

BORNEO: SABAH & MULU

31 JANUARY - 15 FEBRUARY 2026

FROM
£9,295
PER PERSON

Tour Leader: Nick Van Gruisen


The Ultimate
TRAVEL COMPANY



Join Nick Van Gruisen to discover a land of enchanting forests, remote jungle lodges, meandering rivers, untouched beaches and some of the most exotic and rare species on earth.

Flying into Sandakan, we begin in Sepilok where orphaned and injured orang-utans and sun bears are brought to be rehabilitated before returning to forest life.

We then travel by boat to the Kinabatangan Floodplain, an exceptional part of Sabah, and an area recognised for its natural beauty and role in supporting diverse life. Expect to see proboscis monkeys, langur, gibbon, crocodile, kingfisher, hornbill and many other species of bird, as well as Borneo pygmy elephant and orangutan in the wild.

We continue to the ancient rainforest of the Danum Valley to enjoy the immense beauty of untouched nature and explore the forest in the hope of seeing Sumatran rhino, pygmy elephant, sun bear, orang-utan, Wallace's flying frog, Bornean gibbon, rhinoceros hornbill or the elusive clouded leopard.

Our final stop is Gunung Mulu National Park in Sarawak which we reach by air from and back to Kota Kinabalu.

Overlooked by the imposing Mount Mulu, this vast, World Heritage-listed rainforest is famed for its enormous limestone caves and dramatic karst formations.



Harlequin Tree Frog
© Tom Owen Edmunds



Proboscis Monkey
© Tom Owen Edmunds



Black Hornbill

16-DAY ITINERARY, DEPARTING 31 JANUARY 2026

31 January London / Kuala Lumpur

Suggested flight (not included in the cost of the tour) Malaysian Airlines MH 3 departing London Heathrow at 10.25 hrs.

1 February Kuala Lumpur / Sandakan / Sepilok

Arrive Kuala Lumpur at 07.15 hrs and connect to MH 2710 departing at 10.20 hrs arriving Sandakan at 13.10 hrs.

Group transfer to Sepilok and check in at the Sepilok Nature Lodge located close to the renowned Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre, where two nights are spent. The tranquil lodge consists of separate wooden chalets set in verdant gardens with many species of orchids, overlooking a lake. Remainder of the afternoon at leisure. Welcome dinner at the lodge.

2 February Sepilok

Optional early morning walk around the lodge. After breakfast, head to the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre, where captured bears are rehabilitated, for a private talk with the founder or a senior officer. This is followed by a visit to the nearby Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre to witness the morning feeding session. Before the creation of a reserve in the area, many

young orangutans were the victims of the illegal pet trade throughout Asia. They were either caught during logging or forest clearance or captured by poachers who slaughtered the adult apes to get at the youngsters.

Lunch at the lodge followed by some time at leisure. Optional night walk at the Rainforest Discovery Centre, within the famous Kabili-Sepilok Forest Reserve, to spot nocturnal species such as mouse deer, elusive civet cats, tarsiers, and various insects and birds. Dinner at the lodge.



Baby Orangutans
© Tom Owen Edmunds

3 February Sepilok / Kinabatangan

Morning at leisure.

Lunch at the lodge. Transfer to Sandakan Jetty and on by boat to the Sukau Rainforest Lodge

(approx. 2½ hrs) along Sabah's longest river, the Kinabatangan, observing the wildlife along the river from the coastal mangroves around Sandakan, through nipa-lined riverbanks, to the upper reaches of the river. Check in at the Sukau Rainforest Lodge, enclosed by tropical rainforest on the banks of the river, where three nights are spent. The eco-lodge has bright and comfortable villas with ceiling fans and facilities include open-air dining and a plunge pool. Afternoon river cruise in search of wildlife such as proboscis monkey, long tailed macaques and several species of birds. Dinner at the lodge.

4 February Kinabatangan

Early morning cruise up the Kinabatangan to Kelenanap Oxbow Lake to view the surrounding forest come to life. Return for breakfast followed by a tour along the lodge's Hornbill Boardwalk with an in-house naturalist to learn more about the Kinabatangan ecosystem.

Lunch at the lodge followed by a talk on orangutans. Sunset river cruise. Dinner at the lodge.



Borneo pygmy elephant



Leopard cat, Danum Valley



Gomantong Caves

5 February Kinabatangan

Early morning river cruise along the Menanggol River to search for wildlife.

Riverside lunch. Afternoon excursion by road to the Gomantong Caves which are ecologically important for the swifts and bats that occupy this intricate cave system and economically important to local bird nest harvesters. Traverse deep into the forest along a trail in search of orangutans, which are often seen feeding nearby. Witness the exodus of over 300,000 bats from the caves. Return to the lodge for dinner.

6 February Kinabatangan / Danum Valley

Transfer by boat to Sukau Jetty and drive (approx. 2 hrs) via Lahad Datu, to the Danum Valley, a 472km sq conservation area of pristine, mostly primary, lowland dipterocarp forest that is home to 300 species of birds, as well as many mammals and insects. The area boasts an amazing diversity of animal life including Borneo pygmy elephant, sun bear, orangutan and clouded leopard. Eight species of hornbills can also be found here. Check in at the Borneo Rainforest Lodge, an unrivalled eco-lodge, tucked within the conservation area beside the beautiful Danum River, where three nights are spent in a Deluxe Chalet with superb river or jungle views.

Lunch at the lodge. Introduction by your guide to the rainforest and the trails surrounding the lodge. Evening

cocktail before dinner at the lodge. Guided night safari to spot nocturnal creatures.

7 February Danum Valley

Wake up to the calls of Borneo gibbons. Morning guided trek to Kadazandusun viewpoint and burial site, 'Coffin Cliff', before taking a short break by a natural pool for a refreshing dip.

Lunch at the lodge. Optional afternoon activities such as guided jungle trekking, or, weather permitting, rafting down the Danum River. Dinner at the lodge followed by a night walk on the lodge's nature trail.

8 February Danum Valley

Optional early morning walk before breakfast. Option to trek to the Fairy Falls and Serpent Falls.

Lunch at the lodge. Remainder of the day at leisure or a guided hike along the Segama River. Dinner at the lodge.

9 February Danum Valley / Kota Kinabalu

This morning transfer to Lahad Datu Airport for a flight to Kota Kinabalu. Transfer to the Hyatt Centric Hotel, located in the heart of the coastal city of Kota Kinabalu with views of the surrounding hills and islands, where one night is spent.

Lunch at the hotel. Afternoon at leisure. Dinner at the hotel.

10 February Kota Kinabalu / Mulu

Transfer to the airport for a morning flight to Mulu. Transfer to the Mulu Marriott Resort and Spa where three nights are spent. Set in the heart of the jungle, on the banks of the Melinau River and adjoining UNESCO world heritage Gunung Mulu National Park, the hotel is traditionally designed in the style of a local longhouse and the rooms are linked by a raised wooden platform. Facilities include a spa and swimming pool.

Lunch at the hotel. Proceed by longboat to Park Headquarters and take a scenic 3 km plank walk through primary rainforest to Deer Cave which has one of the world's largest cave entrances and can fit St. Pauls' Cathedral under its massive archway! Also visit the nearby Lang's Cave with its impressive stalactites and stalagmites. Return to Park HQ at sundown to see the spectacular exodus of about 2 million of bats as they leave the cave in search of food. Dinner at the hotel.



Buffy Fish Owl, Danum Valley
© Charles Ryan



11 February Mulu

Proceed by longboat upriver to Wind Cave with its impressive 'King's Chamber'. Here, stalactites and stalagmites with delicate lace-like patterns are found. Walk along a plank walk next to the limestone cliff and climb up approximately 250 concrete steps to reach the entrance of Clearwater Cave. Like most caves in Mulu, Clearwater Cave provides a habitat for unique species of plants such as the one-leafed plant which can only be found at Mulu. Photo-sensitive algae grows on certain rocks and produce needle-like formations that point towards the source of light. Nearby is a wonderful swimming area shaded by giant rainforest trees. Lunch and dinner at the hotel.

12 February Mulu

In the morning, experience the breath taking Mulu Canopy Walk, a 420-metre walkway suspended 25 metres above the forest floor – one of the longest tree-based canopy walks in the world. Stroll through the lush treetops, taking in panoramic views of the tranquil river below while observing the striking contrast between the riverine forest floor, the understory, the towering canopy, and the nearby limestone cliffs.

Lunch at the hotel. This afternoon embark on a scenic boat journey along the river to Long Iman, home to the once-nomadic Penan tribe. Visit a traditional longhouse, where

33 families reside under one roof. Explore their unique communal living quarters and the long verandah, a central space for social gatherings and daily life. Cruise back to the resort in time for dinner.

13 February Mulu / Kota Kinabalu

Transfer to Mulu Airport for a return flight to Kota Kinabalu. Transfer to the Hyatt Centric Hotel where a further night is spent.

Lunch at the hotel. Afternoon at leisure. Farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

14 February Kota Kinabalu / Kuala Lumpur

Morning at leisure.

Lunch under own arrangements. Group transfer to Kota Kinabalu Airport. Suggested flight (not included) Malaysian Airlines MI 2645 departing at 18.00 hrs arriving Kuala Lumpur at 20.40 hrs. Connect to flight MH 2 departing at 23.30 hrs.

15 February Kuala Lumpur / London

Arrive London Heathrow at 05.35 hrs.

TOUR PRICES PER PERSON

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|-------------------|--------|
| Tour Price | £9,295 |
| Single Supplement | £1,495 |

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| Upgrade to Premium Suite at Borneo Rainforest Lodge | £600 |
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| Upgrade Single Supplement | £905 |
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Please note we have not included the cost of the flights in the tour price. Please contact us for prices should you wish to book them through us.

PRICE INCLUDES

- Accommodation throughout as shown in the itinerary
- Breakfast daily; 12 lunches; 13 dinners
- Group transfers and transportation as per the itinerary
- All entrance fees, visits, excursions
- Gratuities in restaurants for included meals; gratuities to guides/s; gratuities to driver/s; portage
- Local English-speaking guide/s
- The services of your tour leader throughout

PRICE EXCLUDES

- International flights
- Travel insurance
- Meals 'under own arrangements'
- Items of personal expenditure (e.g. telephone calls / laundry etc.)
- Government levies or taxes introduced after costing and publication of this programme on 25/02/25.





YOUR TOUR LEADER



NICK VAN GRUISEN

Raised in Northumberland, in the 1970s Nick spent five years as a professional guide in Botswana and southern Africa. He then joined the Tiger Mountain group, pioneering cultural, trekking and wildlife holidays throughout the Indian subcontinent. He founded Worldwide Journeys and Expeditions in 1991, from which The Ultimate Travel Company emerged in 1998.



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