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Perak International Homestay Carnival 2012



The inaugural *Perak International Homestay Carnival* held in early October at the Sayong Riverfront Complex, Kuala Kangsar was a one of its kind. The objective was to showcase homestay packages from the IMT-GT (Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand – Growth Triangle) countries. Malaysia had the most number of participants followed by Indonesia. Thailand, for some inexplicable reasons, pulled out at the very last minute. The Sayong Riverfront Complex was opened last year. Built at a cost of RM17 million with funding provided by the Northern Corridor Implementation Agency and the Ministry of Tourism.

Continued on page 2

foreword

Dato' Hamidah Osman
State Executive Councillor for Tourism



October has come to a close and, as the days pass, we are nearing the end of the year. The end of 2012 signals the end of Visit Perak Year 2012, as well. I am saying this with a heavy heart for, as the saying goes, “a woman’s work is never done”. There is still plenty to be done and considering the limitations, deliberate or otherwise, I feel we have achieved what we have set out to do, with some reservations, of course. There will be those who think the opposite. I am not averse to criticisms, as this is only to be expected. The adage, “you can’t please everyone” holds true. I am not absolving myself or my staff of any blame. After all, we are all human and are apt to make mistakes. We have to look at the bigger picture. If, in the eyes of my detractors, VPY 2012 has achieved little, at least it is a likeable foundation for Visit Malaysia Year 2013. My optimism remains high, in spite of the many shortcomings.

The highlight of October was the *Perak International Homestay Carnival 2012*, the first of its kind in the country. It was successfully organised by the Ministry of Tourism (Perak) with the collaboration of the Kuala Kangsar District Office and the Kuala Kangsar Municipal Council. Participation by homestay operators was most encouraging. My only regret, however, was the poor turnout. There are several factors for the shortfall. But it will not deter us from doing the same come next year.

The theme for November’s issue of *Tourism News* is on homestay in Perak. There are eight defined locations in the state where homestay services are available. Each will be given the prominence due. Hopefully, the information given will be of use to those wishing to give themselves a break during

the coming school holidays.

Located on a 6-hectare site on the banks of Perak River at Sayong, it can be accessed by road via a bridge or by boat from the Kuala Kangsar Jetty at Bukit Chandan. Facilities available include a jetty, an art gallery, restaurants and an exhibition cum handicraft centre.

The eight Ministry of Tourism (Perak) sanctioned homestay service providers in Perak came in full force. They had the opportunity to introduce their homestay services and products to visitors that thronged the two-day carnival. Operators from neighbouring states such as Kedah, Perlis, Selangor and Negeri Sembilan were also present to showcase their products.

The weekend event had plenty to offer with cultural performances, traditional games and handicraft exhibitions. An interesting workshop organised by Malaysian Homestay Chairman, Dato' Shariman Hamdan provided participants some useful tips on how to micromanage the growing homestay industry.

Dato' Hamidah Osman, in her opening address, thanked the federal government for honouring Perak with the hosting of the carnival. The event would help develop the homestay industry in the country and the region.

Attendance, unfortunately, was below expectation. The reasons could be several. In spite of the many banners announcing the event strung on lamp posts and at rest areas along the PLUS Expressway, the message did not filter down to the public. Inclement weather could be the other reason for the shortfall.

Blame should not be apportioned to the organisers alone as they had put on a remarkable show despite the many shortcomings. It may have to do with accessibility and positioning, as the Sayong Riverfront Complex is still foreign to residents of Kuala Kangsar.



All 8 Perak Sanctioned Homestay Operators Participate



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Editorial Board:

Hj. Musa bin Dun,
Mohd Odzman bin Abd Kadir,
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Graphics:

Muhammad Shahir and Rosli Mansor.

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Gopeng Homestay



The Gopeng Homestay is a collection of traditional Malay houses offering homestay services for the discerning travellers and adventure seekers. It is spread out in three Malay villages in Gopeng namely Kg Jelintoh, Kg Sg Itek and Kg Pintu Padang. These villages are located along the Gopeng-Kg Ulu Geruh road with the imposing Main Range (Banjaran Titiwangsa) looming high in the east.

Due to their proximity to the highlands the place is relatively cool compared to Gopeng. One major attraction is the preponderance of trees and shrubs giving one a healthy feeling of being closed to Nature.

Sungai Kampar, which flows in a south-westerly direction, provides some tacky staging points for white-water rafting and other forms of water activities of which Gopeng is famous for.

Guests can indulge themselves in traditional Malay handiworks like basket weaving, making of bird cages, making of *bedak sejuk* (rice-based face powder), etc. Trips to Kellie's Castle, Herbal Garden and the iconic Gua Tempurong can be arranged upon request.

For details and reservations call the coordinator at **605-477 5145 or 6017-506 4783**. Email: gopenghomestay@yahoo.com.

Bukit Gantang Homestay



Bukit Gantang is a village named after a hill lock shaped like a container to measure rice. One *gantang* of rice weighs 6 katis or 3.6 kilos. The village is on the old Kuala Kangsar-Taiping trunk road that runs through a pass in the Bintang Range.

This thickly wooded area is well known for durian, a seasonal fruit which is synonymous with Bukit Gantang. The annual Bukit Gantang Durian Fest is a major attraction one which is eagerly awaited by both tourists and locals.

A number of villagers have turned their humble wooden abodes into shared lodgings offering homestay services for the intrepid travellers and sojourners.

The village's proximity to touristic spots such as Kg Dew (fireflies), Kuala Sepetang Mangrove Forest, Long Jaafar Museum and historic Taiping makes the Bukit Gantang homestay an ideal home-away-from-home for Nature lovers.

The period most favoured by visitors is the fruiting season (November to March) when durians, mangosteens and langsung are in sheer abundance.

For details and reservations call **605-855 1311**. Email: ghasaliyunus@yahoo.com.

Klah Homestay



Homestay Klah, unlike others in Perak, is managed and run by a federal agency – the *Federal Land Development Authority* (FELDA), an agency dedicated to developing state lands for oil palm and rubber cultivation.

Klah is a quintessential FELDA oil palm plantation located at the southern tip of Perak close to Tanjung Malim. It is accessible from the old trunk road.

The choice of this spot for the provision of homestay services is prompted by the presence of numerous hot springs. These thermal springs are being optimised to the fullest by the operators and have become a major source of revenue for the agency.

Guests will be hosted by villagers and thus get to enjoy the ambience and experience of the day-to-day routine of their hosts. Taking a dip in one of the spruced-up hot springs is a must.

For details and reservations call the coordinator at **605-438 6869 or 6013-590 7698**. Email: deeklahhomestay@yahoo.com.

Maju Manik Homestay



This homestay takes its name from the Malay village of Sungai Manik located in the District of Hilir Perak at the south-western part of the state. In this relatively flat hinterland of Perak, where agriculture is the major staple of the populace, activities common to kampong are the major highlights of a tour package.

Visitors can learn to plant and harvest padi, try their luck fishing in streams and rivers and, if they have nothing much to do, share the simple lifestyle of the villagers within a rustic rural setting. Your hosts are more than willing to let you loose in their kampongs away from the hustle and bustle of the cities.

Sungai Manik's closeness to Teluk Intan and Pasir Salak provides guests a chance to see Teluk Intan's leaning clock tower, savour the local cuisines and visit the historic *Pasir Salak Complex* for a peek into Perak's chequered past. This can be done in a day, as accessibility is never problematic.

For details and reservations call the coordinator at **6012-591 7771**. Email: koperasimajumanik@yahoo.com.

Pendiat Homestay

Kampung Pendiat is located on the banks of the Perak River within the mukim (ward) of Bota Kanan. It is accessible from the Ipoh-Bota Kanan Road.

Being a thriving riverside settlement, activities closely associated with riverine communities feature prominently on the visitors' programme. Fishing using nets (*jala*) and traps, commonly used by the villagers, are some of the activities in store for visitors. One can even boat or kayak in the Perak River provided facilities are available.

Since Kg Pendiat is close to Lumut, Pasir Salak and Batu Gajah day trips to these places can be arranged upon request. The much-anticipated rural ambience is lost should one decide to leave for the bright lights of the towns. So it is better to stick to your hosts' programme. The Bota Kanan Terrapin Breeding Centre is must see.

For details and reservations call the coordinator at **6017-579 6251**. Email: homestaypendiat@yahoo.com.



Bagan Dato Homestay



Bagan Dato, a collection of over a dozen Malay villages, is located at the mouth of the Perak River in the District of Hilir Perak. If Bukit Gantang is noted for its durian, Bagan Dato is famous for its coconuts. In fact it is the coconut haven of Perak, as the quality of the nuts found here is the best in the country.

There are over a hundred houses that offer homestay services to visitors. The idyllic charm of a rural lifestyle is forever engraved in the minds of those who care to drop-in.

Experience the carefree nature of the pleasant Malay villagers and immerse in the subtle beauty of the rural countryside. You will be spoilt for choice.

Some of the pre-determined activities on the tour package programme are a trip to Benting Beras Basah, a sacred spot for the Perak royalty, a visit to Bagan Dato's famous coconut oil-making factory, traditional dance performances, fishing for lobsters, etc.

For details and reservations call the coordinator at **605-648 0757 or 6019-549 9777**. Email: homestaybagandato@yahoo.com.

Kg Beng Homestay



This Lenggong-based homestay is off the Lenggong-Gerik Highway about 60 kilometres from Kuala Kangsar. It is located within the rustic Kg Beng about 3 kilometres east of Lenggong. There are two ways to Kg Beng one is a river route via the jetty at Durian Pipit and the other a land route via Kampong Baru Kota Tampan and Kampong Luat. The river route, incidentally, is the more exciting of the two.

The Kg Beng homestay has been acknowledged by the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia as the best managed homestay in Perak. It is placed fifth in the national ranking. Being so highly rated, the services and amenities offered are definitely notches above the rest in the industry.

A 3-day-2-night tour package cost RM140 per person. Guests get to stay in one of the 42 houses and will be cared for by the operator. Activities include fishing and night boating in Chenderoh Lake, jungle trekking, a visit to a deer farm, water sports and partaking in the villagers' daily routine. Meals are being provided by the hosts so one gets to eat what the villagers eat.

For details and reservations call the coordinator at **605-757 7102** or **6016-565 4303**. Email: homestaykgbeng@yahoo.com.

Selama Homestay



Homestay Selama is a grouping of 32 houses located in two localities, Bagan Baru (23 houses) and Sungai Seputeh (10 houses). Located in the northern region of Perak, this homestay has been in operation since 2004.

There are two ways to get to Selama; one is from Bagan Serai and the other is from Kamunting. Both ways have their advantages, in terms of accessibility. The preferred route is from Kamunting as the scenery is more appealing to the eyes.

Selama sits right smack on the Perak-Kedah border which is defined by the fast-flowing waters of the Krian River whose source is from the summit of Gunung Bintang.

Situated close to the Ijok Felda Scheme, oil palm trees fill the landscape. In fact, one has to pass through rows upon rows of palm trees to get to the homestay. For city dwellers this is an attraction by itself.

Programmed activities are similar to the other homestays. Some fascinating places to visit include a giant pond, a river on a river, the largest deer farm in Malaysia, the third tallest waterfall in Asia, a mini museum and a thriving herbal industry using "mas cotek" (*Ficus deltoidea*, also known as "mistletoe fig") as an ingredient.

A 3-day-two-night package costs RM260 per person. The homestay can accommodate 80 visitors comfortably.

For details and reservations call the coordinator (Ali Mohd Radzi) at **6013-418 8418** or **605-839 4813** (Koperasi Risda Selama).



Tourism Roundup

Scaling Gunung Rinjani



Thirty members of Media Perak, an association of Perak-based media representatives, are set to create a record of sorts by being the largest group of media personnel to scale Mount Rinjani in Lombok, Indonesia.

Capping at 3726 metres, Gunung Rinjani is the second highest of Indonesia's 127 active volcanoes after Gunung Kerinci (3800 metres) in Sumatra. The team will be led by Datuk Akmar Hisham Mokles, the Prime Minister's Press Secretary.

Dato' Hamidah Osman, on behalf of the state government and Tourism Perak, donated RM30,000 to the media club during a brief ceremony held at the State Secretariat Building on Thursday, October 25.

Datuk Akmar Hisham, a Perakian is elated at being given a leading role in the effort. "It's a challenge which we'll assume with much pleasure. A successful attempt will have a definitive impact on Malaysia and Perak, in particular."

The team will leave for Lombok on Saturday, November 3 and return on Sunday, November 11. Scaling of the mountain is scheduled for November 4 to 6.



TOURISM CALENDER - NOVEMBER 2012

- 1. KARNIVAL CUTI SEKOLAH**
Venue: Batu Gajah
Contact: Tourism Perak at **605-208 3600**
- 2. November 4: KAYUHAN PELANCONGAN KUALE**
Venue: Kuala Kangsar.
Contact: Majlis Perbandaran Kuala Kangsar / Sekretariat Kayuhan Kuale at **605-776 8199**
- 3. November 6 to 7: WORLD AMATEUR INTER TEAM GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP (WAITGC)**
Venue: Ipoh
Contact: Tourism Malaysia Perak at **605-255 9962**
- 4. KARNIVAL DUNIA HERBA PERAK 2012**
Venue: Batu Gajah
Contact: Tourism Perak at **605-208 3600** / Jabatan Pertanian at **605-253 1957**