

Where To Live In Malaysia?

Malaysia is quite a large country and deciding where to live will depend on your personal preferences. Currently the most popular places where foreigners choose to live are Kuala Lumpur and Penang. Certainly Kuala Lumpur has the best facilities and is the only city in Malaysia, which comes close to major cities in developed countries. By buying property in one of the many new developments outside the city centre one can enjoy the cities facilities and avoid the higher costs, crowds and congestion of central KL. If you have a bigger budget and want to be closer to all the action then there are some upmarket high rises in central KL or large bungalows available very close to the city centre.

Penang is a well-established tourist destination and has the advantage of being close to the sea with a number of high developments offering sea views. Many people under Malaysia My Second Home programme have chosen to live here.

A little further north the island of Langkawi has attracted a number of foreigners to settle. It is a beautiful tropical island but it is primarily a tourist destination and does not offer a lot more than sun, sand and sea.

Ipoh some 200kms north of Kuala Lumpur and about half way to Penang, has attracted some foreigners. It is quite well developed but there is only a small expat community so it is better for those who wish to live and mingle solely with Malaysians.

The nearest beach resort to Kuala Lumpur is Port Dickson (about one hour by car) and there are many developments in this area. It still lacks good facilities but people who like being close to the sea and

Kuala Lumpur enjoy living here. Further south Malacca has appealed to some expats. It's an historic town with reasonable facilities.

If you venture to the south of peninsular Malaysia, Johor is a large, relatively modern town and offers proximity to Singapore. Its position has made it one of the most expensive cities in Malaysia, as it is a favourite shopping and entertainment area for Singaporeans, which is substantially more expensive country than Malaysia.

If you want to live in either of the two States in east Malaysia, on the Island of Borneo then you need to apply for your MM2H visa in the respective state. Both Sabah and Sarawak have many attractions particularly for people who enjoy nature and the sea.

Kota Kinabulu in Sabah has seen more foreigners move there than Sarawak. It has direct flights to Manila, Hong Kong, Bangkok and several other Asian cities and is becoming a popular tourist destination for people from those countries. It is a roughly 2½ flight from KL and has plenty of sea and beaches and plenty of natural attractions.

Sarawak has a lovely historic capital city, Kuching, but currently they do not appear too keen on attracting people under the Malaysia My Second Home programme. They only offer three year visas and we have heard reports of some people having trouble with their applications.

Under the MM2H programme foreigners are allowed to purchase two properties so one option is to buy a place close to Kuala Lumpur to enjoy everything it has to offer and also a second home in a resort area or another more part of Malaysia.

It should be noted that the local authorities raised the minimum purchase price of RM150,000 is raised to RM250,000 in Malacca, Johor, Kedah and Penang island.

The other option, particularly if you like to explore is to stay in hotels. The cost of hotel rooms in Malaysia is relatively cheap so you can travel around the country in style without spending a fortune.