

# “Wild Borneo with Magical Malaysia”

**Orangutans, Sun Bears and Gibbons, Oh, My!**

**Sep 4-14, 2025**

**REGISTER NOW**



*Do you hear that? It's the call of the wild on our new 10-day eco-adventure like no other! Come discover a world of wonders in Untamed Borneo and magnificent Malaysia for one spectacular vacation escape. Bear witness to one of the world's most diverse ecosystems in remote and mystical Borneo, the world's third largest island county. There's plenty to love and so much to see as we explore the best regions by air and by boats in 9 glorious days.*

*Just listen to our exotic locations - Kuala Lumpur, Kota Kinabalu, Sandakan, and Sepilok. You'll be transported to another world of rivers and jungles with unique creatures found nowhere else on the planet. And we'll find our home in the midst of this wild wilderness at the wonderful Sepilok Rainforest Resort in Sukau. Borneo is truly a place like no other and the locals concentrate on sustainable tourism to ensure it remains unspoiled. Our past AFS groups loved this journey and you will, too.*

*We begin in the modern capital city of Kuala Lumpur, where tourist attractions are limitless. Known as the “Garden City of Light,” it is an unforgettable introduction to Malaysia's diverse allure. Then, it is on to Borneo to cruise emerald rivers that snake their way through lush rainforests. Love animals? Here's the place to explore stunning conservation areas and national parks, spotting playful orangutans, the rarest of monkeys and the world's smallest bears.*



*For a once in a lifetime wildlife encounter, we visit Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Center and the Sun Bear Conservation Center to learn what is being done to help protect these special creatures. We even get hands-on experiences at the rehabilitation centers, feeding the orangutans and learning their habits.*

*As we explore the rainforest, look for the gibbons, the iconic proboscis monkeys, pygmy elephants along with 340 bird species, 124 mammal species and countless amphibians. Each day, enjoy the fun of cruising through the jungle to visit villages and tropical islands.*

*For some rest and relaxation, we end at the luxurious Sangri-la resort and Spa, a private paradise stretching along almost 2 miles of pristin beaches washed by the South China Sea. Taste authentic cuisines that set this island apart. Oh. and mind the peacocks durina breakfast!*

*Anthony Bourdain adored Borneo, saying this tropical paradise was his favorite escape and the Sarawakin people were among the friendliest people he ever met. Round-trip air to Kuala Lumpur from the US is easy and March is the best time of year to visit. This is the perfect trip for our exotic travelers and those who want to experience nature off the tourist trodden trails. But Borneo is becoming a big draw this year for bucket lists so now is the time to go. Don't miss this one time AFS journey to the only place on the planet where orangutans can be seen in the wild. Come find you own Shangri-La.*



REGISTER NOW

## Our Glorious AFS Itinerary

Tap for a printable PDF itinerary

**4 Sep – Depart USA.** You cross the international date line to arrive Sep 6. You get this back at the end of the trip. Air is easy round trip to Malasia. Details coming and trip tips.

**6 Sep | Arrival to capital city Kuala Lumpur**

Welcome to Malaysia!!! You will arrive at Kuala Lumpur International Airport and make your own way to the ultra-modern Trader's Hotel in the heart of the city. The day is yours to either rest after a long flight or get out and explore. There is a wonderful mall adjacent to Traders and it is located in one of the city's best shopping districts. This capital city dazzles by night, so fel free to take it in before we laugh our own adventures!

Overnight: [Traders Hotel](#) (2 nights)



Panoramic View from Traders Hotel Kuala Lumpur

Traders Hotel in Kuala Lumpur is a wonderful place to stay because of its prime location in the heart of the city, offering breathtaking views of the iconic Petronas Twin Towers. The hotel provides luxurious accommodations with modern amenities, ensuring a comfortable and relaxing experience for guests. It is well-known for its exceptional service, with staff going above and beyond to meet the needs of every traveler. Additionally, the rooftop SkyBar is a popular spot to unwind, offering a stunning panorama of the city's skyline.

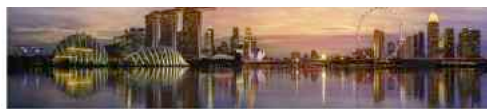
**7 Sep - Kuala Lumpur Tour Day**                      B (Meals included)

Following breakfast at our hotel, we'll head out for a half-day tour of the best of Kuala Lumpur. We'll dip into the city's abundant multicultural experiences



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starting at Masjid Negara, one of the country's largest and most distinguished mosques. Then, we make our way to the incredible Petronas Twin Towers, where we have an extraordinary panoramic view of the city skyline for Instagramable photos. Other highlights on our visit include the Moorish-style Federal Court, Central Market, the old Railway station, which is a striking piece of Mohammedan architecture; the Tudor-style Cricket Club, as well as the King's Palace. The tour concludes at Thean Hou Temple situated in Robson Heights. This striking six-tiered shrine is home to the patron Goddess Thean Hou of the Hainanese community and is regarded as one of the biggest Chinese temples in Southeast Asia.



The rest of your afternoon and evening is free.

Overnight: [Traders Hotel](#) (2 nights)



**8 Sep** | Fly to Borneo Kuala Lumpur - Sandakan - Sepilok B,D

After breakfast, we'll fly midmorning to the island of Sandakan, city in the Malay state of Sabah. We'll arrive at the wonderful Sepilok Rainforest Resort in the late afternoon. The spectacular eco-resort is built to blend in with the rainforest. Settle into our beautiful chalets and explore the stunning grounds or take a dip in the pool.

This evening, we'll be treated to a wonderful welcome dinner and get to know our fellow travelers.

Overnight: [Borneo Sepilok Rainforest Resort](#) (one night).



**9 Sep 2025** | Orangutans, bears and wildlife, Sepilok – Sukau [B,L,D]

Awaken to the call of birdsong. After breakfast, we visit the nearby **Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre**. Orangutans are man's closest relatives, and we'll spend time with several of them who are being rehabilitated to their natural habitat. We even get to feed some of these amazing creatures before taking a walk in Borneo's tropical lowland dipterocarp forest. We continue to the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre, which aims to release small, rescued sun bears into the enclosed forest.

At noon, we head to Sandakan Jetty for a 60-minute boat cruise through the mangroves in the Kinabatangan River Sanctuary to



reach Abai Jungle Lodge for lunch. After lunch, we continue to cruise along the river to Sukau Village in search of primates such as wild orangutans as well as birds and pygmy elephants. The lower basin of this river is the largest forest-covered floodplain in Asia, covering 4200 km<sup>2</sup>. This rich rainforest wetland is famed for its biodiversity and is filled with wildlife.



Upon arrival at Sukau, we check in to the Kinabatangan Riverside Lodge, a lodge known for its location at the river's edge and a staff that will bend over backward to make us happy. It's rustic but authentic and our past groups enjoyed it. It's also sustainable tourism. The lodge supports its local community with jobs, tree planting, and wages for fishermen. We'll take an afternoon boat cruise to Menanggul River, a small tributary of the Kinabatangan, in search of more wildlife, returning to the lodge for dinner.

**Overnight: Hornbill Lodge (two nights)** - (please note that Riverside Lodge just informed us of twin room status now. They do not have 12 twin-bedded rooms. Our past groups stayed there but it has become worn.)



**Hornbill has just been renovated. They have 12 rooms with a king bed and a single bed, so we ask that you flip a coin of who gets which bed. Each room has private balcony facing the river, modern bath, coffee and tea service, A/C, hairdryer and more with great breakfast. They provide our river cruises at dawn, afternoon and at night to see the wildlife. Also, evening jungle walks with great naturalist guides. Look for orangutans, proboscis monkeys, pygmy elephants, langurs, wild cats, crocs, amazing bird life and more. This is a totally sustainable eco-**

**lodge run by tour operator "River Junkies" who hire local villages to give back to the communities. [www.hornbill-lodge.com](http://www.hornbill-lodge.com)**



Bornean Sun Bear  
(Photographer: Clement Liew Kai Hin, Format: JPEG)



Borneo Pygmy Elephant, Sukau  
(Photographer: Clement Liew Kai Hin, Format: JPEG)

## 10 Sep - Jungle Cruising Sukau

B,L,D

The jungle comes alive in the morning, and we'll wake to the calls of gibbons and hornbills for an early morning river cruise. Our waterway expedition takes us to Pitas Oxbow Lake to observe Borneo's wildlife, which might include elephants, nine species of monkeys, monitor lizards, macaques, crocs, otters, and monkeys as we travel on Sabah's longest river. The most famous attraction is the proboscis, "big nose of Borneo", monkeys endemic only in Borneo.

We return to the lodge for breakfast and have free time to spend at our leisure whether exploring the area or relaxing on the sundeck while enjoying the river view.



At 4.30 pm, we embark on a Wetland river cruise in search of more wildlife and there is optional trekking so bring hiking shoes, just in case.



Overnight: Hornbill

**11 Sep-** Sukau – Sandakan – Flight to Kota Kinabalu B,L

Make the most of your last morning and rise ahead of dawn to watch the world spring to life. We can then enjoy a hearty breakfast surrounded by nature before we take a 7.30 am scheduled boat to Sandakan. Once there, we'll have the opportunity to explore the city a bit before lunch at a local restaurant. In the afternoon, we make our way to the Sandakan International Airport for a short flight to the island of Kota Kinabalu.

We return to civilization upon landing, we're taken to the stunning Shangri-La Tanjung Aru Resort. Set on 25 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens, this is a place to be pampered. Once settled in, feel free to explore or enjoy the resort's 6 restaurants and numerous amenities during your free evening. There are six restaurants and bars to explore on this island resort.

Overnight: [Shangri-la Tanjung Aru](#) (3 nights)



Shangri-La Tanjung Aru Resort & Spa is a luxurious beachfront resort located in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia. Nestled along the shores of the South China Sea, it offers stunning views, white sandy beaches, and lush tropical gardens. The resort features elegantly designed rooms and suites, world-class dining, and a range of recreational activities, including water sports and a lavish spa. With its serene setting and top-notch amenities, it provides an idyllic escape for both relaxation and adventure.

**12 Sep-** Marine Park Cruise, Kota Kinabalu **B,L**

Gear up for a full day of fun on the water at Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park on Manukan Island.

Switch onto island time at this park known for its crystal-clear waters and colorful marine life. It's just a 15-minute ferry ride from our hotel to one of the five stunning islands that make up the Tunku Abdul Rahman Park. The boomerang shaped Manukan Island is the second largest island within the park, with excellent stretches of beaches and a good trail system around the island. The whole day is free to spend at our leisure; picnicking, snorkeling, exploring the island, or just relaxing on the beach. We enjoy a sumptuous lunch on the beach and at 3 pm we board the boat from the island jetty back to Sabah and transfer back to the hotel for an evening of exploration or relaxation.

Overnight: [Shangri-la Tanjung Aru](#)



**13 Sep-** **B**

Today is a day of leisure to enjoy this 5-star resort. The Shangri-La Tanjung Aru is home to the private STAR Marina, a water play area and the Sunset Bar, renowned as one of the world's top seven places to watch the sunset. Time for snorkeling, sea kayaks, parasailing and more. You can also take advantage of the many unique treatments at the Chi Spa located in a unique standalone spa village sitting on an island connected to the hotel by a private causeway.

Or, you may choose to escape out of the city and journey into nature at the sister resort of Shangri-la's Rasa Ria, about 45 minutes away. This is where the sea meets the rainforest and at a 400-acre beach resort with a 3 km private beach. In the city of KK, you can visit the handicraft market or tour or the stilt villages, river rafting or Poring hot springs.

If you want to continue exploring nature, you can arrange to visit the acclaimed Kinabalu National Park and the 13,400-foot Mount Kinabalu, Malaysia's tallest peak, a mecca for climbers. Ninety miles away, thrilling jungle trekking and camping await in the Crocker Range National Park.

Overnight: [Shangri-la Tanjung Aru](#)

**14 Sep- Departure** **B**