

Langkawi UNESCO Global

2020

# GEO PARK

## GAZETTE

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Geopark Status for a third time

### BIRDS OF A FEATHER, FLOCK TO LANGKAWI

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for the perfect staycation

### Revival: LANGKAWI TOURISM AFTER THE PANDEMIC

"It is now time to unwind in  
Langkawi, the number one  
island destination in Malaysia."

- LADA CEO Dr. Hezri Adnan



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LANGKAWI

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# GEOPARK



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## PREFACE

**Azmil Munif Mohd Bukhari**  
MANAGER LANGKAWI  
UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK



Greetings from Langkawi UGGp Office

Warmest welcome to all of our distinguished readers.

This is a very special issue for us here at the UNESCO Global Geopark Gazette in Langkawi, and we are so delighted to announce that Langkawi has maintained its Global Geopark status for the third time.

This four-year revalidation comes as no surprise, as everyone at Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark (UGGp) has taken significant efforts and steps. We are thankful to the experts who have issued renewed sanctions to further improve the natural ecosystem of the geopark, local communities, and tourists. This validation encourages us to work harder to drive our geopark to higher levels.

It's been thirteen years since we were first declared a UNESCO Global Geopark. This could not have been done without collaboration and close relations between stakeholders who have played a crucial role in the contribution of CSR, industry players, and government agencies who have supported us and the community, who have not only benefited from UGGp's positive ripple effects but have also worked together to sustain the UGGp.

The community now learns about the ideas, activities, and importance of the geopark initiative to their everyday lives. I am proud of the infusion of the care and consideration paradigm, which has contributed to the protection, preservation, and future for coming generations at every level there in Langkawi's community.

We are also proud of the inclusion of Langkawi schools in the Geopark program, which this year has become one of the legendary Island's tourist attractions. Twenty-nine primary and secondary schools around Langkawi took part in the program by setting up their own 'Geopark Club'. This has brought Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark's mission to ensure sustainable sustainability to life, not only by contributing adults but also in the minds of young people, for they are the future not only of Langkawi but also of Malaysia.

Although 2020 has not been kind, good news will carry a long way. Looking forward, Langkawi, as a big community, will continue to preserve this unique asset.

# FOR RE WORD



**Dr Ahmad Hezri Adnan**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Langkawi Development Authority (LADA)

Greetings to all our valued readers.

Since over a decade now, Langkawi UGGp has carefully developed a sustainable development strategy to ensure economic and environmental targets are fulfilled. The rapid growth of the geopark has brought the local community investment, business, and socio-economic development opportunities. This is embodied in a broad spectrum of innovations involving both tourism and non-tourism businesses.

On Langkawi Island, the tourism infrastructure is developing, with a specific emphasis on the need to become a leading geopark site in the world. Many thanks to the UNESCO Global Geopark Council, for since 2007, it had consistently offered Langkawi a valuable edification, in particular through its highly respected assessors. Langkawi UGGp has grown into a world-class geopark than it has ever been before. The vast abundance of geopark activity and the exponentially rising number of geopark implementations are a terrific testament to this. This suggests that it has future prospects of improving the tourism industry and regional trade in Langkawi. With the proliferation of Langkawi UGGp Partners and Ambassadors Programmes, it has been proved true that this geopark will have a promising future. Langkawi UGGp got more suggestions during the last revalidation mission in 2015 to further develop the quality and the operation of geoparks. Over the years a lot of activities were undertaken to ratify all UGGp recommendations. Various actions taken to accelerate urbanisation and gentrification have been taking place by the year 2019.

The year 2020 is a tipping point for Malaysia. It has significantly altered the way people in and outside the country value Langkawi. Alas, the year 2020 is already earmarked as the "worst year of the 21st century, twelve months into a new decade. The novel coronavirus led to a worldwide pandemic that has the most institutional settings destabilised. "What seemed like a routine public health challenge" gradually developed into a global

health epidemic, then a social and economic crisis. Though we cannot foresee the full repercussions of this momentous occurrence, its implications will stretch over centuries to come.

This year the number of tourists to the island has dropped by 50%, the lowest in six years. Only 1.5 million visitors have entered Langkawi in the first 10 months of this year, as opposed to 3.9 million last year in the same period. In essence, the goal was five million tourists, but the COVID-19 transmission hit the third wave as a result, and we were only able to register 1.5 million tourists until the end of October. In December, however, the domestic tourism industry is showing signs of improvement after the COVID-19 virus significantly affected the sector. There is a rising number of flights to Langkawi because more visitors are coming, so this would provide a positive effect to tour operators on the island. Travel is speeding up, with 27 flights landing on the island per day and higher in days to come. The goal for December has been 250,000 visitors.

The year after coronavirus is still unclear. Thus, this is something that should be addressed as the first priority so we need to work on remedies that can be applied. These days we cannot afford to be defeatist about this problem. We need to build a new normal: a healthy partnership between the environment and our future. Langkawi Safe Program has been initiated to ensure the society adopts standard operating procedures to deter the COVID-19 pandemic. We must want Langkawi to be a green zone so that tourism activities can operate and help the residents regenerate their profits. Langkawi UGGp is immensely grateful to all individuals and organisations for their complete involvement and assistance in ensuring all activities are conducted appropriately and in meeting the needs of the people. We wish to express our gratitude to all who support our protection of this special ecosystem through Langkawi UGGp and LADA.



# FOR WORD



Prof. Emeritus Dato' Dr Ibrahim Komoo  
Advisor of Langkawi UGGp

## Welcome back from Langkawi UGGp!

Thank you for helping to make the Langkawi Geopark a truly remarkable place. Langkawi UGGp is not something that can be conveniently handled, well away from the state and federal administration hubs. In honor of the efforts to improve the quality of life and eco-climate in Langkawi, a commendation is deserved for the Langkawi UGGp. The rocks and landscapes of Mount Machinchang, Kilim, and Dayang Bunting are of international value in Langkawi. The landscape, biodiversity, and culture of the local community is an integrated heritage of the excellence of Langkawi and a major tourist attraction.

Before the Covid 19 pandemic struck Malaysia and the world community, Langkawi had become a major international tourist destination. Following the classification of Langkawi as a UNESCO Global Geopark, tourist arrivals to the island skyrocketed. Over the last five years, Langkawi has attracted more than 3.5 million visitors, of which about 50 percent are foreign tourists. In response to Covid-19, the arrival of foreign tourists collapsed, while investors and the hospitality industry were wounded, leaving the local economy devastated.

The Covid 19 pandemic attack is about to leave a deep impression. It's hard for Langkawi to get back to 'business as usual,' as the new norm has started to emerge from the community and the tourists. They will be more vigilant in the planning of post-Covid-19 tourism destinations. Two important aspects that will be the prevalent step of tourists are to give priority to cleanliness and social distancing. Cleanliness should be the primary objective of site visits, service systems, and accommodation. As I see it, Langkawi needs to seriously think about sustainable tourism practices.

Langkawi and hundreds of other UNESCO Global Geoparks around the world need to look back at the true vision and purpose of the development of the geopark. In reality,

the geopark is not a 'mass tourism' site, or the indicator of success is the number of tourists per year or the total revenue. Geoparks give heed to three key components of a region with special natural treasures: superior heritage conservation, knowledge-based tourism, and benefits to the local community.

Langkawi has many geological, biological, and cultural heritage sites of national and international standing. Scientists have identified over 30 natural heritage sites that need to be preserved. Some of these sites are suitable to be developed as knowledge tourism products. Knowledge-based tourism is different from mass tourism. We develop products in a focused manner, elevating and explaining natural phenomena that produce beautiful landscapes, earth history, uniqueness, and biological diversity, as well as cultural and natural relationships.

The local community is trained to guide and tell tourists the stories of nature. Knowledge tourism or geotourism can be pursued not only by practicing hygiene and social distancing but also by educating tourists to respect the nature and culture of the local community. Geopark aims to increase the source of income for the local community through geotourism activities. Outside investments have concentrated on Langkawi, but the locals remain workers. This strategy must be reviewed and synchronized with the sustainable regional development vision. Entrepreneurs who have a stake in the local economy should be at least provided opportunities in tourism.

More importantly, locals' well-being and comfort should be paramount. There is an overall responsibility to promote quality of life in villages, basic infrastructure, and health, and to preserve the culture and heritage of the ancestors. Geopark highlights the importance of local welfare and continues to reinforce its culture. Post-Covid-19 tourism policy needs to pay attention to the new norm of tourists, the well-being of local communities, and economic sustainability.

## THIRD TIME'S THE CHARM

### Langkawi maintains Global Geopark Status for a third time

Langkawi was declared a UNESCO Global Geopark for the first time back in 2007 by the Global Geoparks Network. The network was part of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). This catapulted Langkawi into the global arena, making it the 52nd geopark out of 147 others found all across the world. What makes it even more unique is that Langkawi is the first geopark in Southeast Asia to hold the coveted title.

In 2011 and 2015, re-evaluations were conducted once again by esteemed geology experts and Langkawi retained the title yet again. Fast forward to 2019 and Langkawi passed its third test with flying colours once again, giving it the chance to retain this outstanding achievement for another year four years.

It really was no surprise for Dr Hezri Adnan, Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) chief executive officer, as the re-evaluation ended on a very positive note. Experts who conducted the assessment were pleased with the undertakings of Langkawi in maintaining its Global Geopark Status once more.

Their evaluation of this assessment lasted a week and results took about four months to before being announced. Iceland representatives, Dr Kirstin Lemon and Sigurour Sigursveinsson were in charge of the assessment this time around and by the end of their five days, appeared to give positive feedback, especially during their debrief session.

This status gives Langkawi the credibility it needs to withhold the title of leading ecotourism destination in Malaysia and Southeast Asia. This renewed validation will give Langkawi the chance and support it needs in order to fulfil its conservation and preservation needs.

Moreover, results of this year's evaluation far surpassed the examination conducted four years ago in 2015. With global warming changing the way the world functions, conservation and preservation efforts are vital in ensuring that the longevity and wellbeing of the geoparks and its ecosystems are protected by its guardians for years to come.

Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark comprises all 99 islands of the archipelago, with three designated geoforest parks, and a recently designated biogeotrail. These are Machinchang Cambrian Geoforest Park (4,274 ha), Kilim Karst Geoforest Park (4,354 ha), Dayang Bunting Marble Geoforest Park (8,261 ha), and Kubang Badak BioGeoTrail (50 ha).

4  
Cultural  
Sites

4  
Geological  
Monuments

10  
Biosites

35  
Limestone  
Caves

38  
Geosites

99  
Islands



## Kilim Karst Geoforest Park

Located in the east of Langkawi is the largest of the three main parks, Kilim Karst Geoforest Park, named after the river that runs through it, and the rock strata that predominate. The park is dominated by mangrove forests and picturesque karstic formations created through the dissolution and erosion of the limestone from the Setul Formation, which have produced numerous sea stacks, sea arches and pinnacles. The mangrove forests have created an environment for several rare species of flora and fauna such as the limestone cycad, which grows on vertical cliff faces, bright yellow sea hibiscus, and the iconic brahminy kite and sea eagle.

## Machinchang Cambrian Geoforest Park

Machinchang Cambrian Geoforest Park, located in the northwest of Langkawi Island, is home to remarkable geological and biological assets, from a breathtaking mountain environment shaped by prolonged erosion and weathering creating barren peaks, vertical cliffs, crested ridges, narrow gorges and waterfalls, to its abundant and exotic flora and fauna, such as unique climbing bamboo or the majestic great hornbill which resides high up in the forest canopy, and can be viewed amidst magnificent panoramas atop the SkyBridge.

**3** GEOFOREST  
PARKS:

**42.47**km<sup>2</sup>  
Machinchang  
Cambrian  
Geoforest Park

**84.15**km<sup>2</sup>  
Kilim Karst  
Geoforest Park

**38.50**km<sup>2</sup>  
Dayang  
Bunting Marble  
Geoforest Park

## Dayang Bunting Marble Geoforest Park

Dayang Bunting Marble Geoforest Park is a five-minute boat ride south from Langkawi's main port. The island is named after its iconic lake, Dayang Bunting, or Lake of the Pregnant Maiden, as the contour of the hills along one side resembles a pregnant maiden. Over time, legends were spun, and it was said that drinking the lake water helped women with infertility. The lake itself was created by a large cave collapsing due to erosion resulting in loss of structural integrity. The island is characterised by a large thrust fault that runs north to south that has uplifted the older Setul limestone alongside the younger Chuping limestone, which gives the island impressive sea stacks, caves and sea arch formations.

## Kubang Badak BioGeoTrail

Kampung Kubang Badak is a unique tidal river estuary ecosystem full of geological diversity, pristine mangroves and a distinctive cultural history with the early settlement of the Thai community. The BioGeoTrail is a strategic partnership project between the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA), Langkawi Research Centre (PPL) and Sungai Kubang Badak Fishermen's Cooperative. The objective is to create a sustainable new geo-tourism product for locals and foreign tourists to enjoy.



## BIRDS OF A FEATHER, FLOCK TO LANGKAWI

Malaysian travellers flock to Langkawi  
for the perfect staycation



Locals from all across Malaysia can now make like birds and fly to Langkawi for an epic staycation on Malaysia's very own emerald isle. No matter your budget, Langkawi has something for everyone. After being locked in our houses for months on end, everyone needs an outlet and if you've been at home and have some extra savings set aside then why not treat yourself to a luxurious getaway at one of Langkawi's many elegant hotels and resorts. With international holidays cancelled for the year 2020, you might as well upgrade your hotel stay and go all out an pamper yourself at least once, before the year is up. The land of the eagle, Langkawi is home to world-class luxury hotels, some of which include, Marriott Bonvoy Luxury Collection, The Andaman, a Luxury Collection Resort, Langkawi, The Danna Langkawi, Four Seasons Resort Langkawi to Meritus Pelangi Beach Resort & Spa Langkawi. From car rentals, a boutique, mail service, a morning call, salon, and baggage handling among its services to beachfront properties offering spacious villas and pavilions with free WiFi throughout, housing multiple dining restaurants all in one hotel, bars, spas and so much more there is something for everyone who appreciates the finer things in life.

For those on the other side of the spectrum and are looking to save a few Ringgit there are plenty of budget friendly hotels for you to have a staycation with all the value for money necessities. From RM 48.00 a night to RM160.00 a night there's something for every price bracket, especially on Cenang beach, for delicious seafood and a stunning sunset, it truly is a staycation paradise for all.

### Langkawi Accorded Full-Fledged Status for its Dynamic & Vibrant Geo Heritage

2020 has been challenging to say the least but it comes with some good news as well. Following its initial evaluation at the end of 2019, Langkawi has been accorded the full-fledged status for its dynamic and vibrant geo heritage a third consecutive time in row.

Despite being victorious there is a lot more work that goes into continuing to maintain the awarded status and Langkawi as a sustainable destination. Education and awareness efforts on the importance of sustaining and protecting the geopark to industry players as well as the island community will continue to ensure all the hard work does not go to waste.

Many have been sceptical on the geoparks initially and believed that tourists would not be as interested in the geopark and its wonders as much as they see Langkawi as a luxury, beach and holiday destination.

It might have been an uphill battle for many years but hoteliers, restaurateurs and tour operators are now warming up to the idea that the geopark might now be why tourists are coming in the first place. With streamlined branding, the introduction of new initiatives and education has now even empowered the local community in championing its eco identity.

The community is truly taking steps in leading and sharing the vision of protecting and promoting the geopark. People from all walks of life have come together to preserve Langkawi's resources and to play their part in ensuring is sustainability.

Sceptics have now turned into supporters as they have witnessed first-hand the way the geopark has benefited not just the community but the surrounding industries as well. Changing perceptions and restoration of the right goals is how Langkawi not only got its green card but how it will continue to hold it close to its heart.

Geopark revalidation is assessed on a quadrennial period. Once every four years we get to showcase our compliance through a compilation of documents gathered. It might be challenging as we venture into a new word, grazed by the pandemic but we hope not to falter and provide Langkawi with the accord of being revalidated once again come 2023.

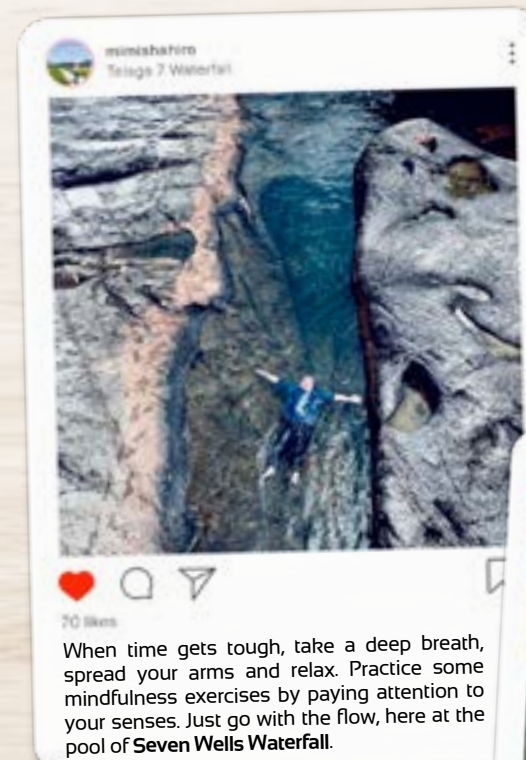
## Langkawi gets the GREEN CARD



# THROWBACKS in Langkawi to keep your head up

[instagram.com/p/CEZcwn7I2gz/](https://www.instagram.com/p/CEZcwn7I2gz/)

Countless caves have formed across millennia starting with just a trickle of water. With perseverance, we can create wonders. Explore the different caves on Langkawi and all the surrounding 99 islands. Featuring here is **Gua Wang Buluh** on **Pulau Tuba**.



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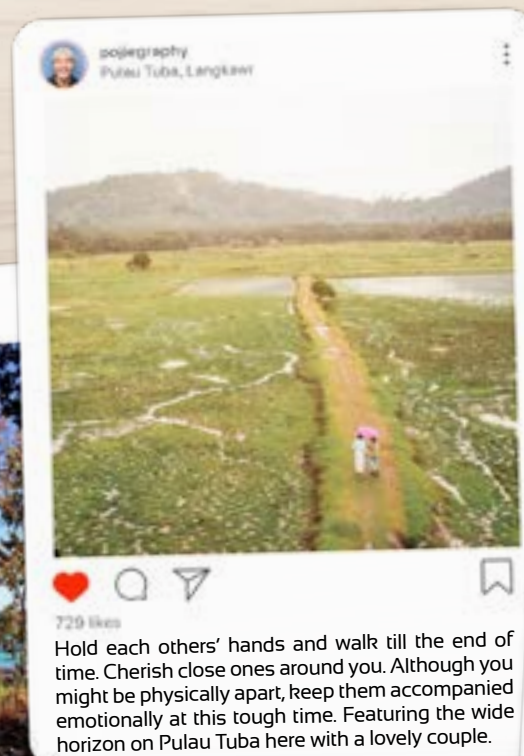
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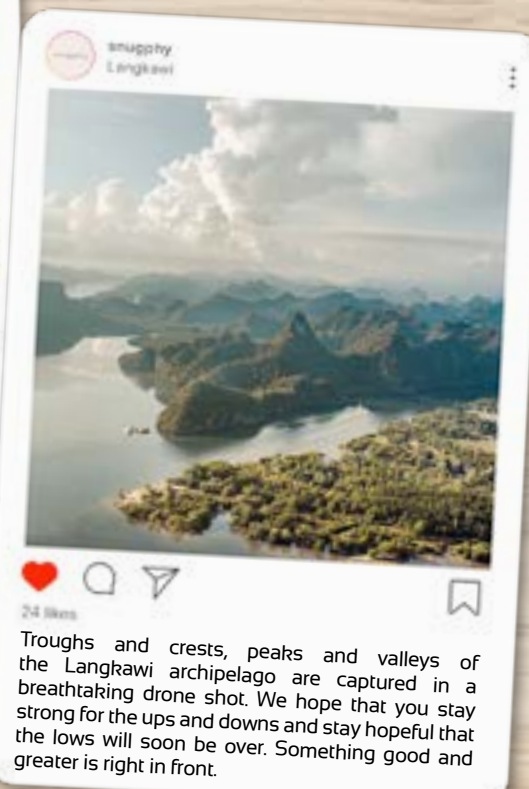
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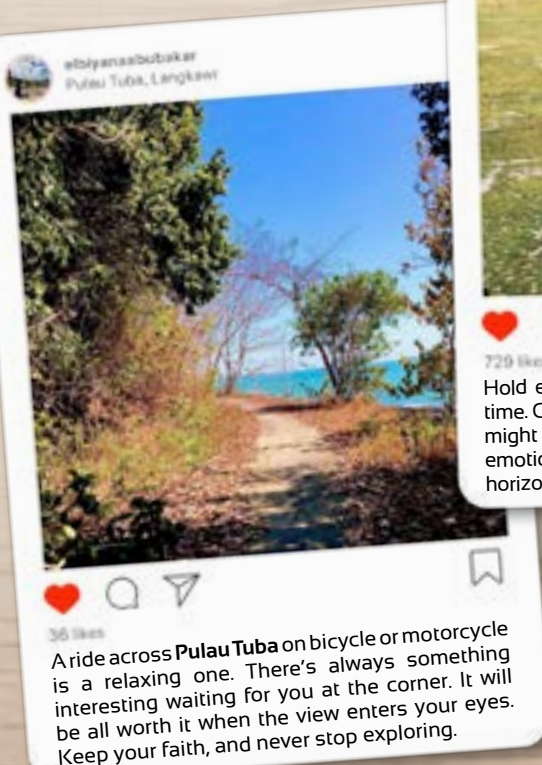
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## Revival: LANGKAWI TOURISM AFTER THE PANDEMIC

"It is now time to unwind in Langkawi, the number one island destination in Malaysia."  
- LADA CEO Dr. Hezri Adnan



We're not sure when the pandemic will cease but being informed on being cautious of the rise and fall of each wave will be the only means to acquire some normality for the foreseeable future. That being said Langkawi is looking in the direction of a revival.

The Covid-19 pandemic had almost crippled the tourism sector and Malaysia recorded only 4.2 million international tourist arrivals and RM12.6 billion in tourism receipts so far this year.

For the first six months, the country lost about RM45 billion in potential tourist spending.

Businesses of every size remain cautiously optimistic as signs of recovery come and go. Hotels in Langkawi are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel

as hopes for a cure is on the horizon with the rise in domestic tourism as room occupancy picks up with the ease of travel restrictions gradually taking place.

The Malaysian Association of Hotels has projected the average occupancy rate for October, November and December 2020 to increase by 21.3%, 22.8%, and 24.9% respectively. That being said, the increase in room occupancy is still largely dependent on the location of the hotels.

Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) CEO Dr Hezri Adnan said Langkawi's tourist arrivals in the first seven months of the year stood at 1.1 million, but its number in July alone was 189,000. With the rise in numbers Dr Hezri Adnan is confident of meeting the target of 2.5 million if the number of arrivals could be maintained or increased to 200,000 a month this year backed by the maiden Langkawi Great Sale (LGS) campaign.



The initiative, under the Langkawi Economic Blueprint (HELANG), is supported by local tourism industry players, including operators of tourism attractions, hotels and duty-free shops, as well as tour agents and tour guides.

The LGS promotion, from Sept 1 to Dec 31 this year, involves operators of tourism products, hotels and duty-free shops, as well as tour agents and tour guides.

The four main packages are offered for domestic tourists' honeymoon; family; meetings, incentives conferences and exhibitions (MICE); and leisure and include accommodation, transport, visits to tourist attractions, and shopping vouchers for use at selected establishments.

A new report on Malaysia equity strategy published by a team of Nomura research analysts, Resorts World Genting is already showing strong signs of recovery – up to 40,000 visitors per day with 50% of hotel rooms open sitting at 90% average occupancy since reopening in June.

It is encouraging to see that efforts to revive tourism and cultural sectors through domestic tourism campaigns are now bearing fruit.

To sustain the growth, the focus is on tourism operators to ensure compliance with standard operating procedures (SOP). By keeping these places safe to visit, a revival of domestic tourism can be achieved.





# Geopark Will Be Expecting You

We're under a duty to **#stayathome** to avoid the spread of Covid-19, but the wanderlust in us....

No doubt, many people miss travelling. Even a short plane trip is something we all wish to do. It is our nature to explore! We want to go out there and breathe fresh air, rekindle old friendships, enjoy good time and friends, fly again and explore new lands again.

As UNESCO Global Geopark, we understand your worries and concerns. We aim to draw a diverse group of people from all over the world and give them an idea of what we are about. We want you to enjoy the inviting atmosphere of the island. We want to show you the beautiful and interesting facets of Geopark. We have plans of showing you other things, so come again!

If you're in Malaysia, make sure to schedule your **#CutlCutlMalaysia** trip to Geopark. Get entertained at our beaches with your favourite F&B. Discover 500 million-year-old granite mountains. Dip into geopark, put your hand into the geology chart and learn about more than just rocks. Visit our local villages. Observe the wildlife around you - monkeys, eagles, hornbills, corals, fishes. There is far more that awaits you in our Geopark!

If you're patiently waiting for the border to reopen, check on us often on Twitter and other social media. We will be reporting more about what will be exciting for the coming days, so, **#staytune**. In the meantime, Geopark will be waiting for you.

The frontliners' selfless sacrifices in this challenging time are beyond appreciation with just words. While we get to stay at home with our families, the frontliners are taking the risk and putting everything at stake to win this fight.

Other than healthcare personnel, there are also heroes working in various sectors - police and armed forces, cleaners, critical workers and more who keep us safe and well. The best way we can show our appreciation is to stay at home and maintain physical distance wherever we go if we have to.

What we are undergoing now is unprecedented. We hope you are safe and sound throughout this period and we will see you soon in Langkawi.

Thank you for your immense sacrifice and service during this tough time! We couldn't have made it without you!

## BRAVO!

### Our heroic frontliners!

You are the greatest heroes in the history!







## GEOPARK AMBASSADOR Mr Mehad Daud

A humble fisherman who became the owner of a fish farm, Mr. Mehad Daud, was elected Geopark Ambassador for his ability to educate and raise awareness among his fish farm visitors. He also highlights the importance of the mangrove forests that surround his farm in the Kilim Geoforest Park area.

Mr. Mehad has become a fisherman since he was a little boy, learning to rope from his father. He expresses that the fish are inexpensive when you buy it from a fisherman, even though the fishermen brave harsh weather, storms, crashing waves, and heavy downpour.

In 1996, he opened his fish farm to visitors. Mr. Mehad recalls that during that time most of the tourists that visited Langkawi were mostly foreigners. At his farm, not just will you find fish bred up to a maximum of one kilo for sale, but a few other types of aquatic creatures that Mr. Mehad breeds as their numbers dwindle in the wild. He hopes to educate tourists from all over the world about the value of saving endangered species from extinction. Langkawi is home to three of the world's four horseshoe crabs.

Horseshoe crabs, locally known as Belangkas, are not only a delicacy in these areas, but they are often used in Japanese cosmetics. Mr. Mehad fears that if these horseshoe crabs are not bred and their numbers are constantly threatened, future generations will not be able to witness this magnificent sea creature.

As a fisherman, Mr. Mehad saw much fish, but one fish, in particular, the Archer Fish, known to locals as Ikan Sumpit, was found only in the Geopark Mangrove. What makes this fish so special is that it uses its mouth as a weapon and the water it spits out as bullets to shoot its prey 2-3 meters away into the water, then swims to its now drowning prey to feast on it. Many visitors, ardent fish lovers who

boast about seeing every fish there is, are always fascinated to see this fish trying to catch its next meal.

Another sea creature in Mr. Mehad's heart is the stingray. He says that after Steve Irwin's death, everyone is now scared of the stingray since it can kill with its tail. It is not the stingray's tail that is dangerous, he says, but the sharp stinger at the tip of its tail. Not all stingrays have stingers on their tails, however.

He says all of us should ponder the fact that not all of them are to be feared only because one animal inflicts harm. With over 200 species of stingrays in nature, not all of them are harmful and could be eaten. He shares that creating awareness on this is something he takes pride in as he continues to protect these misunderstood, gentle creatures of the sea.

As a tourist destination, Mr. Mehad's farm has seen visitors from all over the world. He thinks of some of them as his adopted children, as they kept in touch and stayed on his farm with him. A young man from Japan spent six months with him to get more information on the biodiversity of the geoparks. Another one from Holland stayed for quite a while to try our local seafood.

Some visitors came and stayed because they were never exposed to such things, and so they come for the experience. Some Korean, Hong-Kong and Japanese students have also stayed for some time to enjoy the unique aquatic life.

However, Mr. Mehad is worried about the continuity of the plants and animals in Kilim Geoforest Park. Sungai Kilim used to be the deepest river in Langkawi, teeming with crocodiles, which can no longer be found in these rivers. The Manta Ray is another sea life that Mr. Mehad has seen a decrease in numbers.

To preserve the current wildlife population, found here, younger generations need to be educated about the consequences of pollution and the risks of throwing garbage into the sea. Mr. Mehad clarifies that no one knows fish better than a fisherman. Twenty years ago, the sea was teeming with fish, but now, because of global warming and over-fishing, there is no time for fish to repopulate. The Archer Fish is rarely seen before the pandemic but has now returned because there is little to no human interruption. This is our heritage, it is our duty for nature and all animal life within it to be preserved and protected; if not, he says, we will be at the losing end.

He explains that he just wants people to visit his fish farm and that if they can't, their friends or their family might come to enjoy the haven he has built. The goal of the geopark is for people to bear witness to the wonders of the natural world, unlike the zoo or aquarium. If there is no wildlife to wonder at, there will no longer be a justification for visitors to come in the future.

Her mission was to use food to educate the people of Malaysia, especially mothers and homemakers on the importance of conservation of nature. She was invited to bring her cookies to Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, to allow the professors to identify which of her 24 cookies were best-represented geopark fossils. At the end of the day, seven cookies were picked as fossil cookies. Trilobite cookie is one of her best-selling cookies. Trilobites are among the earliest recognized groups of arthropods, a marine species that has long been extinct.

Madam Nor Azlina relocated to Langkawi eight years ago. New to the city, she fell in love with Langkawi and its geology. She has created something new, never before seen, with her passion for baking. She also opened a café right in the Geopark where visitors could indulge in nasi lemak made as Pulau Dayang Bunting, a pregnant maiden island, or spaghetti as an eagle's nest, and nasi goreng formed as Gunung Machinchang and also Bat Cave Rojak.

The cafe was on the Telaga Tujuh watersheds facing the Machinchang Mount. The FRIM circle and Kuala Lumpur geologists also came to experience the unique deal which can only be found in Langkawi. Sadly, it has burnt down since, but Mrs. Nor Azlina hopes that her dream cafe will be restored into its former glory in a not-so-distant future; if she

cannot maybe one-day hand the mantle over to her children.

Madam Nor Azlina also held talks all over Langkawi to educate students about the importance of the Geoparks. She has also been active in organizing events on Pulau Tuba to promote geopark and nature conservation awareness. She also took part in several courses arranged by the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and the Langkawi Development Authority to further enrich her knowledge of geopark wildlife and environmental preservation. Madam Nor Azlina expresses her love for nature and is intended to get more people to feel the same.

One of her most memorable encounters as ambassador was when she visited Indonesia and observed Gunung Merapi. She was in awe of how the volcanic eruption has enriched people's lives. She states that the people of Indonesia have many geosites and are doing their best to protect these sites. In Thailand, she experienced the same thing and hopes that this can also be a shared mindset for all Malaysian people.

Changing our mentality and perception of the environment starts with the parents. Parents should educate their children on the importance of preserving nature so that generations to come can benefit from this.

LADA has also made a major contribution to these education efforts. In one program, we go to school to teach children visualization tools to better understand the value of caring for nature and all its animals.

It is the little things which make a big difference, for instance, scraping trash from the beaches, not burning rubbish by teak trees and not throwing stones at birds and so on. Everything begins at home, our duty is to further reinforce these values in young people's hearts and minds.

Money may be necessary for survival, but nature, she explains, allows the senses to calm. Nature makes us feel happier and healthier, and gives us a deeper sense of life, she says. It is the mission of her life to make more people realize the value of conserving nature. "It makes me feel good, like giving back to nature, it has changed my life from an emotional point of view. I find myself more patient now and by sharing my experience, I can make a greater difference and that is worth so much more than what money can buy," she adds. As an ambassador, Madam Nor Azlina, now in her 50s, hopes she can contribute in the form of food to the nation, Langkawi, and the geopark. Not only in the form of cookies but potentially a much bigger restaurant serving the whole geopark. She hopes that through her food she will be able to educate people about the value of conservation.

"Nature makes me younger, here we're not talking about people or money, but nature and its geoparks. Much of the time, nature is our subject of discussion. This mutual love and passion for nature unite all of us," she concludes.

## GEOPARK AMBASSADOR

### Madam Nor Azlina Ahmad

Madam Nor Azlina Ahmad is a tour guide, entrepreneur, and restaurateur. Her journey as a Geopark Ambassador started when she sought to better understand the geopark, the unique offering of Langkawi. She then



sought the aid of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia academics to learn more about the geopark. She also

discovered that the fossil and rocks of the geopark looked just like cookies she enjoyed baking. She had a passion for baking and wondered if anything could be done to support geopark with her cookies.





“As a matter of principle, each of us has a part to play in contributing, in our way and means, to the Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark Community. We’re not politicians or police officers, we don’t have wages or allowances, but each of us has a powerful vision of providing our sincere services to make Langkawi UGGp the best UGGp in the world,” he says.

As a community-based tourism site, the cooperative organizes many activities for government agencies, NGOs, universities, colleges, private companies, and more. The Kampung Kilim Cooperative manages these operations while giving priority to the livelihoods of the Kilim villagers. Activities for the education sector are coordinated by means of community programs, inviting lecturers to teach lessons centered on ecotourism and community interests. The fishermen’s economic association was founded in 2010 before the cooperative was established. Then the focus of Langkawi shifted to ecotourism. The community benefited from ecotourism and it changed their lives completely.

The cooperative handles 250 houses and roughly 2005 villagers, 10 percent of whom are cooperative members. The priority of membership is granted to those who earn a living by driving boats. There are 123 boats and the cooperative owns just three, while the rest is owned by the community. Kilim Karst Geoforest Park is one of the top three places to be seen in Langkawi and is the best location for international tourists for its community-based tourism. Visitors are fully immersed in their experience of traveling. He shares that everything is close enough to touch and that nothing is seen from a distance.

Mr. Imran has interviewed tourists, to get a sense of how they feel about Kilim Karst Geoforest Park, and on many accounts, it is the best destination for tourists pressed for time, especially those who come via cruise ships. There are four or five big sites near each other. Tourists see the coexistence of animal life, from the mangroves, in their ecosystems. The Geoforest Park of Kilim Karst is the only one in the world of its kind. That makes it very special in karst formations.

Mangrove trees, he says, are unique and significant because they contribute 90% of the oxygen required for the livelihood of plankton, fish, crabs, and other sea creatures. Bats in the zoo he shares rarely fly around, but here you get to experience them in their natural habitat. It is also the only place that you can see three different kinds of bats in a 10-meter radius unless you watch the National Geographic Channel, of course, he jests. And when visitors go for bird watching, they see at least two or three types of eagles co-existing together. This is a very unusual occurrence, as eagles are usually very territorial. Only here are seven to a hundred eagles seen at once by visitors. This is what Mr. Imran thinks excites visitors.

Prior to the pandemic, Kilim Karst Geoforest Park had between 30,000 and

50,000 visitors each month. Mr. Imran points out that Kilim Karst Geoforest Park would need to focus on its capability to support the livelihood of Kilim in the same way as Mount Kinabalu.

It is important to encourage domestic tourism, however, he adds. Mr. Imran shares that the public must first be educated on how important Geoparks are before they are persuaded to support the Geoparks. He hopes that we do not only have a handful of but many geoparks like China, which children can visit, study and explore. There are currently several Geoparks in Malaysia, including, Jerai Geopark, Kinta Valley Geopark, Mersing Geopark, and several more proposed Geoparks in the pipeline such as the proposed Kinabalu Geopark, the proposed Sarawak Delta Geopark, and Klang Gates Quartz Ridge.

The younger generation must also be educated on the do’s and don’ts in a geopark and the importance of conservation. University Kebangsaan Malaysia already has an elective in the subject and even a Geopark Club. A geopark syllabus should be implemented in kindergarten up to high school, either as an elective subject or as part of the curriculum. Mr. Imran is hopeful that this will be the new standard for every school in our country.



## GEOPARK AMBASSADOR

### Mr Imran B. Ismail

Mr. Imran B. Ismail has been the Cooperative Manager of the Kampung Kilim Community since 2015. As an ambassador for geoparks, he follows strict guidelines including the involvement in LADA-organize geoparks programs and the promotion of Geoparks and the organization of Geoparks programs annually.

The theme of the talk was, the Role of a Geopark Guide. In Japan they don’t have a permanent geopark guide. Unlike most places where a geopark guide or a tourist guide is a career, in Japan geopark guides only participate on a volunteer basis and mostly consists of older, retired individuals. This all began when Puan Indara had a nature programme where lecturers and students from San’in Kaigan Geopark visited Langkawi for a nature, culture tour. They were excited to learn as it was hard to convince the younger generation on becoming tour guides in Japan.

Puan Indara took 25 years to become the guide she is today. She was born in Bukit Mertajam, Penang. Her mother is a Langkawian and her father is from Sungai Nibong. She moved to Langkawi in 1987 when it was first declared a duty-free island. She has witnessed first-hand the growth Langkawi has experienced in 20 years. She recalls that when she first lived in Langkawi, there were only a few cars on the island. There were no proper roads and it was filled with paddy fields and rubber tree plantations and only small chalets and hotels. Kuah Town look like a tiny country town and Rabu Town was just the sea.

When she became an eco-guide in 2006 and Langkawi was introduced as a geopark, she had no idea what a geopark was. It took a long time for her to understand. When University Kebangsaan Malaysia conducted research, she took the opportunity to learn with them. Green practices and conserving nature and the people’s culture are what the geopark status brought to Langkawi.

Langkawi has 38 geosites and 10 biosites. Gunung Raya is 300 million years old and is the best site for birders. It is the oldest granite formation in Malaysia at 851 metres above sea level. It even has as satellite at the top and there was even a Commonwealth meeting at its peak. Today, people can explore the geo trails of Gunung Raya via the 4000 steps it takes to get to the top from Lubuk Semilang. The locals call the trail, tangga seribu or trail of a thousand steps. Not only is it known for its unique fauna, such as the rock gecko and yellow and black striped snake but it is also the best nesting spots for hornbills and mountain hawk eagles.

As a tourist guide and ambassador, she believes that is her role to deliver Langkawi to the people, be it tourists or to locals. You have to have conviction in what you believe in to be a pioneer in your own field, she states. These days people often want to take the easy road.

“We have to learn and seek things out for ourselves. I’m lucky because I live right by the Langkawi Research Centre on Jalan Teluk Yu. When I’m free, I often go there to read books and to view the rock and nature specimens found there. It’s a place where people get to see what Langkawi has done for its Geoparks,” she shares.

Puan Indara goes on to elaborate that Langkawi has the complete Palaeozoic era rock formation, which is why the trilobite has been selected to be the Geopark’s mascot. The Kubang Badak Bio GeoTrail is where you will find the local fishing village. It’s the first settlement

of the Thai people and is where the first generation of charcoal was produced, 200 years ago. The kiln used to make charcoal are built with layers of rocks and sandstone, the age of the rocks found go back 500 million years. There are 12 kilns found here, which is also the location of the best mangrove ecosystem. The mangrove tree is actually what produces charcoal. Some species are more valuable than others as not all mangrove species can be used to produce charcoal due to its high water content.

As a Geopark Ambassador, it is Puan Indara’s goal to educate locals on the challenges of running a geopark and how amazing it is to live in Langkawi so close to the oldest limestone cave in Malaysia. She truly does love Langkawi with a passion and hopes to tell as many people about Langkawi so that more people are aware of its value.

The Kubang Badak Bio GeoTrail area is not only famed for its wondrous nature, kayaking and trekking but also for its exotic food. Here is where visitors can find kerabu siput tarik kaki, a local salad with snails and kerabu served with raw pomfret called Ikan Tambak, Langkawi’s take on sashimi. Fisherman come back from sea with fresh fish like pomfret and anchovies, giant green crabs as well as squid and visitors can buy them directly and get the local restaurants to cook delicious local styled dishes for them. This way visitors can get the full authentic Langkawi experience, she concludes.



## GEOPARK AMBASSADOR

### Puan Indara Rahayu Binti Mohd Noor

Puan Indara Rahayu Binti Mohd Noor has been a tour guide since she was seventeen years old. She was selected to become Geopark Ambassador when she came back from Japan in 2016. Puan Indara was invited to Japan for the Asia Pacific Geopark Conference in 2015 in the Tottori Prefecture, where the San’in Kaigan Geopark is located. She was invited to conduct a talk for leading Tottori Tourism players.





# CLEAN UP ON ISLE LANGKAWI

## Geosite Cleaning Programme



The Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) is responsible for managing geological heritage, cultural preservation, and community engagement. All these efforts help to preserve Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark's cleanliness and sustainability. Also, volunteers are making tireless efforts to ensure that the natural assets of the geopark are preserved and kept intact.

Weekly clean-ups have been organized under the LADAs GeoEducation program as part of local culture for the past few years. Volunteers from various backgrounds gather together to do their part in ensuring that Langkawi is clean, green, and sustainable for all.



The GeoMangrove Program is geared at corporations that seek to integrate environmental conservation as part of their CSR programs. The GeoCoral Program caters to divers by organizing diving trips to clean up coral gardens. This is mostly performed every month. Geosite Cleaning is carried out every Wednesday and Sunday at one of the 38 geosites. Geopark workers guide volunteers and students who want to do their part to keep the geopark clean.

The activities carried out during the GeoMangrove Program include planting seeds and mangrove saplings in the Mangrove Sanctuary area as well as collecting waste in the Sungai Kilim Tourism Jetty area. The participants of the program also have the opportunity to visit the Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark Discovery Centre, a new product of geo-tourism on the island of Langkawi.

The GeoCoral Program involves clean-ups of coral reef waters in nearby islands such as Pulau Singa Besar and

Pulau Tepor. Snorkelers and scuba divers shall make the required arrangements at least one month before the actual cleaning date.

The most recent Geosite Cleaning Program was carried out in June 2020 in Teluk Mempelam, where 84.5 kg of waste was collected, and in Tanjung Dendang, where approximately 154 kg of waste was successfully disposed of from the beach. The most recent Geosite Cleaning Program was carried out in June 2020 in Teluk Mempelam, where 84.5 kg of waste was collected, and in Tanjung Dendang, where approximately 154 kg of waste was successfully disposed of from the beach. To ensure that plastic and styrofoam containers are no longer a concern, participants shall always carry their food containers and bottles of water. This helps to promote the use of biodegradable materials and decrease waste generally.





# SECLUDED & UNEXPECTED DESTINATIONS IN LANGKAWI



## 1. KUBANG BADAK BIOGEOTRAIL

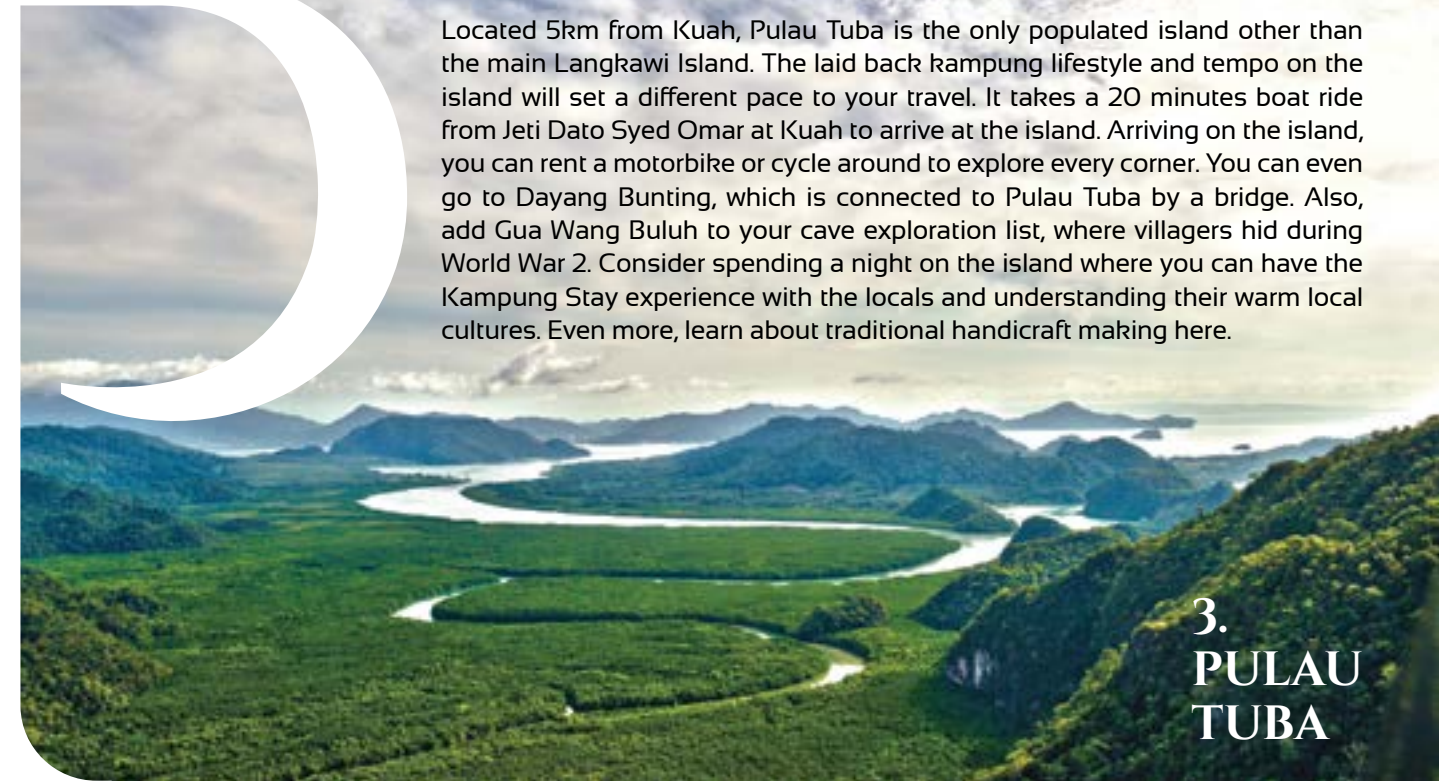
Visiting the Kubang Badak BioGeoTrail will definitely bring you a different kind of experience in Langkawi. Starting off from the unassuming Kubang Badak village, you will travel through the fork of the river, towards a young mangrove forest and learn about healthy mangrove ecology. What's awaiting ahead is also exciting. You will get to see the ruins of Siam village dated back to the 18th century. There are even 100-year-old charcoal kilns in there. Heading towards the sea, several geosites welcome your exploration. You can see limestone and sandstone formations, even trilobite fossils, at Pinang Hill Cave, Jemuruk Island, Tanjung Buta and more. This one-of-a-kind trail is the blend of the wonders of geological, biological and cultural heritage, perfect for those who want an offbeat trip.

Start the trail from Kubang Badak jetty:  
<https://goo.gl/maps/HbuNgTbBQcWHbkpz5>

## 2. AYER HANGAT VILLAGE

Challenging your perception towards Langkawi's mountain and beach holiday vibe, there are hot springs on Langkawi where you can relax and unwind. The mythical hot springs in Air Hangat Village are the aftermath of the fight between the two giants, Mat Chinchang and Mat Raya, that caused hot water to spill over the place. This is the only saltwater hot spring in Malaysia where the water source is seawater - a very unusual natural phenomenon. The spring water is heated by the volcanic lava of Gunung Raya. Other than soaking in the warm and soothing hot springs, you can also enjoy Malay-style spa and treatment in the village. Escaping from the usual routined itinerary, Ayer Hangat Village will certainly add calmness and relaxation to your trip.

Getting here:  
<https://goo.gl/maps/pyf3rpnBBTZstShg8>



Located 5km from Kuah, Pulau Tuba is the only populated island other than the main Langkawi Island. The laid back kampung lifestyle and tempo on the island will set a different pace to your travel. It takes a 20 minutes boat ride from Jeti Dato Syed Omar at Kuah to arrive at the island. Arriving on the island, you can rent a motorbike or cycle around to explore every corner. You can even go to Dayang Bunting, which is connected to Pulau Tuba by a bridge. Also, add Gua Wang Buluh to your cave exploration list, where villagers hid during World War 2. Consider spending a night on the island where you can have the Kampung Stay experience with the locals and understanding their warm local cultures. Even more, learn about traditional handicraft making here.

## 3. PULAU TUBA

## 4. DURIAN PERANGIN WATERFALL

While the Seven Wells Waterfall and Temurun Waterfall get all the limelight, there is another waterfall in Langkawi that you wouldn't want to miss - Durian Perangin Waterfall. As the name suggests, there are durian trees all around the area. The 811m waterfall has 14 tiers that gurgle down Gunung Raya, with natural pools at each section of the fall. There are plenty of gazebos around the waterfall where you can just rest and zen with the sound of nature. This is a less crowded waterfall and best for a quieter picnic or a dip. If you are feeling more adventurous, you can pick up a canyoning tour which is managed by professional guides..

Getting there  
<https://goo.gl/maps/E8t2wfxhrzaheoP7>





# GOODWILL ACTS in the Geopark amid the pandemic

One lesson to draw from the Covid-19 outbreak is that humanity somehow does triumph in tough times. It is solace to know that the community is mutually supportive. Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark (UGGp) emphasized the importance of the well-being of the local community and its culture. In connection with the Covid-19 pandemic, here is a compilation of the efforts of the kind souls of Geopark who behave out of love even in times of crisis.

## HEART-WARMING LUNCH FOR MEDICAL PERSONNEL



At the onset of the nation-wide Movement Control Order, Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) joined forces with the office of Member of Parliament and other NGOs to support frontliners at the hospital. Together, they have given out lunch for free to 200 hospital personnel. Although it was a small token of appreciation, they hope that this act will motivate the frontliners in handling the coming pandemic challenges.

## THE GOOD CAMPAIGN LANGKAWI

A charitable service has been instituted by a community group in May last year. Thanks to donations, the group has given food hampers to over 2,000 people, mainly locals and stranded tourists. "Good tickets are also distributed along with the requisite food items, which are valid for entry to the attractions of the Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark .



## TAILORING FOR THE HEROES

A group of 48 tailors from around Langkawi came together to do charitable work at Hospital Sultanah Maliha and Klinik Kesihatan Kuah. An initiative mooted by Mrs. Norhayati Hassan on Facebook got everyone together. Madam Long Lee Ket provided a room for the rest of the tailors to sew. They already donated 500 sets of protective suits to various hospitals and clinics.



## Y-CONNECT FOODBANK PROJECT

A community-led initiative started distributing food to struggling households since early October. Donors and volunteers came together to help deliver different food items such as rice, canned food and cooking oil. They have also visited Tuba Island and gave out supplies there as well.



## Discovery Consists Not in Seeking New Land but in Seeing with New Eyes

### The Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark Discovery Centre

Discover the 550-million-year-old natural wonders of Southeast Asia's first UNESCO Geopark at Langkawi's Geopark Discovery Centre (GDC). An introduction to the wonders of Langkawi on-site. The center introduces visitors to the spectacular rock formations found in Langkawi as well as its diverse rainforests, mangroves, tidal flats, beaches, caves, karsts, estuaries, and coral reefs.

The Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark Discovery Center, also known as the GDC, was officially opened to the public in January 2020 and offers an educational and exciting range of exhibits, displays, photographs, digital and interactive media, and more. Conveniently located only a few minutes from Kilim Karst Geoforest Park, the Geopark Discovery Center comprises eight zones.

Visitors can launch their journey from the main lobby where the Geopark Rangers will introduce them to the geopark. Langkawi's geological and historical exploration will then begin as visitors see its nature and beauty through a series of 3D animations showing the formation and growth of the island in each era, period, and epoch.

As in the Themed Exhibition Area, visitors will enjoy the first-hand experience of rocks, fossils and other fascinating geological ecosystems found only at the exhibit. Besides, there is a showcase on UNESCO global geoparks, made up of 161 geoparks in 44 countries around the world.

At the Interactive Gaming Zone, families and children will get an even more exciting and engaging idea of the wonders of the geopark through interactive games. There's also a comprehensive library for any book lover. It's a perfect place to take a break from all the discoveries and enjoy a moment of peace.

The Amphitheatre Hall allows guests to take part in a visual montage, a short film about the formation of Langkawi Island 550 million years ago, including various elements that have produced the diverse archipelago and wildlife of Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark. Visitors can also get a souvenir to remember their experience and try out a variety of local Geopark products. This is truly a splendid start for the guests before they head to the real geopark sites.

 Langkawi Geopark Discovery Centre

**Tel** +604-950 2130

**Operating Hour** 09.00 am - 5.00 pm  
(Opens Daily)



## See the World in a Grain of Rice

### Laman Padi Langkawi a Spectacular Agricultural Experience

Langkawi has long been synonymous with rice production, as Kedah is recognized to be the rice bowl of Malaysia. Rice is a staple in almost every household in Malaysia and is also a big export to the world. Here you will witness the vast open rice fields that offer not only a unique experience but a tranquil view of the wide-open fields of nature. While Langkawi is renowned for its ocean view, tourists can get a feel of what agro-tourism is like here in Langkawi.

Located directly opposite Meritus Pelangi in Pantai Cenang, Laman Padi is a quick walk from the beach. Upon passing the gates, you can see a sign pointing to the different parts of the complex, comprising a few rice fields, herb gardens, the Heritage Gallery, and the paddy gallery, which display the method of rice cultivation and processing, as well as the evolution of these processes.

Established in June 1999, the gallery offers visitors an insight into the lives of the people of Langkawi and the paddy industry. Visitors will have the opportunity to learn about the varieties of rice and how rice is

produced. It's humbling when you try to plant rice yourself to see how paddy is processed.

The Kerisik Restaurant, located in the complex, offers guests a special dining experience with its kampung style flair. There are also local Malaysian dishes and foreign dishes. It's the best place to have lunch and dinner with friends and family, as the scenery and food make an authentic Langkawi dining experience.





# 9 SIGNATURE FOOD

## You Must Try in Langkawi



### Laktud

Bet you've never heard of *laktud*! It's actually a type of seaweed that is much more chewy and airy, almost like jelly. When you bite it, it's slightly crunchy and pops in your mouth. Locals would freedive at the mangrove area looking for *laktud*. It is served raw, like salad, together with *sambal kerisik* - cilli paste with grated and toasted coconut shreds.

Check out a micro-documentary about *laktud* here:  
<https://youtu.be/SEiILH3U2LU>



### Kak Yan Nasi Campur

*Nasi campur*, or mixed rice in Malay, can be easily found across Malaysia. You get rice and add on dishes to your plate like a buffet. But at each location, you get to try signature dishes from the place. One of the most famous *nasi campur* places in Langkawi is Kak Yan Nasi Campur, located near the airport. Serving over 30 different dishes, you can easily find what suits your taste buds. Get the freshest local seafood, *ulam* or salad, all prepared in *kampung* style that will make your travel wholesome!



### Hafiz Rojak

Enjoy the sea view together with *rojak* and a plate of hot *mee rebus*! Hafiz Rojak operates on a little food truck located at Pantai Kok. The secret to this delicious *rojak* is the dressing that coats all the fruits - sweet and tangy. With crunchy ground peanuts, the combination is over-the-top and a big surprise to your palate. They also serve *mee rebus* (egg noodles in sour, spicy and gluey gravy) and *Pasembur* (a salad of fritters drizzled with peanut sauce). Consider getting your cravings for Northern Malaysian food fixed here.



### Wonderland Food Store

If you are a seafood lover, then you must not miss Wonderland Food Store at Kuah town. The restaurant serves freshly prepared seafood which tastes just like you are munching them underwater! You can order from a plethora of cooking styles for each of the seafood you order, be it fried soft shelled crabs, salted egg squids or grilled prawns, they have it all. The price is also affordable so that you can go home with a satisfied stomach and wallet.



### Halim GP Gulai Panas Airport

*Gulai* is actually curry with coconut milk. Compared to usual curry, using coconut milk to thicken the gravy gives *gulai* a unique depth of flavour. *Gulai Panas* is spicy and hot curry. Situated near the airport, Halim GP Airport restaurant is your go-to place for some kick in the tongue. You get to choose whichever ingredients you want and have it served in *Gulai Panas* style. The ingredients range from various types of fish, squid, shrimp and chicken. You can also pair it with *ulam* or salad to freshen your taste buds.



### Laksa Kaw Ikan Sekoq

While there are a few different varieties of *laksa* in Malaysia, Langkawi *laksa* (sour spicy rice noodles) is one that you don't want to miss. Laksa Kaw Ikan Sekoq, as the name implies, serves laksa with one mackerel fish to add more flavour to the fish broth. This sour and spicy fish broth is one appetising dish that you would want to order more. You can also get squid instead of mackerel. To finish up, get a bowl of icy cendol *pulut* (green rice flour jelly with sweet glutinous rice) to refresh your taste buds.



### Kerabu Bronok

Wrapping up this list is a dish you can get nowhere else but Langkawi - *kerabu bronok*. *Bronok* is a type of sea cucumber. It has a smooth texture like squid, yet it's more chewy and salty. It melts apart when cooked, so *bronok* needs to be served raw. Making it into *kerabu* is the best way to enhance the flavour and add a more spicy kick to the dish. The *kerabu* mixture is made from *sambal kerisik*, onions, chilli, cashew leaves and more shredded coconut. While it can be daunting to try, you will love it once you put it in your mouth. Remember, this is unique in Langkawi and Langkawi only, make sure you try it out!

Check out a micro-documentary about bronok here:  
<https://youtu.be/oYlctoHLuBg>



### Sup Gamal Sea Cucumber Soup

*Sup Gamat* or Sea Cucumber Soup is also one of the unique and exotic foods in Langkawi. By dicing sea cucumbers and boiling with a lot of herbs, this soup provides you with extra oomph and nutrients. A tonic that you should go for after a long trip of travelling! Get a taste of this soup from Restoran Siti Fatimah at Taman Sentosa. This delicacy is popular among the Malay community here in Langkawi. Sea cucumber has long been used in traditional medicine as it is highly nutritious and is useful for the healing process of wounds.



### Nasi Dagang Pak Malau

Even though *nasi dagang* does not originate from Langkawi, you will appreciate this dining experience in the paddy field overlooking Gunung Raya - the tallest mountain on Langkawi. What sets this rice and curry combination apart is the rice that smells really fragrant from the onion, ginger and *halba* (a type of spice). This rice goes really well with fish curry, mutton *kurma* (mutton marinated in yogurt and spices) and beef rendang (braised beef in coconut milk and spices gravy). Also served at the side is some pickled vegetables that give a refreshing bite to your meal. Go earlier in the day to enjoy the best view when it is not too hot.



## HELANG SOARING HIGH AGAIN THROUGH A HOLISTIC PATH

A pandemic that takes away life and livelihood resets Langkawi economic approach. The new economic blueprint - HELANG is ready to bring Langkawi to recover then soar high again after the COVID-19 pandemic.

A tropical paradise and one of the must-visits in Malaysia, Langkawi tourism industry contributes 70 per cent to the island economy. The drastic drop in tourist arrivals since the pandemic started became a daunting challenge for almost all residents, even for those working outside the tourism sector.

Langkawi direly needs a multipronged approach to rejuvenate the island's economy. Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) hence developed an economic blueprint to steer the way forward. The HELANG economic blueprint got its name from an acronym derived from *Hala Tuju Ekonomi Langkawi*, which stays true to Langkawi's icon - the majestic eagle.

The execution of this economic blueprint runs on three main pillars - economic diversity, local culture and sustainability as well as safe travel. These pillars are thoughtfully structured to allow focused and holistic actions to take place. Supporting the three pillars are ten concrete strategies, coupled with 30 action plan.

Involving major stakeholders to revive the economy is the key. To wade through the challenges, LADA is engaging with the tourism industry through short-term, mid-term and long-term actions. Thus far, local tourism industry players are supporting the HELANG initiatives, including operators of tourism attractions, hotels and duty-free shops, as well as tour agents and tour guides.

The three tourism strategies include highlighting Langkawi as a destination that is safe, clean and sustainable, promoting Langkawi tourism in a focused way and reopening Langkawi as a travel destination. Resilience in the tourism industry is the priority.

LADA launched the tourism action plans of the HELANG economy blueprint on 15 August this year. The launching event highlighted the four main initiatives - Langkawi Great Sales, Langkawi Travel Fair, 7 Legendary Trail and Kuah Down Memory Lane Trail. Each of these initiatives ultimately aims to boost Langkawi's tourism by instilling the uniqueness of the island through multi-experience travel.



This economic blueprint has seen some quick win before the launch. Eighty tourism frontliners attended the Retraining and Upskilling Program, a two-week course organised with the support of Langkawi Tourism Academy. This program has equipped the participants with the knowledge to diversify their skills other than tourism.

Ensuring the success of this grand plan to pull through this pandemic and recover is not an easy task. With careful consideration, HELANG economic blueprint will guide everyone through hardships and recoup stronger. Government agencies, private sector, industry players, NGOs and the local community are essential to this journey. Everyone bears an immense responsibility to manoeuvre Langkawi to soar high again.

## Celebrating 13 Years of Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark Achievements

The Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark's achievement in retaining its current glory and its international geo-tourism reputation was mostly for the efforts and excellent management of the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA). It is thanks to LADA that the island, known not only in Malaysia but on a global front, has now been elevated to international status.

Essentially, the transformation of Langkawi has been primarily for eco-tourism attractions products, and ventures such as the award-winning Kilim Mangrove Tours, which are actively being sought by travel trade and LADA. That said, comparable efforts are being made to ensure that it remains intact. This is evident despite new attractions, transportation, and road development for the coherent efforts of sustainable tourism.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS WILL PROVE TO BE A JOURNEY NOT A DESTINATION

Langkawi was first awarded the Global Geopark title in 2007. The vision of Dato' Dr. Kamarulzaman Abdul Ghani led Langkawi to the achievement of the Global Geopark Status. It was time to re-validate the world's geopark status for the first time after four years. It was the efforts of Dato' Azman Umar that led to the second award, in 2011, as he gathered the support of stakeholders. These supports are crucial to LADA in its efforts to elevate Langkawi's reputation as a global geopark destination.

In 2015, during the second revalidation, Tan Sri Khalid Ramli lead Langkawi to receive international recognition by UNESCO as a geopark reference center for all of Southeast Asia. This award was conferred at the 4th Asia-Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN) at the San'in Kaigan Symposium in Tottori, Japan.

Dato' Haji Azizan Noordin later took over as CEO in December 2016 and launched strategic growth plans for Langkawi in the area of sustainable tourism, investment, and the environment. He also was in charge of bringing the Geopark to the regional non-profit travel association, which champions responsible for tourism development in the Asia-Pacific region.

At present, under the leadership of Dr. Hezri Adnan, efforts are now moving to the culmination of Langkawi as Asia's first transborder Geopark. The integration of Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark and Satun UNESCO Global Geopark would create a cross-border geopark for sustainable tourism, as well as continuing research and promotion activities.





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**LANGKAWI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (LADA)**

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