



# Malaysia & Singapore



## Food & Culture Tour



Oct 13-25, 2013

Stephen Bugno

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*"Passing on the thrill of independent travel"*

# Malaysia & Singapore: Food & Culture Tour

Colonial Towns & Modern Metropolises

**13-25 October 2013: Singapore, Melaka, Kuala Lumpur, Penang**

## Tour Highlights

### **Singapore—Melaka—Kuala Lumpur—Penang**

This itinerary allows you to experience the long history of colonial influences in Malaysia as well as the dynamic urban centers of Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. Our tour will focus on the traveler's experience, as well as the history, rich culture, and delightful foods of all these destinations. The tour will start and end in the vibrant and sophisticated city-state of Singapore.



### **Singapore – 4 days**

Walk through Little India, China Town, and Orchard Rd.  
Visit the best hawker centers—eat where Singaporeans eat  
Hike along the Southern Ridges to see the Henderson Waves Bridge  
Visit Jurong Bird Park or Night Safari  
Do like Singaporeans and shop  
Visit the new Gardens by the Bay

### **Melaka—2 days**

Stay in the historic old town of Melaka  
Experience the taste of Melaka—chicken rice, laksa, wan tan mee, satay, and more  
Visit temples, mosques, churches, and historic residences  
Understand the complex layers of immigrants and colonial powers who've formed Melaka

### **Kuala Lumpur—3 days**

Witness Malaysia at its most modern  
Ascend the famous Petronas Towers  
Visit the Hindu pilgrimage site: Batu Caves  
Taste the specialties of KL food

Walk through Chinatown and other neighborhoods of interest  
Spot the few remaining colonial buildings  
Shopping—markets and malls

### **Penang (George Town)—3 days**

Experience the essence of Penang through eating at the many street hawker stalls  
Walk through historic George Town: past old colonial highlights, Little India, and more  
Visit a well-restored historic mansion  
Eat, eat, eat! Penang's is one of Asia's top food destinations.  
Appreciate the multi-cultural makeup of Penang

### **Why Our Tour is Different**

Our tours are different. The group will be small, limited to 12 individuals. The goal of our trip is simple: travel in a method that gives you better experiences. We will be passing on tourist traps in favor of sites of cultural interest. We will be using public transport the whole way, showing you how independent travelers do it. We'll stay at simple, small guesthouses and eat where the locals eat. We'll also be meeting with Malaysians and Singaporeans who will give us insight into their countries. Our pace of travel will be slower than a typical group, which will allow us to gain a deeper understanding of the place, not just as tourist passing through on a whirlwind tour. Our guides have years of independent travel experience and will be sharing some of their tricks of the trade with you.

### **Why Malaysia and Singapore?**

This is our premiere tour. Why did we choose Malaysia? Malaysia is one of our favorite destinations on earth due to its physical and human diversity. Peninsular Malaysia encompasses fascinating historical colonial towns, dynamic modern cities, wildlife, world-class beaches and diving. With a multi-cultural population of Malay, Chinese, Indian, and Indigenous, you'll see first-hand what makes Malaysia unique. Malaysia also offers incredible and varied food options. Singapore, bordering Malaysia, extends many of the same attractions, just in a more compact space.

### **What to expect:**

#### **Modern and Traditional**

Something we love about Malaysia is the fact that even though its infrastructure is developed and the society is modern in many ways, there are still lingering old-world charms. You'll especially see this in Penang and Melaka and the old neighborhoods of Kuala Lumpur and Singapore: blacksmiths, vintage

barbershops, old-school coffee shops, seamstresses at work, old colonial building facades, ancient religious rituals, and traditional markets.

### **Excellent Food**

Malaysia is a country obsessed with food. With three distinct cuisines, there are always diverse options available. We will help you sort through the realm of Malay, Chinese, and Indian cuisines. While the Malay and Indian foods can generally be considered spicy, the Chinese food may be a little easier on sensitive stomachs. Fresh fruit is also abundant: think mangos, papayas, pineapple, guavas, jackfruit, durian, and watermelon. Like desserts? Malaysia has some sweet concoctions that we would consider both odd and delicious. For most travelers, ourselves included, food is an absolute highlight of Malaysia and something we will focus on throughout the trip. This tour is especially suited to people who would like to try new foods. You don't have to be overly adventurous, but at least have to be curious.

### **Learning Travel Skills**

Our hope for this tour is to pass on some of the travel skills we've learned during our past 10-15 years of independent travels. By the end of the 13 days you'll have more confidence and more travel knowhow. If you want to stay on in Singapore, Malaysia or travel through the rest of Southeast Asia, you'll have that opportunity, depending on how you book your flight.

### **Learning History, Culture, Society & Food**

We won't bore you with long, drawn out explanations about places. Rather we'll show you what makes these destinations special and the crucial information needed to understand them. Our Malaysian guide will give you insights into contemporary Malaysian society and even share his experiences growing up in the country.

### **Unique Experiences**

We've planned meet-ups with locals where you'll have a chance to converse and ask questions and get different perspectives.

### **A Lot of Walking**

This trip will intentionally mimic our travel style. We walk a lot not only because it's the best way to experience a place, but it's free transport, environmentally friendly, and helps keep you healthy. Melaka and Penang are exceptionally good destinations to explore by foot. Travelers in our group should be relatively fit and healthy to keep up with the group.



### **Simple but Clean Accommodation**

The accommodation on this trip is not fancy. Each accommodation has been picked out by our team and they are all clean, small, locally-run guesthouses. Some will be air-conditioned, but it's not a guarantee. We've picked these places for several reasons, but mostly because they mirror our style of travel: comfortable, clean, economical, and supporting the local economy without spending a lot of money. Most of the accommodation includes dorm-room beds and shared bath facilities.

### **A Slow Travel Pace**

We have built in time for relaxation or extra independent exploration. We want the pace of this trip to be unhurried. This not only keeps travelers well-rested, but allows a more in-depth appreciation of the places. Instead of just being a typical tourist, you get to have a more intimate feel of the place. Many group tours run too fast and travelers are too worn out to enjoy the places they've paid so much to visit.

### **No Tourist Traps**

We've been traveling long enough to know the difference between the sites marketers want you to visit (for your tourist dollars) and the sites of legitimate historical and cultural interest. We also know the places that are interesting from a foreign perspective. These are the places we'll be taking you to. Understand our travel philosophy is more than just visiting sights; it's also about simply absorbing, experiencing and enjoying the atmosphere of each destination.

### **Ethical Travel**

On this trip, your tourist dollars will stay at the local level as much as possible. We'll be supporting small, locally-owned businesses for our accommodation and food. We'll be taking long-distance buses between cities and public transportation within cities. We'll minimize our use of taxis and take only one flight (Penang-Singapore). We'll also discuss social norms within Malaysia to get an idea of what behavior is appropriate.

### **No Tour Buses, No Lectures**

Our nightmare group tour is one where all tourists are stuffed into and out of buses to see cheesy sites. The tour guide's lectures drag on and on and the tourists are too tired to stay awake to pay attention or look outside to see the scenery. They stay at some generic hotel on the outskirts of the city and never have a chance to experience life in the destination they traveled so far to see.

Our tours are the antithesis of this scenario. Rather they mimic the style and spirit of independent travel that our guides have been experiencing for the past

decade, traveling in more than 70 countries. Instead we share with you the crucial information needed to appreciate each destination and travel skills necessary to travel on your own if you wish to do so.

### **Good Value**

Enjoyable travel does not need to be expensive. Malaysia offers travelers good quality accommodation, transport, food, and shopping for very decent prices. You'll also benefit from our intimate knowledge of these destinations. We're passionate about the experience, food, history, architecture, genuine sights, and sharing those places with fellow travelers.

### **Why Now?**

Up until this point, I (Stephen) have only been able to share my passion for traveling in writing and photography in both print and online media as well as my [travel blog](#) and my [own travel magazine](#) which I've been publishing since 2009. Join me as I take it to the next level and personally lead small groups of interested and culturally-aware travelers.

I want to transfer some of my knowledge about both Malaysia, which I love, and about the travel skills necessary to have real, organic, fulfilling travel experiences. Part of this philosophy involves traveling low to the ground, using public transportation, staying at small guesthouses, and eating at local establishments.

For more experienced travelers who want to join this trip, they will benefit from our leaders' in-depth knowledge about Malaysia and our previous trial and error traveling here. Most importantly, we've also scoped out the best places to eat.

### **Who is this trip for?**

This trip is targeted at first-time backpackers and travelers with little independent travel experience of all ages. It's also for those who may prefer to travel in a small group rather than solo. More experienced travelers who wish to join the group will take advantage of our accommodation booking and eating recommendations and can choose to break off from the group at any time or enjoy exploring the destination independently with the ample free time. Others might just be interested in how we travel.

This trip is for travelers of any age as long as they're comfortable and fit enough to carry their own luggage throughout the trip exclusively on public transport (bus and metro). The trip will include a lot of walking.

## [Our Travel Team](#)

Our team's objective is to channel our years of independent travel experience and passion for Malaysia into creating a unique and rich travel experience for you. We have diverse backgrounds and hope to share our insights and travel philosophy with you.



### **Stephen Bugno**

The trip-designer and organizer, Stephen fell in love with Malaysia the second he walked across the land border with Thailand in 2010. Visiting the fascinating cultural-melee towns of Melaka and Penang only made his interest in Malaysia grow. The cultural make-up of Malaysia, combined with the incredible food and destinations, along with ease of travel, made him want to take travelers there. Considering he's been to dozens of countries, the fact that he's chosen Peninsular Malaysia for his first tour tells you it's a special place. He blogs at [Bohemian Traveler](#).



### **Juno Kim**

A general love of Malaysia has brought Juno to both Peninsular Malaysia and Borneo four times. A trained-mechanical engineer, Juno followed her passion for photography and travel to leave her native South Korea to explore the world. In that span of time she's created her own Media company through building blogs and designing websites and gaining influence of thousands on social media. She's also got an eye for beauty and a super-fine palette which has helped us sort through the best places to eat and include on our tour. Read more about Juno on her blog, [Runaway Juno](#).



## Noel Lau

Although born and raised in East Malaysia (Borneo), Noel Lau has called both Kuala Lumpur and Singapore home for periods of his life. He's traveled and lived abroad for much of his adult life which has broadened his appreciation for his home country. It's also taught him a thing or two about travel. He's here to lead our group and give us greater insight into Malaysian society as well as help us sort through all the wonderful food options. Read more about Noel on his blog, [Wander2nowhere](#).



*Ready to join us in Malaysia in October?  
Read below how to secure a spot!*



## The Cost

The cost includes:

- all transportation
- accommodation (dorm beds)
- admission to all included attractions and sights
- at least one meal per day.

**The cost: \$ 875**

Additional expenses:

- You'll be responsible for some meals. Prepared food is a good value in Singapore and Malaysia, so you can budget between \$3-5 per meal in Malaysia and \$3-9 in Singapore.
- You will also be responsible for booking your airfare to/from Singapore.
- Need help booking your airline ticket to/from Singapore? We'll do it for you. We have years of experience booking the cheapest airline tickets available. This service only costs \$50 extra. Please ask me about it.

### **Details:**

To confirm a spot on this tour;

1) Forward a deposit of \$200 using Paypal.com Please send the payment to:  
[gomadnomadtravelmag@gmail.com](mailto:gomadnomadtravelmag@gmail.com)

*(Please notify me if you don't have a PayPay account.)*

2) Fill out the following online application form: [Malaysia & Singapore Trip Application Form](#)

Once I receive **both the application form and deposit**, you will receive an email confirmation from me.

If you have any questions, please [contact me](#).

**Payment Details:**

Deposit: \$200

Balance of \$675 – will be due before August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Refund policy:

- Deposit fully refundable before: July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013
- Balance of \$675 –50% refundable before August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013  
After August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013 – balance non-refundable

**Arrival/Departure Information:** The tour will start at about noon on Sunday, October 13<sup>th</sup>. If you'll be arriving early in Singapore, I can help you with accommodation recommendations. Please let me know. The tour will finish in Singapore on Friday, October, 25<sup>th</sup> at approx. 1:20pm at Changi Airport. The tour will essentially finish in Penang and we will fly back to Singapore together. If you wish to continue traveling on your own from Penang, and want to forego your flight to Singapore, please let me know as soon as possible (if you know at time of sending your deposit, you'll be eligible for a refund of \$50.)

**Waiver:** All participants are required to sign a waiver releasing myself, Bohemian Traveler, and GoMad Nomad Travel Mag, LLC from any liability related to any aspect of this Malaysia & Singapore – Food & Culture Tour. It's a standard formality, but I just wanted to let you know ahead of time.

***Join the tour***