



Mesmerizing Kuala Selangor

This little city just on the brim of Selangor is enchanting to say the least, with many different attractions for the inquisitive and adventurous type.

If you are an adventurous traveller, there is the huge nature park that excites visitors with its rich assortment of flora and fauna.

The old forts in the area take you back through time, as you revisit past glories and hear the legends and folklores the locals have to share. Once you are done with nature and history, you can top it off with fishing in Kuala Selangor's calm, meandering river stream.

For those who lean on the sporty side and are more content to enjoy a round of golf, the nine-hole course within the tranquil environment of Kampung Kuantan is a favourite find.

Golf aficionados from across the country come here to putt.

These places of attractions are a microcosm of what the quaint little town of Kuala Selangor has to offer to the modern traveller. This place is truly a legacy of the past blended with a soothing more modern environment emerged with the preservation of natural beauty.

The Best of Selangor

Kuala Selangor continues to play an important role as one of Selangor's leading 'rice bowls', as well as a historical spot. Kuala Selangor was Selangor's

administrative centre before it was shifted in 1756 to Jugra in Kuala Langat and later Klang, the royal town, situated about 50 kilometres southward.

Then the administrative capital for the State, Kuala Selangor is now a popular tourist corner with rare finds to offer the adventurous traveller. Kuala Selangor is perhaps the best of the state's 11 districts to visit and is well suited for those who wish to savour the best of Selangor in a go and has limited time to spare. It is also perfectly suited for those looking for a quiet break away from the hustle and bustle of city life.

Going Back In Time

Visit the forts in the old part of Kuala Selangor and you will discover the saga of Selangor's memorable past. Those well read in the history of Malaysia will tell you that Raja Lumu proclaimed himself

as the first Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Salehuddin, in 1756. He then established his headquarters at the mouth of the Selangor River.

Kuala Selangor was chosen by the Sultan because of its strategic location and because it was protected by two hills. The bigger of the two, Bukit Selangor, sat across from the smaller one called Bukit Tanjong Keramat. In the olden days, this was the battleground, where the Dutch and the English fought their ground. These battles were fought within the Bukit Malawati area, which is today identified by age-old forts and cannons. The forts, which were constructed by the locals, served as a form of protection against the Dutch.

Today Bukit Malawati dominates the landscape of its dense forest setting. On its peak stands Fort Malawati, formerly known as Fort Althingsburg. Built by locals

during the reign of Sultan Ibrahim, who was the second Sultan of Selangor (1778-1826), the fort houses several cannons, which served as a means of defence against enemy attacks. The architectural structure of Fort Melawati reflects a marriage of the Malay and Dutch cultures.

The hill also houses the royal graves of the first three Sultans of Selangor namely Sultan Salehuddin Shah, Sultan Ibrahim and Sultan Mahmud Shah. To complete and preserve the royal tombs, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah erected a stunning mausoleum enclosing the Royal Tombs in 1977. The Royal Mausoleum, which is a part of the fort, houses colonial style bungalows and the lighthouse, which form the only existing features of Bukit Malawati today.

You can also visit the 100 steps. These steps were built from solid rocks and arranged very closely together, done



A view from the fort

completely without the use of cement. Visitors to Fort Malawati who come by sea or river have to stop at Batu Buruk at the foot of the hill, which is where the steps are. At the end of these 100 steps stand three stones, which form the door to the hill's cave. While the steps are mainly still intact and sturdy, not all of the weather-

beaten steps are visible, as many have been buried under soil deposits.

East of Fort Malawati and three steps down the 100 steps, lies a flat piece of land measuring approximately 10 by 10 metres. In the centre stands a solid rock called the 'execution block'. Back in the day, this was the site where traitors and

enemies were decapitated. The corpses of those beheaded here were buried in a graveyard called kubur derhaka (or traitors' graves).

Of Legends and Folklore

Another sight to behold or folklore to hear is the seven wells. These seven wells are said to be from seven springs, which never dry up even during long periods of drought. The people of Kuala Selangor used these wells before they had piped water. The superstitious villagers used the water to drink and bathe to cast off bad luck or to cleanse themselves from sins. Some of the wells are still being used today. The rest have been filled in with earth.

At Bukit Keramat Anak Dara, you will find a gravesite at its peak. Legend has it that Rubiah, a beautiful village virgin fled



Grey herons, egrets, storks and other migratory birds frequent the swamps.

Nature preserved

Mangrove swamp



Rice fields in the agriculture area of Kuala Selangor



An aerial view of Kuala Selangor



The silver leaf monkeys come here to play



to this island on her wedding day after being forced to marry a man she did not love and eventually perished here.

A Haven of Nature

A definite pit stop if you visit this town, is the Kuala Selangor Nature Park, which is the first of its kind in Malaysia. Established by the Malaysian Nature Society in arms with the Selangor Government, it aims to conserve the rich natural heritage of plants and wildlife within it. The park also provides facilities for nature education and recreation.

The nature park consists of 250 hectares of coastal-land mostly of which is the mangrove swamp. This place is a haven to about 130 species of birds, some of which are very exotic and rare. An estimated 100,000 wading birds, from approximately 30 species, fly through the area on their annual migration.

It is said that there is a large mud hole in the nearby mangrove swamp, which

is frequented, by grey herons, egrets, storks and other migratory birds. If you are patient enough, you may be treated to the sight of these birds stalking for food, otters venturing out for their morning swim or kingfishers diving in the lakes to catch fish.

With a little bit more perseverance, you might even be able to catch a glimpse of the silver-leaf monkey. These large grey coloured primates, give birth to

orange-coloured offspring and are known for this unique trait. It is here that you can easily find silver-leaf monkeys, which will amuse you with their antics of crashing through the trees. If flora and fauna are what you sought after in your travels, then this is the place you will want to be. You will be hushed by the gushing waters and overwhelmed by the abundance of nature here, so well preserved.



At one with nature



Fire In The Sky

If you visit Kuala Selangor, you have to be sure to pop by the firefly sanctuary. These fireflies in the riverside area of Kampung Kuantan, located 9km from the town centre of Kuala Selangor, woo visitors from far and wide.

This sanctuary is universally acknowledged as one of the few remaining areas in the world with fireflies still breeding today. The promotion of Kampung Kuantan as a firefly sanctuary began in the early 1970s when a local entrepreneur foresaw the commercial potential of the place.

The project was later entrusted to the Kuala Selangor District Council, which provided various facilities like boats or sampans and accommodation.

The Firefly Park Resort in Bukit Belimbing is another spot in Kuala Selangor where you can watch millions of fireflies after sunset from boats along the Selangor River.

You will be enthralled by the miraculous sight of fireflies that swarm around in spectacular symphonic harmony from the branches of the berembang trees along the riverbanks. The pteroptye tener species of firefly are

the largest species found in Kampung Kuantan.

The fireflies here are unique due to their tails that produce light. Each flash of light emanating from each insect is produced at an interval of three seconds.

From fireflies to nature parks and fishing in the river, what is left of this type of life so involving nature is fast dispersing for most urbanites. The rapid pace of development has evaporated much of the reminiscence of historical events into thin air. Fortunately, places like Kuala Selangor are not short of specialities to continue to lure visitors.