



PROJECT DOSSIER AND PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

TRANS BORNEO CROSSING

PONTIANAK to BALIKPAPAN
22 days
Approx. 1,450 kms

Indonesia - Borneo - Kalimantan

Welcome to the Trans Borneo Crossing, which is run in conjunction with Intrepid. We hope that you enjoy travelling in Kalimantan as much as we do! This project is certainly for travellers with a yearning to explore and for those who enjoy travelling without the knowledge of what is around the next corner. As a part of the philosophy of these adventures we do not issue day by day itineraries. The aim is to keep the trips as flexible as possible so that we can respond to local conditions and group interests. As such, much of our accommodation and transport is not booked in advance. The route has been followed before and the experience and contacts gained are utilised for this project, and so on for trips which follow yours. These trips offer the opportunity to travel in a way that is rare in these days of mass-market tourism.

This is perhaps the most demanding trip we offer, travelling away from the more conventional tourist centres. It includes some very rigorous travelling and basic accommodation — please don't expect tourist style comforts! Once you have left for the rainforest you basically have no communication with the western world for two weeks.

We encourage you to read all of the following information very thoroughly as we want you to be as prepared as possible for this trip.

Itinerary

This is the ultimate adventure challenge - crossing one of the most rugged islands on earth from west to east! We utilise roads, rivers and our feet to traverse the jungles of Indonesian Borneo in three weeks.



Yes, this is a trip for the truly intrepid traveller. Definite prerequisites for this trip particularly the trek section which makes up the bulk of the trip are - very good levels of fitness, an adventurous spirit and a strong sense of determination, as the conditions en route and accommodation are challenging.

Founded by the 18th century Arab pirate Abdul al Gadri, Pontianak lies on the junction of the Kapuas and Landak Rivers, a few kilometres from the South China Sea, with coastal mangrove swamps to one side and the 5,400 sq. km Kapuas Delta to the other. The city's population is a mix of Malay, Chinese and Dayak (native tribespeople).

Leaving Pontianak we travel through palm olive plantations and over the equator, to Sintang. Here we might climb Gunung Kelam (Dark Mountain-950m), weather permitting. This 6-8 hour ascent and descent is demanding and can only be done if the weather is dry. Atop the mountain we see views of the spectacular valleys of Kapuas and Melawi.

We continue by road to Putussibau from where we embark on a 2 day journey by motorised jungle boat to Nanaga Lapung. Be prepared to bail out of, and perhaps cvcn drag, the boat as the rapids may be

pretty wild. We will endeavour to stop at the village of Sa Hula where the Dayak people live in communal long houses and the women are heavily tattooed and have long stretched ear lobes adorned by heavy earrings.

Along with our Dayak guides and porters, we tackle the jungle trails and traverse rivers to cross the Muller Range in the heart of interior Kalimantan. Nights are spent in very basic jungle camps set up by our guides. The trekking is tough, leech-ridden and wet, but it is the only way to really appreciate the primeval jungle of Kalimantan first hand. We will try to have a day of rest during the trek. See the notes on trekking below.

Finishing our trek we head off along the Mahakam river by boat to Long Bungan, where villagers collect swallows nests for sale for up to US\$350 per kilo. The river forks out into lakes and swamps which are home to the elusive fresh water dolphin. At Long Bagun, the scenery changes dramatically from primary to secondary jungle. Sheer limestone cliffs, dramatic gorges and lush tropical vegetation dotted with waterfalls replace the all-embracing forest canopy of the previous days. Again, we travel along rapids through beautiful scenery and stop at fascinating Kenyah long houses and villages. We journey downriver to Muara Muntai, a town built entirely from ironwood. On Lake Jempang we visit a community in which people base their lives around catching giant river shrimp; colourful houses perch on stilts and the streets are waterways. In Tanjung Isuy we can buy all kinds of artefacts. We go in search of the wildlife of Lake Semayang, looking for heron, kingfisher, proboscis monkeys and the Irawaddy dolphin.

After our remote experiences we head back to the big smoke of Balikpapan, the commercial and economic centre of East Kalimantan.

All in all, an amazing trip that you will remember for the rest of your life!

Note: This trip is, in real terms, an exploratory adventure and thus the itinerary is subject to change pending group wishes, festivals and logistical practicalities. An indicative itinerary is:

Day 1 Arrive Pontianak

Day 2-4 Sintang, Mt Kelam

Days 5-6 Jungle boat

Days 7-14 Jungle trekking (including one day rest in jungle.)

Days 15-16 Jungle boats to Long Bagun

Day 17 Muara Muntai

Days 18-20 Kota Bagun, Lake Semayang, Samarinda

Day 21 Road back to Balikpapan

Day 22 Project finishes in Balikpapan, or you join the Orangutan Experience Project.

Special note: The above is intended as a guide only and to indicate a typical itinerary and its highlights. While our intention is to adhere to this, it should be understood that the constraints of weather, widely

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varying river levels and remote jungle travel can alter our exact route, its activities and timings. For example: High river levels on the Kapuas immediately after heavy rain can make the rapids too severe to float, forcing us to pull boats and carry equipment round them, and delaying our timings. Conversely, low river levels on the Mahakam can prevent the larger river-boats from reaching upstream to Long Bagun, forcing us to continue by motorised long boats to wherever river levels allow the navigation of the larger vessels. Low water here also means the use of shallow draft longboats into the lake and swamplands of Jempang and Tanjung Isuy. River levels and the weather, along with just about everything else in back country Borneo, can be fascinatingly random!

Trekking

The trek is really the main focus of the trip and thus overall it is essential that you have an extremely good level of physical fitness. It is certainly the most difficult trek that we do. We have planned to trek 7-8 days, anywhere between 6-8 hours per day, depending on the weather conditions. The terrain is mountainous and you will be carrying your trekking pack with all your gear. Porters can be hired to assist you (allow US\$80). You will have wet feet probably everyday, and leeches are very common. The trail is tough – you will be sliding down steep, muddy slopes, crossing fast flowing, waist-deep rivers, rock climbing up waterfalls and slithering across slippery logs and rocks. It will be important to dry and vaseline feet carefully each day as fungal infections run riot in the tropical climate. Indonesia is humid enough at the best of times, but in the thick of the jungle the heat and humidity is very high.

Before going to Kalimantan you must be doing some exercise so that you do not find the walking too difficult. This does not mean to say you must be able to walk with the fastest person in the group. Everyone can walk at their own pace and there is plenty of time in which to complete each day's walking. However, if you have never done an overnight walk carrying a pack, you must complete at least a two day walk while in your home country, carrying your gear. Our guides prepare all meals and carry most of the food (but you will be expected to take some emergency rations in your bag). The food is generally very simple but certainly adequate – a flexible attitude towards your diet is certainly needed. You will need to chip in and help collect firewood, set up camp and clean dishes.

Visas

On entry you are required to have a passport valid for 6 months and a ticket out of Indonesia. The following nationalities will be issued with a 60 day Tourist Visa when you arrive at Indonesian Immigration; Australian, British, New Zealand, Canadian, American, Belgian, Swedish, German, Dutch and Danish. For other nationalities, please

refer to your travel agent. No extension on the visa can be made.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory. Evidence of travel insurance will be required by your group leader. You will not be permitted to participate in the trip until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your group leader.

Health

There are no specific health requirements for entry into Indonesia. However, you should consult your doctor for up to date information and prescriptions for vaccinations, anti-malarial requirements and any reasonably foreseeable illnesses whilst travelling in Indonesia.

We recommend that you carry a very substantial first aid kit as well as any personal medical requirements (including a spare pair of glasses). Please be aware that during the trekking part of this trip you will be in remote areas and away from medical facilities for numerous days, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets/antibiotics etc. Please ensure that you are adequately prepared. A good supply of oral rehydration solution is particularly important.

Spending money

You will need to allow enough money for meals whilst not on the trek, drinks, shopping and additional sightseeing. As a rough guide, allow US\$250 - this would also include the cost of your meals.

Flights

If taking the Orangutan Extension, allow a further US\$300 for domestic flights. We also recommend you allow an extra day pre and post trip to allow for the unpredictable nature of domestic flights. Local airlines connecting with Jakarta are Merpati, Mandala and DAS.

Departure Tax

From Indonesia (Jakarta) 25,000Rp (although this often changes). There is also a domestic departure tax of about 11,000Rp. Do not forget you may have a departure tax when leaving your home country.

Laundry

There will be times when the hotel offers laundry facilities however usually you have to do your own (for example when trekking). If you can find biodegradable soap, it would be preferable.

Exchange rates

Please check the latest exchange rate for the Indonesian Rupiah at your local bank or in the newspaper. It has been changing frequently in the past year.

Travellers cheques can be very difficult to change in Kalimantan. We recommend bringing cash or credit cards. Cash advance on Visa card is available from selected banks in Pontianak. ATM cards are widely accepted in Indonesia. Please note that

most banks will not accept US\$20 bills, US\$50 is the smallest bill they will change. We strongly suggest you change enough money to get you through the trip before arriving in Kalimantan. Black markets do not exist in Indonesia.

What to take

You will be on the move a good deal, so our general advice is to pack as lightly as possible (stay under 10kg). It is to your own advantage as you are expected to carry your own luggage. We also do not allow video cameras when trekking as they can be perceived by village people as highly obtrusive.

Luggage requirements

A backpack or travel pack is essential for this trip as you will use this to carry your gear for the trek. The trek is from point A to point B so there is no chance to leave gear behind for the trek and pick it up later - you will have to carry everything. Porters can be hired to assist you (allow US\$80) but still please pack light. **Most porters will not carry more than 10kg. You may need to carry over 10kg yourself.** It is necessary to have a backpack with good shoulder and waist straps. Your gear should be packed in strong plastic bags to keep it dry. We also suggest having water bottle holders on your waist strap for your convenience while trekking.

Before you leave home complete the following check list below, just in case!

- A good sense of humour, flexibility and an openness to a very different culture.
- Travel documents (Passport/Travel Insurance/Air tickets/voucher)
- Money - Travellers cheques/cash/credit card
- Money belt/ neck wallet
- Mosquito repellent (good for leeches too)
- Ear plugs
- An extensive first aid kit – include something for itches and blisters
- Biodegradable soap and shampoo
- Vaseline
- Sun Cream/Sun hat/ sunglasses
- Toilet paper
- Gastrolite - Oral Rehydration Powder
- Torch/ Flashlight (spare batteries)
- Camera (with spare batteries) and film
- Water bottle
- Favourite trail snacks
- Thermarest or sleeping mat and Inflatable pillow (optional)
- Warm clothes for the evenings. Bring some thermal underwear for sleeping in and fleece/warm sweaters and pants. In the highlands it gets cool.
- Shorts and a T-shirt for trekking during the day
- Lycra leggings – good for deterring leeches!
- Walking boots with good tread
- Adventure sandals or sandshoes to wear at night while trekking
- Mosquito net (optional)
- A good rain jacket/Wet weather gear/ poncho
- Waterproof bags for clothing
- Back pack cover for rain protection (optional)

- Indonesia is predominantly a Muslim country and as such appropriate dress is required. This means covering shoulders and knees. Sarong for women to bathe in when at small villages (buy locally).

Joining Instructions

Note that Day 1 is an arrival day and you can arrive at any time on this day. There are no group activities planned. Similarly, the final day is a departure day.

Joining Point

Pontianak (Starting point)

Hotel Kartika

Jalan Rahadi Usman

Pontianak

West Kalimantan

INDONESIA

Ph: (62 561) 34401 Fax: (62 561) 38457

If you wish to arrive before Day1 this hotel's rates are approximately US\$18 Single
US\$25 Twin

Please inform reception that you are part of the Intrepid group.

Taxi from the airport is approximately US\$10.

Balikpapan (Finishing Point – 22days)

Hotel Budiman

Jalan Jend. Achmad Yani

Balikpapan

Ph: (62 542) 36030 Fax: (62 542) 23811

For people who do not take the Orangutan option, Balikpapan is the finishing point. It is possible to book a room in this hotel for US\$10 – 15 per night. The hotel is about 20 minutes from the airport and the town.

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