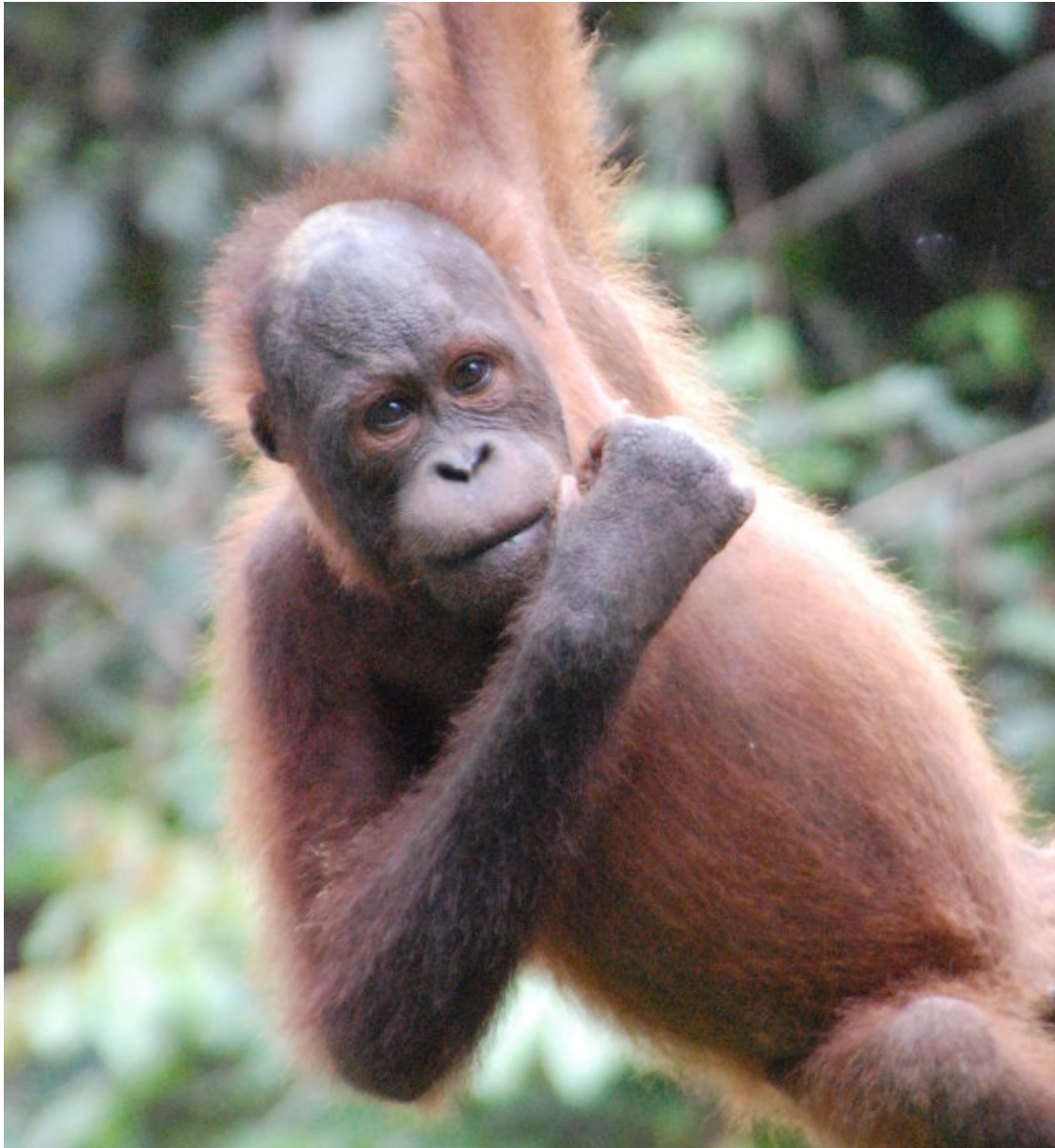


Borneo



Wilds of Borneo

11 days Kota Kinabalu to Sandakan

Tip of Borneo - Jungles - Orang Utans - Wildlife - Beaches

Borneo is an adventurous place with high mountains, extensive jungle, fierce rivers and amazing wildlife. We'll show you all of this and more. The ride will have some hills and options for mountain biking with everyone linking up at the end of the day - this way there is something for everyone. We finish in Sandakan with a visit to the famous Orang Utan Rehabilitation Centre.

Itinerary



Day 1 | Kota Kinabalu

You are free to arrive any time throughout the day. In KK, as it is known to the locals, we will stay in a centrally located hotel with a pool. We will meet at 6pm for a group briefing and our first dinner together. If you are arriving early and want extra nights at the starting hotel please let us know and we can book this for you. (D)

Day 2 | Tauran | 48km

We start the cycling with an easy half day ride out of Kota Kinabalu to a beach resort north of the city. Cycling directly out of our hotel will mean riding through some traffic to get out of the city but once you've seen Kota Kinabalu you'll realize that despite it being the capital of the state, it is little more than a large town. Today you'll ride along the coastline and see your first mangroves - two features that you'll be seeing a lot through the coastal section of the tour. The Tauran Beach Resort is a great place to spend the afternoon slowing down, taking a swim in the ocean or enjoying a beer next to the pool. (B L D)

Day 3 | Teluk Usukan | 62km

Today is an incredibly varied day with all types of riding and a little test of balance along the way. The first 16km take you along smaller back roads before we hit a larger road with medium traffic. There is one 4km hill to contend with along this stretch. 10km later we get off the highway and into some very interesting terrain. A village road leads us to a local suspension bridge, a common feature in Sabah where rivers are many and road bridges few. These bridges are important for the local people but only serve as foot bridges - they are narrow and sway with your steps. We will cross the bridge with our bikes while the support vehicles go the long way around. After the bridge comes a short mountain biking section of 4km. This is a fantastic stretch of road that takes us well away from settled areas and even for those not used to mountain biking most of this section can be ridden rather than walked. After this small 'lump' we take tiny village roads to Teluk Usukan, our overnight stop. The beach resort is simple but on a great section of beach which is good for a swim after a challenging ride. Tonight's accommodation has shared bathroom facilities but the rooms, while simple, are very comfortable and have air conditioning. (B L D)

Day 4 | Kota Marudu | 68km

A meandering back road makes for a wonderful morning as we ride through villages, farmland, alongside rivers and if the weather is clear all under the gaze of Mt Kinabalu. The second half of the ride takes us along a more main road into the 'thumb' of north Borneo. There is a significant hilly section that needs to be crossed to get over to our destination of Kota Marudu. There is not much to Kota Marudu which makes it all the more interesting. Few visitors stay here so expect a few looks. There is a great night market to check out but otherwise enjoy being in a rare little corner of the world. Our accommodation tonight is the best in town - a simple hotel that is clean and functional. (B L D)

Day 5 | Kudat | 49km

We have some nice variety on our travels today starting out on the back roads around Kota Marudu. For those looking for a bit of extra fun we have an alternative route that is no longer than the regular route but takes you over a local suspension bridge and along a short section of single track - a nice little adventure before rejoining the group. Once out on the main road we ride on to the end of the cycling section of the day at a restaurant and jetty. After lunch at the restaurant we leave the bikes and take to boat to cross the Marudu Bay directly to Kudat - about a 1 hour cruise. In Kudat you can relax in the relative luxury of the Kudat Golf Club and Resort which even has a pool! In the event of bad weather we will transfer to Kudat. (B L)

Day 6 | Kudat & the Tip of Borneo | 70km

Borneo is the 3rd largest island in the world and today you'll find yourself at its most northern point where the south China Sea and the Sulu Sea merge - not that amazing really but the site of this point is actually quite worth the trip. We will cycle sealed and unsealed roads during the day stopping at some beautiful secluded beaches for a swim. This is one of the best sections of riding of the trip. At the Tip a thin finger of land juts out and takes the honour of the most northern point. The beach here is a delight - beautiful clear water, some surf for body surfing and no one there! We'll enjoy a bbq on the beach before returning to Kudat. (B L)

Day 7 | Rungas Longhouse | 42km

Another day of options gives those looking for easy or harder riding to decide their fate as we head back south. Take sealed roads all the way or take off onto the dirt back roads for something a little more challenging. Our destination tonight is a stay in a Rungas village. We will be staying in a traditional longhouse which means very basic conditions in a bamboo hut that is long (hence the name) and divided into separate rooms. Conditions might be simple but it will be a great cultural experience. Mattresses and mosquito nets are provided. In the evening we will be treated to a cultural show and dinner by the local villagers. (B L D)

Day 8 | Mt Kinabalu National Park

A day off the bike makes for a nice break. We will take a vehicle transfer to the entrance to the Mt Kinabalu National Park and have a free afternoon to walk the trails, enjoy a massage or just relax. If the weather is clear you will have the 4100m front of Mt Kinabalu in your sights from the lodge. It is amazing to be sitting under the gaze of such an impressive peak. (B L)

Day 9 | Poring | 39km

The final ride of the trip is a mostly downhill ride to Poring Hot Springs where it is finally time for a full rest day. There are two route choices again today so you can choose to extend your efforts a little if you wish. During the ride we will look out for flowering Rafflesia flowers that are known to bloom in this area. The Rafflesia is the world's largest flowering plant. It flowers grow up to 90cm and only last a few days before dying so to see one will be a special bonus. Locals who own land in the area keep their eyes out for blooms and set up little ticket boxes to their land for the passing tourist trade so we'll easily know if there is one close to our cycling route. At Poring you'll have the afternoon to relax in the hot springs or take a walk in the surrounding jungle. (B)

Day 10 | Sandakan

As a final treat today is monkey day. Departing in the morning from Poring we drive across Sabah to Sandakan, a coastal town with a large Chinese community. On the way we will make a visit to the famous Sepilok Orang Utan Rehabilitation Centre located near Sandakan. The Centre is fighting the battle for the orang utans which are facing habitat loss and capture. Everyday the feeding platforms are visited by the orang utans that have released back into the wild. Over time many orang utans return to a complete wild existence and stop relying on a daily feed from humans. It is a popular sight but highly entertaining. In the evening we will enjoy our last night together and celebrate the end of the tour. (B L D)

Day 11 | end of tour

Check out time is midday. If you require extra nights in Sandakan or assistance with onward travel please let us know. (B)

Tour Details

Style

Fully supported bike tour

Inclusions

Bikes, Grasshopper tour leader (tour leader only included for groups of 5 or more travellers), local guide, all entrance fees and activities as listed per itinerary, most meals, accommodation on twin share basis.

Group Size

Minimum 2, maximum 14.

Food

Include meals: 10 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 6 dinners. Fruit and snacks will be provided on cycling days. You should consider bring some of your favourite energy snacks and electrolyte powder for the cycling days.

Accommodation

6 nights comfortable hotel, 1 night simple hotel, 2 nights guesthouse with shared bathroom, 1 night longhouse (basic bamboo building with shared bathrooms).

Due the nature of cycling trips we stay in some towns where the general standard of accommodation is quite low. In these places we have chosen the best possible place to stay—trust us there's nothing better!

The night in the longhouse is the most simple night of accommodation. You will be sleeping on a mattress in a simple bamboo structure. Anyone who has been trekking in Northern Thailand will have some idea of what it is like. Mosquito nets are provided and there are modern shared bathroom facilities on site.

Extra Accommodation

We can book additional accommodation before the tour in Kota Kinabalu or after the tour in Sandakan at competitive rates. Should you wish to extend your stay we can organise trekking at Mt Kinabalu and snorkeling/diving at Sipadan Island.

Arrival Details

Meeting Point—this trip will begin and end at a central hotel in Kota Kinabalu. There are many shops, restaurants and facilities located nearby. The hotel has comfortable rooms with private bathrooms, air conditioning, TV 24 hour reception and a great breakfast! It can be easy to get lost in any new city so

make sure you take a hotel card and a map when you go out exploring.

On arrival at the Kota Kinabalu International Airport you will find a pre-paid taxi counter outside the terminal. A taxi on the hotel should cost approximately 20 MYR (about US\$6). If you arrive by Air Asia you will land at Terminal 2— this is the same airport, just a different terminal and the taxi situation works the same.

Cycling Details

Days Cycling

7 days

378km - with an option for longer distances on some days.

Difficulty

Moderate to Difficult - this trip involves some riding up long mountain roads and some dirt road riding. Riders should be of reasonable cycling fitness. There are options for extended rides and more difficult mountain biking sections for those looking for a bigger challenge.

Cycling conditions

Almost the entire tour is on quite back roads with only a few sections on highways. Traffic in Borneo is generally light so even the highway sections are pleasant for riding. There will be some dirt road riding in areas where there are no sealed road options. On all days there will be short hills to ride - there is little in the way of flat land of Borneo. The days are generally short so there will always be time to walk up any hills that are too steep to ride.

Bikes

Bikes are included in this tour. We will supply Giant mountain bikes with 27 speed Acera gears, disc brakes and front suspension. The bikes have knobbly tyres with a constant centre tread. You are welcome to bring your own bikes. For those looking to ride the more difficult mountain biking sections a fully suspended mountain bike would not be a bad choice!

Helmets

Helmets are compulsory on this tour. If you not have a helmet please let us know and we will provide one for you.

Support Vehicle

For the cycling days we will have the backup support of a small bus that will carry our luggage, snacks, water, and anybody not cycling.

Travel Details

Visas

In Malaysia, 60 day single entry visas are free on arrival for many nationalities (including Australians). Check with your local travel agent to see if you require a visa.

Before you travel check your passport to ensure that there is room for a visa and entry/exit stamps (at least 3 pages) and that it has at least 6 months validation remaining.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of participating in a Grasshopper Adventure that you hold travel insurance for the duration of the trip. Insurance must include comprehensive medical and emergency evacuation. Your travel insurance details will be checked by your group leader on arrival at the starting point hotel.

Flights

International flights to the starting point and from the finish point are not included in the price of this tour. We can assist with the purchase of inter-Asia flights and provide advice if you are considering overland travel.

There are a couple of good options for getting yourself to Borneo. One good option is to use **Air Asia** (www.airasia.com) who operate regular flights from Kuala Lumpur to Kota Kinabalu and Sandakan and can be booked online. Simply get yourself to Kuala Lumpur and then connect onto the Air Asia service.

Money

The official currency of Malaysia is the Ringgit which should be used for all transactions. Malaysia has a modern banking systems with ATMs and money changers in all towns. When coming to Malaysia it is possible to use Visa/Mastercard or Cirrus/Maestro cards to access cash with an ATM. You should, however, carry travelers cheques as a backup. Most international currencies can be exchanged so it is not necessary to bring only US dollars—AUD, EUR, CAD, NZD are all accepted at banks in major centres.

For current exchange rates visit:

www.oanda.com

Costs

We recommend that you allow approximately US\$15 for food and general living costs per day. Shopping money should be considered extra to this amount. It is customary to tip the guides and drivers in Malaysia. You should allow approximately US\$40 for tips. Note: this is a guide only, feel free to tip more or less (or nothing) depending on your satisfaction.

Health

There are no specific health requirements for travelling in Malaysia, however, we recommend that you visit a travel medicine doctor before travelling. You should carry a well stocked first aid kit with you when you travel. All Grasshopper Adventures Group Leaders are first aid trained, however, they are not permitted to distribute any medications.

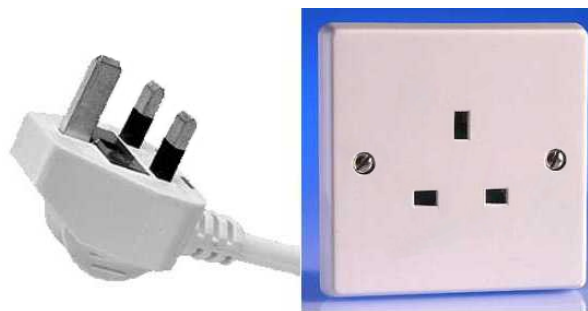
Electricity

Malaysia works on a 220 volt system and uses the British 3-pin rectangular blade plug. You can easily buy an adapter for much cheaper than home in country.

Packing

While we do have a support vehicle to carry your luggage during the cycling days, you will be required to carry your own luggage at times. Luggage will need to be loaded on and off buses and up and down stairs at hotels. For this reason we recommend that you pack as lightly as possible in a backpack.

You should consider bringing the following items:



<p>Personal Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backpack or small suitcase • Long trousers • Shorts • Shirts • Hat • Sandals/flip flops • Swimming Costume • Light rain coat • Sunglasses • Light Rain Coat • Toiletries • Small towel • Sunscreen • First Aid Kit • Mosquito Repellent • Camera and Film/Memory • Alarm Clock 	<p>Travel Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passport with 6 months validity and 3 spare pages • Travel insurance details • Flight tickets • Money - cash/credit cards/ travellers cheques • Phrase book <p>Bicycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat and pedals (<i>optional</i>) • Something to carry your personal belongings in while cycling, eg. day pack, bum bag, handlebar bag • Helmet • Cycling gloves • Bicycle water bottle • Bike shorts with something to put on over the top while off the bike
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Climate

Borneo has a tropical climate with generally warm to hot days and warm nights. The weather changes little throughout the year. Rain can fall at any time of the year. When staying overnight near the Mt Kinabalu Park Headquarter temperatures can be low so make sure you have long trousers and a long sleeve top to wear for this night.

Positive Impact

An integral part of traveling is to have a positive impact on the country that you are visiting. On this trip there are a number of things you can do to have a positive impact on the communities that we visit.

Traveling is as much about how you visit as where you visit. Our guides and group leader follow detailed guidelines on acceptable behaviors and practices. These cover cultural considerations, reduction and disposal of waste and protection of endangered wildlife.

As travelers we will provide you with specific guidelines to help you make responsible decisions whilst traveling. These guidelines cover appropriate dress, etiquette for visiting homes and religious complexes, waste and environmental issues and endeavor to explain cultural behaviors which may seem alien to western travelers.

Dress

Malaysia is still quite a conservative country. In rural areas and temples overly revealing clothing is considered offensive. You should make an effort to dress more conservatively in these situations. Walking around a village in bike shorts is not appropriate so if you wish to cycle in just bike shorts you should have something with you on the bike to put on over the top such as long loose shorts or a skirt/sarong. A good solution to this is 'shy shorts' which combine cycling shorts with loose long shorts over the top. When visiting temples/mosques shorts are acceptable providing they cover the knee. Sleeveless tops are not acceptable in temples/mosques.

Phrase Book

A highly memorable part of your travels will be the local people that you meet. In the tourist areas some people will speak English but away from these areas you should learn a few words of Malay.

We will teach you some of the basics but if you want to really interact we recommend bringing a phrase book.

Donations

Often when coming on trips overseas people like to bring items such as sweets, pens and books for children or old clothing for families. While this is a fantastic idea, if distributed in the wrong way it can actually create more problems. Giving items away to local people can create an expectation that a visiting foreigner equals free give away's. In some communities in Asia this has created whole villages where the only interaction is the locals asking for things. If you would like to donate anything to the communities that we visit we suggest that you give the items to Grasshopper Adventures which we will then pass on to development organisations, schools or whole communities. In this way items are distributed by those working in the communities who understand better the local needs.

Wildlife Support

There are a number of organizations in Borneo that work to support the endangered wilderness and wildlife of the area. Your tour leader will introduce these to you during your tour.

Important

All information in these tour notes is researched with care and provided in good faith. The information subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and Grasshopper Adventures.