

# Malaysia Travel Advisory

Prepared by: Indeed Travels

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## Overview

Malaysia is a diverse Southeast Asian nation known for its multicultural society, stunning landscapes, modern cities, and tropical islands. From the bustling metropolis of Kuala Lumpur to the rainforests of Borneo, Malaysia offers a unique blend of urban and natural attractions. Its rich history, diverse cuisine, and a mix of Malay, Chinese, Indian, and indigenous cultures make it a fascinating destination. As with any travel, being aware of local customs, safety precautions, and practical advice will ensure a seamless and enjoyable trip.

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## Entry Requirements

### 1. Visa and Passport

- **Visa-Free Entry:** Citizens of many countries, including the US, UK, Australia, and most EU nations, can enter Malaysia visa-free for tourism for up to 90 days. Ensure your passport is valid for at least six months from the date of entry.
- **Visa on Arrival:** Travelers from select countries may obtain a visa on arrival for a shorter stay.
- **Tourist Visa:** If you are not from a visa-exempt country or plan to stay longer, you may need to apply for a tourist visa. Visa extensions are possible and can be processed at Malaysian immigration offices.

### 2. COVID-19 Requirements

- Malaysia has relaxed most of its COVID-19 restrictions, but travelers are advised to check for the latest entry requirements regarding vaccination status or testing. Face masks may still be required in certain areas like public transport and healthcare facilities.
- **Health Insurance:** While not mandatory, it is recommended to have travel insurance that includes COVID-19 coverage.

### 3. Customs Regulations

- You may bring personal goods into Malaysia without paying duties, but there are strict regulations regarding the import of alcohol, cigarettes, and illegal substances. Make sure to declare any valuable items.
  - Importing drugs carries severe penalties, including capital punishment. Avoid any contact with illegal substances during your stay.
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## Health and Safety

### 1. Healthcare in Malaysia

- Malaysia boasts excellent medical facilities, especially in major cities like Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Johor Bahru. Private hospitals offer world-class services, and medical tourism is growing in the country.
- **Emergency Numbers:** For medical emergencies, dial **999** for an ambulance or **112** from a mobile phone.
- **Travel Insurance:** Ensure you have comprehensive travel insurance that covers medical emergencies and evacuation if necessary.

### 2. Vaccinations and Health Precautions

- Standard vaccinations such as **Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Typhoid**, and **Tetanus** are recommended.
- **Dengue Fever** is prevalent in urban and rural areas. Protect yourself by using mosquito repellent and staying in accommodations with proper netting or air conditioning.
- **Malaria:** While the risk of malaria is low in peninsular Malaysia, there is a higher risk in rural and forested areas of Borneo. Antimalarial medication may be required for longer stays in these regions.
- **Food and Water Safety:** Stick to bottled or boiled water and avoid ice in street beverages. While Malaysia's street food is delicious, be cautious and opt for vendors with high turnover for the freshest ingredients.

### 3. Safety Tips

- **Petty Crime:** Pickpocketing and bag snatching can occur in tourist areas and public transportation hubs. Always be mindful of your belongings and avoid walking in secluded areas at night.
- **Public Transportation:** Stick to reputable taxi services or rideshare apps like **Grab** to ensure safety and fair pricing.
- **Drug Laws:** Malaysia has some of the strictest drug laws in the world, with severe punishments for possession or trafficking. Stay away from any involvement with drugs.

- **Protests and Demonstrations:** Avoid any large public demonstrations or political gatherings, which can sometimes occur, particularly in Kuala Lumpur.
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## Local Laws and Etiquette

### 1. Cultural Sensitivity

- Malaysia is a predominantly Muslim country, and visitors should be mindful of local customs and practices. Modest dress is expected, especially when visiting religious sites or rural areas.
- **Respect for Islam:** Avoid public displays of affection, and be respectful of religious practices, especially during **Ramadan**, when eating, drinking, or smoking in public is discouraged during daylight hours.
- **Temple Visits:** Remove shoes before entering temples or mosques, and dress conservatively, covering your shoulders and knees.

### 2. Alcohol and Smoking

- Alcohol is widely available in Malaysia, particularly in non-Muslim areas and tourist spots like Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Langkawi. However, be respectful of local customs in rural or predominantly Muslim regions where alcohol consumption is frowned upon.
- Smoking is banned in all indoor public places, including restaurants and bars. Be sure to check for designated smoking areas to avoid fines.

### 3. Public Behavior

- **Greetings:** The traditional Malay greeting is a slight bow with both hands clasped. The **salam** is a handshake-like gesture used among Malay Muslims.
  - **Head and Feet:** As in many Asian cultures, avoid pointing your feet at people or religious objects, and never touch someone's head.
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## Getting Around

### 1. Public Transportation

- **Taxis and Ridesharing:** Taxis are widely available in cities, but be sure to use metered taxis or book through a ridesharing app like **Grab** for a safer and hassle-free experience.

- **Buses:** Malaysia has an extensive and affordable bus network, connecting cities and towns throughout the country. Long-distance buses between Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Singapore are popular with tourists.
- **Trains:** The train system in Malaysia is efficient and scenic, with services such as the **KTM** connecting the capital with towns across the country. The **KLIA Ekspres** is the fastest way to get to and from Kuala Lumpur International Airport.
- **Monorail and MRT:** In Kuala Lumpur, the Monorail and MRT systems provide an easy and inexpensive way to get around the city.

## 2. Traveling Between Cities

- **Domestic Flights:** Air travel is a convenient way to travel between Peninsular Malaysia and Borneo (Sabah and Sarawak), or to remote islands. Popular airlines like **AirAsia**, **Malaysia Airlines**, and **Firefly** operate frequent flights.
- **Ferries:** To reach islands like **Langkawi**, **Tioman**, and **Redang**, ferries are widely available and well-maintained. Plan ahead, especially during monsoon seasons, as weather can affect travel schedules.

## 3. Driving in Malaysia

- If you plan to rent a car, you will need an **International Driving Permit (IDP)** along with your home country's license. Roads are generally in good condition, but traffic in major cities can be congested.
- **Driving Tip:** Drive on the left side of the road, and watch for motorbikes, especially in busy areas.

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## Top Destinations in Malaysia

### 1. Kuala Lumpur – The Modern Capital

Malaysia's capital is a melting pot of cultures, modern skyscrapers, and colonial architecture. Visit the iconic **Petronas Twin Towers**, explore the **Batu Caves**, and experience the lively markets of **Chinatown** and **Little India**.

### 2. Penang – A Food Lover's Paradise

Known as the "Pearl of the Orient," Penang offers a blend of modernity and tradition. The capital, **George Town**, is a UNESCO World Heritage site, famous for its street art, colonial buildings, and incredible street food. Don't miss the **Penang Hill** and the **Kek Lok Si Temple**.

3. **Langkawi** – Tropical Island Escape  
For beach lovers, **Langkawi** is an archipelago of 99 islands with pristine beaches, clear waters, and lush rainforests. Popular activities include snorkeling, diving, and taking a cable car ride up to **Gunung Mat Cincang** for breathtaking views.
  4. **Borneo (Sabah and Sarawak)** – Adventure Awaits  
**Borneo** is a nature lover's paradise with its rich biodiversity, ancient rainforests, and indigenous cultures. Explore **Kinabalu National Park** in Sabah, home to **Mount Kinabalu**, or visit **Sarawak's Mulu Caves**, a UNESCO World Heritage site.
  5. **Cameron Highlands** – Malaysia's Green Getaway  
Famous for its tea plantations and cool climate, the **Cameron Highlands** offer a serene escape from the heat of the lowlands. Enjoy tea-tasting, strawberry picking, and scenic walks through lush green hills.
  6. **Malacca** – Historic Charm  
**Malacca**, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is one of Malaysia's most historically significant cities. With its mix of Portuguese, Dutch, and British influences, Malacca offers a charming blend of old architecture, museums, and vibrant culture.
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## Money and Currency

1. **Currency**
    - The official currency is the **Malaysian Ringgit (MYR)**. ATMs are widely available in cities and most tourist areas. Credit cards are accepted in hotels, restaurants, and malls, but smaller businesses may prefer cash.
  2. **Tipping**
    - Tipping is not customary in Malaysia, though it is appreciated. In restaurants, leaving small change or rounding up the bill is common practice.
  3. **Bargaining**
    - Haggling is acceptable in markets and with street vendors, but not in malls or established shops.
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## Climate

- Malaysia has a tropical rainforest climate, characterized by high humidity and temperatures ranging from 25°C to 32°C (77°F to 90°F) year-round. The country experiences two monsoon seasons:
    - **Southwest Monsoon:** From May to September, affecting the west coast of peninsular Malaysia.
    - **Northeast Monsoon:** From November to March, bringing heavy rains to the east coast and Borneo.
  - **Best Time to Visit:** The best time to visit **Peninsular Malaysia** is between **March and October**, while **Borneo** is best visited between **April and September**.
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Malaysia is a land of diverse cultures, incredible landscapes, and unforgettable experiences. Let **Indeed Travels** guide you through a journey of a lifetime. For further inquiries or to customize your Malaysia itinerary, contact us today!