



Pre Departure Information

About Palangka Raya

Palangka Raya, capital of the Indonesian province of Central Kalimantan (Kalteng), is a frontier city of some 300,000 people. Planned and built by President Sukarno in the 1960's some 60 years ago, it is destined to become the administrative capital of Indonesia in the near future. Palangka Raya is the business base for the development of the Province's wealth of natural resources. Starting point also for the Rahai'i Pangun Jungle River cruises, it is the gateway to accessing the natural wonders of this fast developing province.

People & Language & Local customs

Kalteng is home to a multi ethnic mix of Dayak tribes, the indigenous inhabitants of Borneo with their unique culture, languages and religion. Kalteng is also home to Melayu, Javanese, Balinese, and many more cultures, who have migrated here from across Indonesia. Villagers often speak 3 languages. Early Christian missionaries converted many Dayaks, but today the Muslim faith has a majority of adherents.

Bahasa Indonesia is widely spoken. English is little understood. Dress is modest, with shirts having sleeves, no mini skirts, short shorts or tank tops. When meeting people, it is normal to shake hands, and if a group, to shake hands with all the people. Drinking alcohol in public is not accepted and pork is not usually served in restaurants.

Climate

The rainy season is November to May, and the remainder of the year has less rainfall and may be dry. Rains are welcome, coming in sudden downpours, often late in the afternoon, cooling the temperature. Temperature is usually 32 – 35 deg C during the rains, normally hotter in the dry season, and dropping to 23 deg C in the early morning. Humidity is 70-80%. August, September and October are usually the driest months. As a result, the river levels fall and we have an alternative route, visiting different villages. We see the Orangutan Islands and BOSF Education Centre with a combination of car and canoes. These months may also be affected by smoke.

Money change

Indonesian currency is the Rupiah. As changing money is difficult in these remote destinations, we ask all guests to change currencies **before** arrival. Note that on the trip it will not be possible to access ATM's, so if you intend to make donations or purchases, please bring some rupiah cash along.

Flights

Garuda Indonesia, Lion Air, Citilink, Wings Air and Batik Air operate daily flights to Palangka Raya originating in Jakarta, Surabaya, Solo, Pontianak, Pangkalan Bun and Balikpapan. These flights are direct and take approximately one hour to one and a half hours. There are no international services.

Health

Bring along a basic medical kit which contains at least hydrating powder for drinks, such as Oralit or Hydralit, Norit charcoal tablets for upset stomach, Panadol, insect repellent, sunscreen, and antiseptic cream. Malaria rarely occurs here, and we advise wearing long sleeve shirts and trousers in the evenings, and using mosquito repellent. Mostly there are not many mosquitoes on the river, in the running water, but if we tie up near the forest, there can be mosquitoes. Treatment for malaria is now effective and fast acting. Check <http://www.traveldoctor.co.uk/malaria.htm> for information or talk to your doctor.

The sun is very strong here, we are only 2 deg off the equator. Sun stroke and dehydration are real risks, so wearing a sun hat is advised, as is drinking plenty of water. All drinking water (and re-fill water) is supplied on the boat. Wow Borneo provides you with a re-fillable water bottle.

We recommend guests have their own travel insurance, with evacuation cover.

Please inform us of any dietary requirements or other special needs before the cruise begins.

Village library visits

We will be stopping at either Katimpun or Marang village libraries. These have been set up by a small local foundation to enrich village children's learning experience. Donations of books or materials are most welcome.

Shopping

There is a traditional market in Palangka Raya where local handicrafts can be purchased. These include woven rattan bags and mats, wood carving, jewelry, rubber miniature boats, swords, blowpipes, beaded purses, some precious stones and simple woven hangings. A selection is also available at the airport on departure.

Bring with you . . .

Throw in your sun hat, mosie repellent, binoculars, sunscreen long sleeve shirt, long trousers, walking shoes and any specific drugs or cosmetics you need (the range is limited in Palangka Raya).

Alcohol other than beer cannot be obtained in Palangka Raya – our office holds a small selection of wine you are welcome to purchase before embarkation. Please ask for our list of what is available before arrival in Palangka Raya so that it may be on board for your arrival.

Our Boats

WOW Borneo Orangutan Cruises are currently operating 3 boats on 3 river systems -

The **KM Rahai'i Pangun**, flag ship of the fleet, has 5 cabins: 1 Superior Large Double Bed Cabin with private terrace, ensuite and optional air conditioning, 2 Double Cabins with ensuite and optional air conditioning, 1 Family Cabin with 4 beds (1 double bed and 2 bunks) air conditioning and share bathroom a step away accross the corridor) and 1 Twin Cabin which is fan cooled and shares a bathroom. The upper deck is spacious and comfortable, where you can enjoy our fabulous food and enjoy the passing scenery from the sofas or deck chairs.

The **KM Spirit of Kalimantan** sails the Katingan River and is available for private charter , fitted with 3 air conditioned cabins, hot and cold water, comfortable enclosed seating area and steamer chairs on the front deck. There is also an upper sun deck.

The **KM Sekonyer**, our latest addition, operates in the Tanjung Puting National Park. With 3 air conditioned, ensuite cabins, our signature comfort and highly praised food, she began operations from 1 July 2017.

Get ready to leave the city behind . . .

Once in board, we leave the city of Palangka Raya and pass only occasional small villages along the river course. Very little can be purchased in these villages. Generators power the boat 24 hours a day, which allows you to re-charge your phone, cameras and computers. Cabins are all fitted with mosquito wire and fans. Meals are all cooked freshly and served on deck.

Take special care off the boat, as infratructure at local ports and in the villages is not in good condition.

Observing Orangutans

The Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation (BOSF) manages 3 islands along the course of the Rungan River in Palangka Raya to accommodate approximately 100 orangutans in the natural forests of the islands. These rehabilitated orangutans are in a re-wilding process in preparation to be reintroduced to the wild.

When watching orangutans along the route, it is recommended by the foundation that observation time is minimized, to prevent from disturbing their re-adaptation to the wild. Therefore, our visit to the islands is of 15 minutes duration, and the canoes maintain a distance of 10-15 meters from the islands. Guests are asked not to feed or attract the attention of the orangutans, wear bright clothing or encourage the boats to go closer to the islands. We work with the local villagers to provide canoes to the Orangutan islands. Standard cameras are fine, however professional cameras with long telephoto lenses are not acceptable to BOSF. Guests wishing to use photographs for commercial purposes, such as making professional documentaries, in articles for publication, books etc about the BOSF islands, need to seek permission from BOSF and the relevant government authorities.

WOW Borneo makes a donation to the BOSF for each guest on board our cruises. Guests are also encouraged to give further donations and to consider adopting an orangutan through the BOSF website www.orangutan.or.id in order to assist with their program.

Relax and enjoy your cruise!

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