



Multiculturalism has not only made Malaysia a gastronomical paradise, it has also made Malaysia home to hundreds of colourful festivals. It's no wonder that we love celebrating and socialising. As a people, Malaysians are very laid back, warm and friendly.

Geographically, Malaysia is as diverse as its culture. There are two parts to the country, 11 states in the peninsula of Malaysia and two states on the northern part of Borneo. Cool hideaways are found in the highlands that roll down to warm, sandy beaches and rich, humid mangroves.

One of Malaysia's key attractions is its extreme contrasts. Towering skyscrapers look down upon wooden houses built on stilts, and five-star hotels sit several metres away from ancient reefs.

For the perfect holiday full of surprises, eclectic cultures and natural wonders, the time is now, the place is **Malaysia**.

Country

Malaysia comprises of Peninsular Malaysia, and the states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo.

Geographic Location

Situated between 2° and 7° to the North of the Equator line, Peninsular Malaysia is separated from Sabah and Sarawak by the South China Sea. In the northern part of Peninsular Malaysia lies Thailand, and in the south, neighbouring Singapore. Sabah and Sarawak are bounded by Indonesia while Sarawak also shares borders with Brunei.

Area: 329,758 square km

Population: 30,949,962

Capital City: Kuala Lumpur

Government Administrative Centre: Putrajaya

People

Malays comprise 50.1% of the population, Chinese 22.6%, indigenous 11.8%, Indian 6.7%, other 0.7%, non-citizens 8.2% makes up the rest of the population. (as of 2010).

Language

(Bahasa Melayu) Malay is the national language in use, but English is widely spoken. The ethnic groups also converse in the various languages and dialects.

Religion

Islam is the official religion of the country, but other religions are widely practised.

Government

Malaysia follows the bicameral legislative system, adopting a democratic parliamentary. The head of the country is the King or the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong, a position which is changed every five years among the Malay Sultanates. The head of government is the Prime Minister.

Weather

The country experiences tropical weather year-round. Temperatures are from 21°C (70°F) to 32°C (90°F). Higher elevations are much colder with temperatures between 15°C (59° F) to 25°C (77° F). Annual rainfall varies from 2,000mm to 2,500mm.

Main Holidays

New Year*, Hari Raya Aidiladha*, Federal Territory Day **, Chinese New Year *, Awal Muharam*, Maulidur Rasul*, Labour Day*, Wesak*, King's Birthday*, National Day* Deepavali# Hari Raya Aidilfitri* Christmas*

Note: (*) - National Holidays (**) - Putrajaya, Kuala Lumpur & Labuan only (#) - except Labuan & Sarawak

Economic Profile

Manufacturing constitutes the largest single component of Malaysia's economy. Tourism and primary commodities such as petroleum, palm oil, natural rubber and timber are major contributors to the economy.

Currency

The monetary unit of the country is Ringgit Malaysia and is written as RM. The exchange rate is valued at USD1 = RM4.4235 (as of April 2017). Foreign currencies can be exchanged at banks and money changers.

Banking Hours

Most states: Monday- Friday: 9.30 am to 4.30 pm.

Saturday & Sunday: Closed (Some banks and its branches are opened Saturdays).

About Malaysia

Last Updated Monday, 17 April 2017 11:00

Kelantan, Kedah, Terengganu & Johor: Sunday - Wednesday :9.30 am to 4.30 pm. Thursday :9.30 am to 4.00 pm.

Friday/Saturday*/Public holiday: Closed

Time

Eight hours ahead of GMT and 16 hours ahead of U.S Standard Time.

Electricity

Voltage is 220 - 240 Volt AC at 50 cycles per second. Standard 3-pin square plugs and socket.

* Further information on the country can also be obtained from the Malaysian government's official portal, www.malaysia.gov.my .