

Sabah

Places of Interest

KINABALU PARK: This huge reserve surrounds Southeast Asia's tallest mountain, Gunung Kinabalu. The remarkable diversity of vegetation ranges from lowland to alpine species and includes pitcher plants, Rafflesia, orchids and rhododendrons, as well as many rare plants. The Park Headquarters is at an altitude of 1,500m and is 90km from Kota Kinabalu.

PORING HOT SPRINGS: Is located on the eastern side of Kinabalu park, 49km from Park Headquarters. Poring offers hot mineral water baths, a canopy walkway, a butterfly park and walking trails, as well as a restaurant, rare orchid garden and tropical garden.

RAFFLESIA FOREST RESERVE: Set in the mountainous Crocker Range, this reserve of rainforest is home to the Rafflesia, the world's largest flower. There is an interesting information centre, where maps pinpointing the location of any flowers currently in bloom can be obtained. There are several walking trails and a lookout point.

PULAU TIGA MARINE PARK: This marine reserve that includes three islands, is accessible by speedboat from Kota Kinabalu. There are interesting walking trails, unusual small mud volcanoes, and one of the islands is renowned for its breeding sea snakes.

KOTA BELUD: Home of the famous Bajau horsemen or "cowboys". The Sunday market or tamu is a colourful mix of coastal Bajau and Irranun with Kadazandusun agriculturalists. The buffalo market adjacent to the main tamu is also worth checking out.

TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN MARINE PARK: This consists of five islands – Gaya, Sapi, Manukan, Mamutik and Sulug. It is just minutes from downtown Kota Kinabalu by speedboat. There are walking trails on all islands, good beaches, snorkelling, barbecue and picnic facilities.

TURTLE ISLAND MARINE PARK: This is a marine reserve protecting three small islands where sea turtles come ashore to lay their eggs. Sabah Parks has limited accommodation and a restaurant on Pulau Selingan, where visitors can observe the nesting turtles and the hatchery. Bookings are essential.

SEPILOK ORANG UTAN SANCTUARY: Located inside a forest reserve close to Sandakan, this sanctuary gives visitors the chance to view orphaned young Orang Utans (found only in Borneo or Sumatra) being trained to live in the wild. Feeding time of the semi-wild animals is at 10am and 2.30pm in the forest.

GOMANTONG CAVES: This small reserve includes famous caves where swifts build edible nests of saliva, which are gathered twice a year in a dangerous and spectacular operation. Bats, swifts, birds and butterflies virtually guaranteed, with occasional sightings of mammals, including the Orang Utan.

SUKAU: This village on the lower Kinabatangan River is in a region renowned for its wildlife. Borneo's unique proboscis monkey can be seen along the river and its tributaries, as well as a wide range of other mammals and spectacular birds.

DANUM VALLEY CONSERVATION AREA: Set aside for research and conservation, this area offers a complete range of the flora and fauna of the lowland rainforest. Excellent for birdwatching from special towers – there are 50km of trails.

PULAU SIPADAN, MABUL, KAPALAI & PANDANAN: These islands are reached by boat via Semporna and are all dive resorts. Prime location is Sipadan, with world class diving.



Peak of Mt Kinabalu



Orang Utan, Sepilok



Snorkelling, Tunku Islands