shows! (B, D)

DAY 5 | AUG. 29
Step into Jurong Bird Park, Asia’s largest, with a collection of over 5,000 birds from 400 species. You’ll meet the many feathered residents during daily feeding sessions, even glimpsing elusive birds like the crested guinea fowl, iridescent starling, and turaco. Your afternoon is at leisure. Enjoy a farewell Singapore dinner tonight. (B, D)

DAY 6 | AUG. 30
Your morning is devoted to the Singapore Botanic Garden. Enjoy a walk through the Orchid Garden, which boasts a colorful display of 60,000 orchid plants, with 400 species and more than 2,000 varieties in bloom. In the afternoon, transfer to the airport for your flight to Kota Kinabalu where you will meet up with the rest of the group, enjoy the evening at leisure, and continue on your tour of Borneo. (B)

Meals included as listed above: B=Breakfast; L=Lunch; D=Dinner

Pre-Tour Pricing
$3,495 per person, double occupancy
$4,790 per person, single occupancy
Optional Post-trip Extension: Sarawak

DAY 13 | SEP. 9
In the morning, bid the rest of the group goodbye and return to the airport for your flight to Kuching and settle into Hilton Kuching. This afternoon, enjoy a cruise along the Sarawak River, a relaxing way to view the various phases of the city. Take in the sights of the Waterfront, Brooke Dockyard, the 100-year-old Malay Kampung, Fort Margherita, Astana, Square Tower, and the houses and mansions of Kuching's affluent society. The remainder of the afternoon is yours to relax, shop for souveniers, or take a stroll. (B, L, D)

DAY 14 | SEP. 10
Your morning excursion is to Kubah National Park, situated close to Kuching on a small sandstone plateau, which offers an interesting range of treks and forest walks. Kubah’s appeal lies in its rainforest scenery, its waterfalls, streams, bathing pools, and its 93 species of palms. After lunch, return to Kuching for a tour on foot of this riverside city. See buildings dating back to the days of the White Rajahs, ancient Chinese temples, and colorful markets displaying the produce that first brought traders to Borneo. This evening we’ll enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. (B, L, D)

DAY 15 | SEP. 11
After breakfast, depart for the Semenggoh Orangutan Rehabilitation Center. Observe the feeding of orangutans that have been rescued from captivity and are being trained to survive independently and ultimately be returned to the forest. Continue on to Mongkos Bidayuh Longhouse, which is about two hours away from Kuching. We'll stop to visit the Serian Fish Market while en route to the Mongkos village. Upon arrival, the Bidayuh community will welcome you with a traditional dance performance, followed by a lunch in the village. We’ll visit the traditional longhouse for a short tour to learn about its history. Later, take a stroll in the village, learn about the Bidayuh way of life, and enjoy a guided walk through the nearby farmlands. Return to Kuching in the evening where the rest of the day is at leisure. (B, L, D)

DAY 16 | SEP. 12
This morning, meet at the hotel lobby to commence a full day trip to Gunung Gading National Park, Lundu. Home to the world’s largest flower, the Rafflesia, the park also boasts picturesque walks and challenging jungle treks. Along the trails, the guide will teach us about the park’s plant life. Return back to the hotel after the tour. This evening we’ll enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. (B, L, D)

DAY 17 | SEP. 13
Visit Bako National Park today for a glimpse of a tropical coastal ecosystem that once surrounded most of the equatorial coasts of the world. Lush mangroves give way to soaring rainforest and short desert-like scrub. Three species of primates are a guarantee: long-tailed macaques, silver-leaf monkeys, and the proboscis monkey. Boardwalks through the mangroves provide an excellent opportunity to examine one of the most endangered habitat-types in the world at close hand. Tonight, enjoy a farewell dinner and reminisce with your fellow travelers about all the amazing sites you've seen on this trip. (B, L, D)

DAY 18/19 | SEP. 14/15
Transfer to Kuching airport for your return flight home. Flights can leave anytime on Sep. 14 arriving home on Sep. 15. (B)

Post-Tour Pricing

$2,595 per person, double occupancy

$3,390 per person, single occupancy