

City Tourism

Brunei:

**ideal stop-over or stand
alone destination?**

London - Islamic Tourism

Waterfall at Ulu National Park

شلال في حديقة أولو

As a stand alone destination, Brunei can appeal mostly to those with special interests related to tropical rainforests or to Malay culture and history, as well as to those looking for peaceful, safe and family friendly vacations, far from the beaten tracks and the tourist hordes, yet easy to reach and to enjoy, and with a sufficient mix of nature, culture and leisure attractions to sustain a leisurely paced stay of several nights.

Adventure enthusiasts looking for new challenges in mountain biking, jungle trekking, rock climbing, white water activities and diving will find new ground to break in Brunei, while those in the region looking for a short getaway to escape the region's capitals pollution and traffic jams will enjoy Brunei's clean air and traffic free roads, while having enough to do and see to keep entertained. Brunei is also ideal for incentive trips,

conferences, conventions, meetings and seminars as it has many state-of-the-art facilities, including a prestigious purpose built convention center, and has ample experience in handling large groups, having hosted many high profile international conferences and sport meetings. With its rather subdued nightlife resulting in delegates remaining focused on the business at hand, organizers usually appreciate the more productive output of events staged in Brunei! For a stop-over or "gateway" stay, a typical program of 1 to 3 nights should include a tour of Bandar covering the city's main sites and museums, a tour of the water village, a stop by a nature reserve, a night tour of the Jerudong area and a visit – or overnight stay – at the Empire Hotel, thus capturing in a short time the essence of Brunei: its abundance of nature,

From a tourism industry point of view, Brunei is suitable not only as a gateway to Borneo or a stop-over destination on the Europe / East Asia route to or from Australia / New Zealand, but also for a multi-center vacation as a destination to combine with Sabah, Sarawak or Kalimantan for a complete Borneo experience, with Bali to which it is directly linked for a taste of two very different sides of Asia, with Singapore for a contrasting mix of urban and real jungle, or even with Dubai for a desert and jungle experience, among other possibilities.

culture, tradition and opulence. Multi-center programs can have a variety of permutations, with pre or post tours to the urban jungles of Singapore or Kuala Lumpur, with beach extensions to any of the directly linked resorts in the region, to contrasting places such as Bali, Australia's Northern Territories or Gold Coast or even Dubai, but the most logical permutation is to combine Brunei with the Malaysian Borneo states of Sabah and/or Sarawak, with at least a 4 nights stay in Brunei covering the Bandar area and the nature areas in Temburong and/or in the Tutong and Belait districts, taking in attractions such as visiting mangrove covered areas home to the Borneo endemic proboscis monkeys, visiting or staying at native longhouse villages, going upriver deep inside Brunei's pristine rainforests in motorized longboats, trekking in the jungle. This can then be combined with, for example, a road trip to Miri in Sarawak, followed by a tour of the UNESCO World Heritage listed gigantic Mulu caves, which can be followed by the exciting but relatively easy trek on the Headhunters Trail that leads back to Limbang, only a short drive or boat ride from Bandar Seri Begawan. Another option is to combine with nearby Sabah and its UNESCO World Heritage listed Mount Kinabalu, South East Asia's tallest yet easy to climb mountain. ■