WELCOME TO SARAH’S EAST COAST
~ A NATURE LOVER’S PARADISE.

How would you like to spend an idyllic holiday in paradise? Come face to face with an orang utan or nesting sea turtle, explore virgin rainforests, relax in a chalet perched over a coral reef, experience some of the world’s top dive sites, and see caves where edible birds’ nests have been gathered since antiquity, all within easy distance of a capital city?

All these treasures, and more, are found along Sabah’s East Coast. Less than an hour’s flight from Sabah’s capital, Kota Kinabalu, is the town of Sandakan, the gateway to the famous Sepilok Orang Utan Sanctuary, Turtle Islands, and Kinabatangan wetlands. One of the richest and most accessible wildlife regions in all of Southeast Asia, the Kinabatangan is home to a plethora of birds and animals like the unique proboscis monkey, found only in Borneo.

The complex beauty of the lowland rainforest can be discovered from the comfort of a lodge set in the heart of the Danum Valley Conservation Area, reached via the town of Lahad Datu. Set amidst rich agricultural lands, is Tawau, the Cocoa Capital of Asia. To the north is the coastal town of Semporna, where people once known as Sea Gypsies come to town and the call of the sea draws divers from all over the world.
THE WORLD'S TOP DIVE SITES!

Sabah is blessed with some of the most beautiful islands, coral reefs and atolls. The clear waters and exotic treasures of marine life found here have captivated visitors and divers from all over the world.

Lankayan Island ~ located in the Sulu Sea, the northeast coast of Sandakan. This is a small island paradise with only one dive resort, surrounded by stretches of white sandy beaches, swaying casuarinas and beautiful sunsets.

Described as a true macro-world paradise, there are also larger marine creatures such as leopard sharks, marbled stingray and giant grouper as well as schools of bumphead parrotfish, yellowtail barracuda and scads. Nearby is the Turtle Islands Park, so the hawksbill and green turtles are also ‘visitors’ in its dive sites.

Mabul Island ~ situated only about 15 minutes by speedboat from Sipadan, Mabul is recognised as one of the world’s best “muck-diving” sites, one of the richest single destinations for exotic small marine life in the world. Flamboyant cuttlefish, blue-ringed octopus, mimic octopus, gobies and frogfishes are everywhere, as are moray, snake eels and practically the whole scorpionfish family. There’s no doubt about it, Mabul is a magical macro site! The beauty of Mabul and Kapalai will also appeal greatly to non-divers as well. There are two resorts on Mabul Island, with the third resort an off-shore refurbished oil-rig.
Sipadan ~ rated as the world’s top dive sites. For the true diving enthusiast, the island needs no introduction. Praised by the internationally renowned oceanographer and filmmaker Jacques Cousteau as one of the best diving spots in the world, it is unique as the only oceanic island in Malaysia. Its geographic position puts Sipadan in the centre of the richest marine habitat in the world, the heart of the Indo-Pacific basin. Sipadan rises 600 m. from the seabed to provide spectacular wall dives and underwater garden. More than 3,000 species of fish and hundreds of coral species have been classified in this richest of ecosystem. Sipadan is also renowned for its unusually large numbers of green and hawksbill turtles, which gather there to mate and nest. It is not unusual to see more than 20 turtles on each dive. Another unique feature to divers is the turtle tomb that contains many skeletal remains of turtles. The residential schooling barracuda and big-eye trevally are one of the highlights on every diver’s Wish-list, which often gather in thousands forming spectacular tornado-like formations. Mantas, eagle-rays, scalloped hammerhead sharks and whale sharks may also be seen, as well as an abundance of macro life. For sustainable and conservation purpose, there will be no onsite dive resorts operating on Sipadan island. Diving activity will continue for divers to be ferried in by operators operating from the mainland or nearby islands other than the islands of Sipadan and Ligitan.

Kapalai Reef ~ actually a sand bar, Kapalai sits on top of the Ligitan Reefs. The sole resort is built water-village-style. Together with Mabul and Langkayan, Kapalai offers some of the best “muck-diving” in the world. Flamboyant cuttlefish, blue-ringed octopus, sea moths and mating mandarinfish, giant frogfish, ribbon eels, harlequin ghost pipefish and crab-eye gobies are found right by the jetty! While the abundance of other marine life like the various gobies, ambonian shrimps, mantis shrimps, crocodilefish, lionfish and scorpionfish, are usually almost ignored as being too common here!
Sabah’s East Coast offers all types of accommodation facilities. From 5-star resorts in acclaimed diving spots to luxury retreats surrounded by centuries-old rainforests, to simple, quaint chalets fronting secluded beaches.

When it comes to food, it’s a culinary wonderland in Sabah. Local delicacies and international cuisine are aplenty with hawker stalls or local coffee shops serving piping hot food or enter the gourmet’s paradise in award-winning restaurants. Continental cuisine can be found in most hotels.

As Sabah’s coastline is embraced by several seas, it is no surprise that you will find the freshest and biggest seafood served. Deliciously prepared by chefs, no cooking can beat the fresh taste of seafood just caught off the waters. Get prepared for a gastronomic delight!
HOW TO GET TO SARAH'S EAST COAST.

The Kota Kinabalu International Airport is serviced by most international airlines, getting direct international air links from Hong Kong, Singapore, Tokyo, Seoul, Brunei, Taipch, Kaoshiung, Manila, Cebu, as well as Malaysia’s capital city, Kuala Lumpur and nearby Kuching, Sarawak.

Several daily flights link Sandakan, Lahad Datu and Tawau to the state’s capital, Kota Kinabalu. For details contact Malaysia Airlines or the nearest travel agency. Travel from Kota Kinabalu is also possible by air-conditioned coach and mini bus, lasting approximately 8 hours per way to Tawau.

Sandakan, Lahad Datu, Semporna and Tawau are all linked by road.