

MALAYSIA

MULU NATIONAL PARK



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Plus
BATU
Caves



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FOREWORD



Thanks for downloading this FREE interactive travel guide. You've made an excellent choice if you plan on **GETTING OFF THE BEATEN TRACK** in (LOCATION). Before you delve into the content of this travel guide, please take a few minutes to read this foreword. It outlines how to make the best use of the information contained within.

First-hand experience: This travel guide has been put together using first-hand experience gained from traveling to, and exploring, all the locations presented within. The information and photos featured in my travel guides, have been collated over years of putting boots on the ground. There is no second-hand information, or information which is plagiarized from other travel sources, within this guide. Every cave, waterfall, river, viewpoint, jungle trail, temple site, guesthouse and restaurant presented, or promoted, I have been to and seen and/or experienced myself.

Getting off the beaten track: The primary focus of my travel guides is **ADVENTURE TRAVEL** (and activities) to locations which are non-mainstream tourist destinations. As an example, there is no information for the mainstream tourist locations of **MALAYSIA** (except as transit hub's before heading off to a more remote location) listed in this travel guide. As such, the information in this guide is directed towards travelers (not tourists) who

are keen for a bit of adventure - caving, climbing, jungle trekking, kayaking - in an off the beaten track location, of South East Asia. If these types of activities aren't to your liking, then this travel guide won't be much use to you. There's no information in here about the party towns in South East Asia.

Budget travel: Knowing the importance of making the most of your hard-earned currency, my travel links ([12GO ASIA](#)) and accommodation links ([AGODA](#)) are predominantly budget oriented. They provide a range of options for getting to a central hub, or base, from which you can make your daily explorations.

Independent sightseeing: Instead of going on group tours, I strongly promote the idea of renting your own vehicle (car or motorbike) and venturing out yourself. To help you get to the exact location, there's always a [GOOGLE MAPS](#) link to show the route from a hub (hotel or guesthouse) to the sightseeing attraction. If there's a local tour operator offering excellent adventure type tours, or activities, I'll provide links to their website. A good example of a great adventure tour operator is [GREEN DISCOVERY LAOS](#), who offer excellent caving, kayaking and trekking tours throughout Laos.

The Table of Contents: This is page four of the travel guide and has a sequential list of sections, which you can go to directly by clicking on the **GREEN** numbered tab.

YouTube Links: These take you directly to my YouTube Vlog ([Megaworld Asia](#)) where you can see short, high quality travel videos of the numerous attractions listed in my travel guides. If you enjoy the videos, please hit the like button and don't forget to subscribe to see my upcoming adventures.

Your next adventure is just one click away

Safe travels,

MEGA

MULU NATIONAL PARK

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General Info = Getting There, Accommodation, Transport & Dining

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**Your Next Adventure
Is Just One Click Away**

How To Use This Interactive Travel Guide

The Table Of Contents: To effortlessly move from the TOC to the page you want to view, simply click on the **page number**: 

YouTube Links: These will take you to a short highlights video, of the sightseeing attraction, in the section you're looking at:



Other Links: These take you to ancillary services such as recommended restaurants, or car and motorbike rental agencies, in the location you're traveling to:

ANCILLARY SERVICES

Travel Links: This takes you to **12GO ASIA**, an excellent travel group which provides a range of options for getting around the region:



The Table Of Contents: To move back to the TOC, click on the **yellow arrows**, at the bottom of each Page: 

Google Maps Links: These provide a route from a designated location (e.g., a hotel) to a particular sightseeing attraction:



Information Links: These links take you to information sites, such as Wikipedia or Wiki-voyage, to provide more in-depth info on a particular subject or location:



Accommodation Links: This takes you to the Agoda website to check accommodation availability and make bookings:



It's Time To Get Off The Beaten Track



MULU NATIONAL PARK - GENERAL INFO

About: Gunung Mulu national Park is a spectacular World Heritage Site located in the state of Sarawak in East Malaysia. It is an important area of biodiversity, situated deep in the jungles of Borneo, with a combination of dense jungle, karst mountain ranges, swift flowing rivers, and large volume caves. For those seeking adventure in the jungles of East Malaysia, the National Park has been developed to provide a range of hiking and caving tours. It also has a nice selection of accommodation options for anyone wanting an extended stay in the area.

Getting there: The National Park HQ, and the nearby village of Mulu, are in a remote area, some 95 kilometers from the nearby city of Miri. Note: There are no sealed roads connecting Mulu to other areas of Sarawak. The only way of getting there is on a Malaysian Airlines flight from one of the provincial cities, such as Miri or Kuching.

From Singapore: If you're traveling from overseas, the best option are to catch a Scoot Airlines flight from Singapore to Miri. **Click on the following LINK to see your travel options from Singapore to Mulu:**



From Kuala Lumpur: If you're in West Malaysia, the most direct option is to catch a Malaysian Airlines flight from Kuala Lumpur to Miri. **Click on the following LINK to see your travel options from Kuala Lumpur to Mulu:**

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MULU NATIONAL PARK - GENERAL INFO

Accommodation: The National Park HQ has a selection of accommodation near the park office. The options are private, air-conditioned bungalows, and dormitory/hostel, shared accommodation. The park facilities also include a café/restaurant and a handicrafts shop. **Click on the following LINK for booking inquiries:**

Mulu National Park Accommodation

High End Accommodation: For those wanting more of a luxury stay at Mulu, the Marriott has a resort near to the National Park HQ. **Click on the following LINK for booking inquiries:**



Tours within the National Park: The primary sightseeing and adventure activities offered in the National Park are caving and trekking/hiking. Note: The caving tours often include some hiking to get to the entrances. Although most of the tours are done with a guide, there are some hiking trails which are classed as self-guided.

There is no fee for tours which are self-guided. The hiking tours, and one of the caving tours, start from the park HQ and follow developed trails to, and from, the specific sightseeing attraction. Several of the caving tours involve travel upriver in a motorized boat, to get to the cave entrances. The tours all have a designated starting time and must be pre-booked to ensure a place.

Hiking and trekking: There are several hikes/treks available. The more physically challenging, or specialized, are guided tours. The less physically challenging hikes are unguided tours. All hikes/treks start from the park HQ and follow trails into the surrounding rain forest and nearby Karst Peaks.

Guided Hikes: The two most popular guided hikes are the MULU CANOPY SKY-WALK and the MULU PINNACLES overnight trek. Note: All guided hikes must be booked in advance to be sure of securing a place on the start date.

Unguided Hikes: There are several unguided hikes which follow trails starting at the park HQ. All are reasonably easy hikes with most flat going on the trails. The most popular are the BOTANIC HERITAGE TRAIL and the PAKU VALLEY LOOP.

Mulu Treks and Trails



National Park Accommodation

THE MULU CANOPY WALK

About: This is a 450 meter circuit, some twenty meters above the forest floor, which offers the opportunity for a look at life in the tree tops. The tour starts at the National Park HQ, normally at 07:00 am, or 08:30, and takes the walkway to Deer Cave. The distance from the National Park HQ to the ascent stairway, to the Sky-walk trail, is 1.7 km. According to the local guides, this is the longest tree top suspension circuit in Southeast Asia.

Safety: The bridge, although prone to swaying as sightseers cross each section, is completely safe. To reduce the loading on each suspended section, there's a maximum of two people at any time.

Doing the Walk: The spans of suspended sections are linked to solid platforms, affixed to tree trunks. There is seven suspended sections in total. When arriving at each fixed platform it's a good idea to take a short break, to enjoy the surrounding jungle scenery, before pushing on to the next suspended section. This tour, with the hike out and back, can normally be completed in two hours.

Note: This is a good activity to combine in one day with tour to FAST-LANE CAVE, in the afternoon.

Mulu Canopy Walk



One of seven spans



Crossing the Suspension Bridge

CAVING TOURS - GENERAL INFO

About: These can be divided into two categories - SHOW CAVES and ADVENTURE CAVES. What's the difference? Show caves have developed pathways and internal lighting. Adventure caves have no pathways and no internal lighting. Note: One of the show caves - FAST LANE CAVE - is classed as semi adventure. It has a developed pathway but no internal lighting. **There are five show caves in Mulu National Park:**

- Deer cave
- Lang's Cave
- Wind cave
- Clearwater Cave
- Fast-lane/Lagang Cave

Note: These five caves can be visited on guided tours as part of a group, or privately. Tours through show caves aren't physically demanding and require no specialized caving training or experience. **There are four Adventure Cave Tours on offer:**

- Racer Cave - intermediate level
- Clearwater Revival - intermediate level
- Clearwater Connection - advanced level
- The Sarawak Chamber - advanced level

Note: These tours can only be done after an assessment is made by the tour guides. These tours are normally for experienced cavers who have their own equipment: lights, helmets, dry-



Deer Cave Entrance

For prices on the above-mentioned tours, click on the following link to contact Mulu National Park HQ:

Show Cave Tours

The Show Cave Tours: As mentioned, there are five show caves. However, for two of the tours, caves which are in close proximity are combined into the one tour. The only show cave tour, which is a stand-alone tour, is Fast-lane. Note: These cave tours will start from the park HQ at either 08:45 am or 2:00 pm.



Clearwater Cave

DEER & LANGS CAVE - GENERAL INFO

About: This is normally the first show cave tour that most visitors go after arriving at Mulu. The departure time from the park HQ is 2:00 pm. The flight from Miri usually arrives in Mulu just after midday, so you'll have time to check into your accommodation and be ready for the 2:00 pm departure. This is a guided tour which takes in two caves and offers a bonus of seeing the BAT EXODUS from Deer Cave at around 6:00 pm.

Getting to the cave entrances: This is the only show cave tour in which boat travel isn't involved. The tour starts from the park HQ and it's then a 3.3 km hike along a boarded walkway to the cave entrances. The trail winds through thick jungle providing the opportunity for wildlife sightings. Along the way the guide will stop and point out interesting aspects of fauna and flora. The trail ends at the bat observatory location. Sightseers can take a fifteen minute drink and toilet break before entering the caves. The bat observatory seating area faces a giant karst wall where the massive entrance to deer cave is clearly visible above the forest treetops. [Click the following link to see a YouTube Highlights Video of Deer & Langs Cave:](#)



DEER & LANGS CAVE TOURS

Langs Cave: This cave gets its name from the local villager who first discovered it. Langs Cave is normally visited prior to exploring Deer Cave. The entrance to Langs Cave is to the right of the of Deer Cave. A short pathway takes visitors up to the cave entrance. Being a show cave, this cave has a developed trail and internal lighting for the full circuit. However, it's still highly recommended you carry a flashlight/headlamp, particularly if you want to take photos or shoot video. The cave illumination, while lighting the trail, is still quite dim. The trail does a loop through the back end of the cave, where there's some nice formations to see. Langs cave is the smallest of the show caves and will normally take about thirty minutes to complete a tour.

Deer Cave: This is the largest of the show caves at Mulu National Park. It gets its name from the deer which used to drink in the small stream in the entrance area. The entrance area of the cave is huge and, accordingly, ambient light is able to penetrate deep into the cave. The trail does a loop through the dark, rear zone area, where one of the highlights of the tour can be seen from a viewing platform, the GARDEN OF EDEN. This is a forested area, filled with ferns, growing in a collapsed part of the cave. From this point the trail loops back to the ambient light area and joins the original trail.



Langs Cave Formations

The Bat Exodus: After completing the tours of Deer and Lang Caves, sightseers can relax at the bat observatory which is directly in front of Deer Cave entrance. The bat exodus normally occurs at around 6:00 pm and, according to the local guides, the volume of bats coming out of the cave clouds the skies. **Note:** According to the Mulu Guides, seeing the bat exodus is a bit hit and miss. There are some days, especially if there's been heavy rain, when the bats don't come out.



Deep inside Deer Cave

CLEARWATER & WIND CAVES TOUR

About: This is another combination cave tour which includes a bonus of a stop at a handicraft village, on the way to the first cave site. This tour normally starts from the park HQ at 08:45. Travel to the cave sites is by boat, along the nearby SUNGAI MELINAU PAKU RIVER. **Note:** The tour will make the stop at the handicrafts village before going to the first cave site.

The Handicrafts Village: This site is approximately thirty minutes upriver, by boat, from the Mulu National Park HQ. The name of the village is BATU BUNGAN, which is populated by local PENAN PEOPLE. The market features a selection of handicrafts which are very reasonably priced. In keeping with the history of the Penan People, and the culture of the area, there are display blowpipes for sale. **Note:** This is normally a thirty minute stop on the Clearwater Cave Tour.

Blowpipe Shooting Range: The most interesting aspect of the market is the blowpipe shooting range. A vendor has an area set up where visitors can have a go at using a full size blowpipe to fire darts at a target.



River Transport



Blowpipe Shooting



Blowpipes for sale

CLEARWATER & WIND CAVES TOUR

Wind Cave: This cave (aka The Cave of Winds) is located just a few minutes upriver from the handicraft village. The cave gets its name from the cooling winds which blow through it. As with the other show caves in the national park, this one has a developed trail and internal lighting for a safe and enjoyable sightseeing experience.

Going through the cave: In the front section of the cave the pathway heads down a long tunnel before arriving at the loop through the more interesting rear section. The main feature of the cave is the **KINGS CHAMBER**. This is a vertical shaft where a collapse occurred, and there's now a hole in the cave ceiling some thirty meters above the pathway. At the rear of the cave, the pathway loops around a nice area of stalactites and stalagmites. The tour through this cave will normally take around one hour.

Continuing on to Clearwater cave: From the Wind cave boat landing, it's approximately ten minutes by boat to the Clearwater Cave site. The boat landing area here is very scenic and the water is crystal clear. There's a large boarded platform with a seating area which enables visitors to relax in a comfortable setting after the cave tour. Visitors are also given time to go for a swim in the crystal clear, natural pool before heading back.



Wind cave Tour



The King's Chamber



The boat landing at Clearwater Cave

CLEARWATER & WIND CAVES TOUR

Clearwater Cave: This cave is one of the most impressive in Mulu National Park. It gets its name from the crystal clear water flowing through it. According to the local guides, this cave system has something in the vicinity of 260 km of passage-ways running back into the karst terrain. The show cave area, which has been developed for tourism, is just a tiny portion at the downstream entrance.

The standard tour: The site is just a few minutes further upriver from the Cave of Winds. If you're doing the tour, this site is visited after the Cave of Winds. The boat landing area is in a beautiful setting with clear, emerald water surrounded by thick jungle. **Note:** After the cave tour, sight-seers are given time to have a swim in the natural pool.

Going through the cave: The cave entrance is just a short distance from the boat landing. Be prepared for a bit of exercise as there's a flight of stairs, with 200 steps, up to the entrance of the cave. The entrance area is large in size and another stairway takes you down into a tunnel leading to the rear section of the cave. One of the main features is the river flowing through this area of the cave. A bridge takes you across the river and provides a nice view, in both directions, along the river tunnel.



The upper section

The upper section: After crossing the bridge, another flight of stairs (with 125 steps) takes you up to the rear section of the cave, which is also a dark zone. At the far end of the rear section there's a collapse where the jungle is visible through a hole in the cave ceiling. The returning pathway goes in a loop, along the opposite side of the cave, where many nice formations can be seen. A tour through this cave will take approximately one hour.



Clearwater Cave Entrance Area

THE FASTLANE CAVE TOUR

About: This cave is arguably the best show cave in Mulu National Park. It is classed as part show cave, and part adventure cave, due to having an established pathway but no internal lighting. Anyone wishing to visit this cave is well advised to carry their own flashlight, for safety, and to be able to see the great formations. Although not as large in volume as Deer or Clearwater Caves, the array of beautiful formations are very impressive. For anyone doing an extended stay at Mulu, this is the cave which most people visit on their third day. Getting there involves a ride up the river in a motorized boat. The boat landing, and start of the hike to the cave entrance, is just past the Batu Bungan Handicraft Village. From the boat landing there's a 600 meter trail, through thick jungle, to the entrance of the cave.

Going through the cave: The cave, for the most part, has a low ceiling. This creates a fantastic effect with the gray of the rippling limestone contrasting with the other colors of the formations. The trail does a circuit through the cave taking in many impressive stalactites and stalagmites. One of the most unusual, and unique, is a formation called the shower head. A formation, hanging from the cave ceiling, has the look of a shower head with water continuously dripping from it.



The cave jacuzzi

A tour highlight: Directly below is a cone like formation, filled with water, which has the appearance of a small jacuzzi. A tour through Fast-lane Cave is definitely a highlight of a trip to Mulu national Park and shouldn't be missed. **Click on the following link to see a YouTube video of Fast-lane Cave:**



Deep inside the Fastlane Cave

BATU CAVES - GENERAL INFO

About: This cave site is located just 10 km from the Kuala Lumpur City Centre and is one of the most popular sightseeing attractions for tourists coming to the capital. Although not really being an off the beaten track location, if you're spending a couple of days in KL, it's still worth a visit. Batu Caves also happens to be a Tamil Religious site (Hindu) and at certain times of the year, is teeming with locals paying their respects to the various Hindu Gods. **Note:** Try to make a visit of a weekday. The weekends tend to be very busy with locals paying their respects to the deities.

Note: The busiest time of the year is the THAIPUSUM FESTIVAL. This is a week long Hindu Religious Festival which occurs every year in January.

Getting there: The easiest, and most convenient way to get to the cave site is by taking a local taxi or a Grab ride. Alternatively, if you're on a tight budget, you can take the train from the KL City Centre Terminal. There's a dedicated line which terminates right outside the Batu caves site. **Note:** There are host of vendors markets along the pathway to the cave entrance. **Click the following link for directions:**



Inside the main cave



Site information



Batu Caves Vendors Market

BATU CAVES - THE MAIN CAVE

On-site: There are two cave sites open to the public. Both have been completely developed as religious sites with temples and depictions of historical events within. A third cave, the DARK CAVE, which was once an adventure cave open to the public, is now permanently closed.

The main cave: This is the most popular site. From the train station exit, follow the pathway around the bottom of the cliff face to the entrance stairway. **Note:** The pathway runs through a line of vendors stalls selling religious trinkets.

The stairway: The main cave has a stairway, with 271 steps up to the entrance. **Note:** There's a large upright Hindu God at the bottom of the stairway.

The cave: Once you arrive at the top of the stairway, a large entrance provides an impressive view deep into the internal areas of the cave. There are two cave rooms. The first is the largest, and has an ornately designed Hindu Temple at the bottom level of the cave. From this bottom level, another flight of stairs takes you up to the second cave room, at the farthest point of the cave. This second room is open to the sky (there's no cave roof) and has another smaller Hindu Temple at it's mid-point.



Main Cave stairway



Main Cave Internal Area

BATU CAVES - RAMAYANA CAVE

Second cave: The Ramayana Cave is the lesser visited of the two cave sites. Possibly because the site it's less well known, and the entrance is in the opposite direction to the main cave. In making a comparison between the sites, the Ramayana Cave is probably the more interesting, because of the artwork/statues within it's internal areas.

Getting there: If you've finished visiting the main cave, you'll need to walk back to the train station terminal and then continue on, approximately 100 meters beyond the rail terminal. Follow the directional signage. There's a blue and gold coloured, upright Hindu Statue at entrance. **Note:** There's an entrance fee of 5 MYR per person

Inside the cave: The small entrance opens up to reveal an impressive internal area with a series of statues/mannequins depicting the Ramayana story. Towards the rear of the cave room, there's a steep stairway which takes you to the upper levels of the cave. On the way up the stairs you'll pass a waterfall, which is an interesting feature. There's a couple of large cave rooms with religious statues in this upper area. **Click the following link to see a highlights video of Batu Caves:**



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