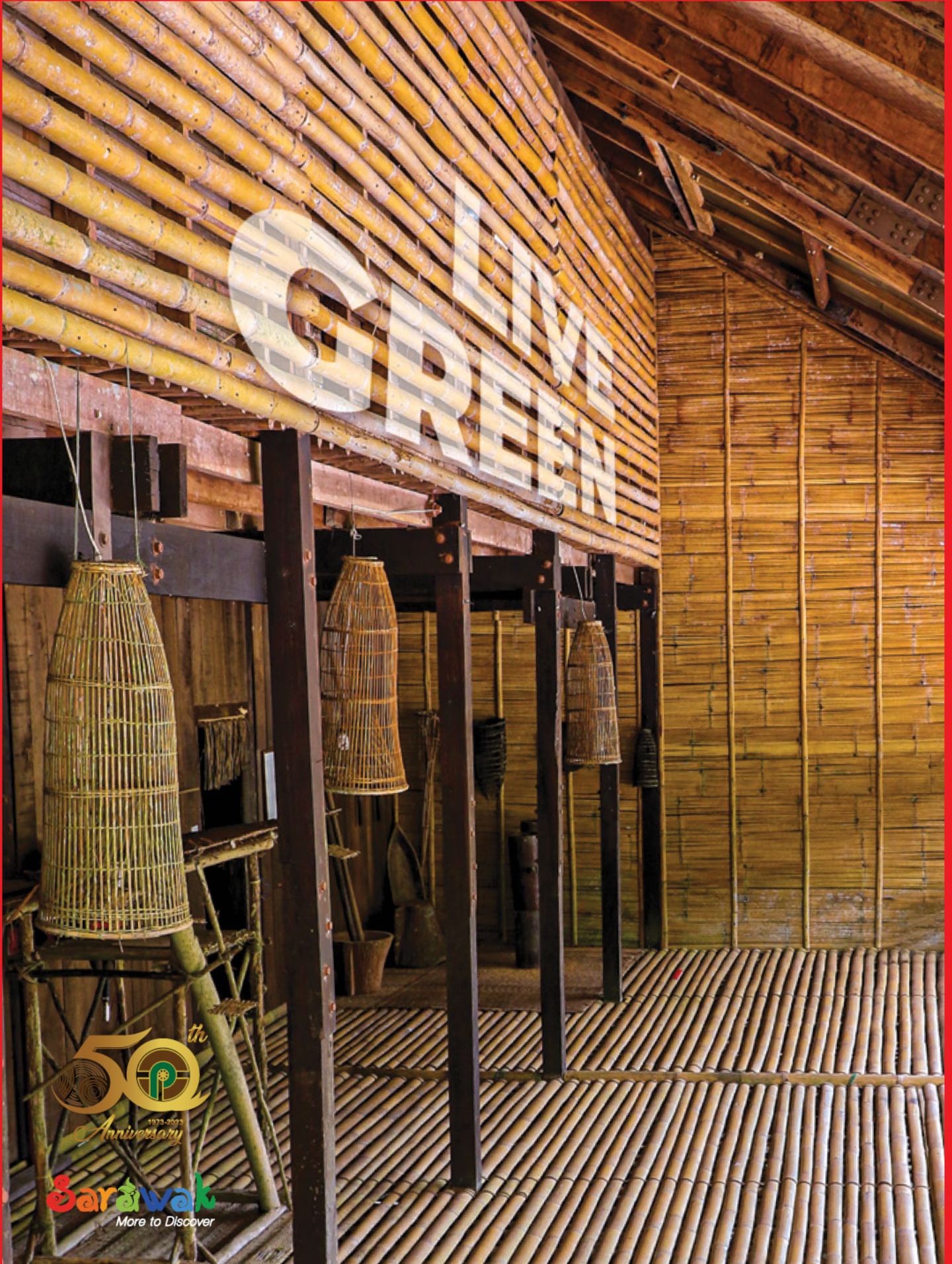


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More to Discover



ENHANCING ISLAMIC TOURISM IN MALAYSIA

Malaysia is a country that boasts a rich cultural heritage, warm and hospitable people, and stunning natural beauty. These qualities have long made it a popular destination for tourists from around the world. But in recent years, Malaysia has emerged as a top choice for Muslim travellers, thanks to its commitment to developing its Muslim-friendly tourism sector.

At the heart of this effort is the Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC), an agency under the Malaysian Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC) that has been working tirelessly to enhance the country's reputation as a premier Muslim-friendly destination. Through a range of initiatives and programmes, ITC is setting the standard for how nations can foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for travellers.

One of the key ways that ITC is strengthening Malaysia's Muslim-friendly tourism sector is by promoting the Muslim Friendly Tourism and Hospitality (MFTH) concept. This concept involves delivering products and services that cater to the unique needs of Muslim travellers, while adhering to Shariah principles. Through collaborations with industry players, setting standards and certifications, offering training programmes, and conducting research, ITC is working to ensure that Malaysia is at the forefront of MFTH.

Two of ITC's initiatives to beef up the country's MFTH are the Muslim-Friendly Tourism and Hospitality Accreditation and Recognition (MFAR) scheme and the Muslim-Friendly Tour Guides (MFTG) programme. MFAR inspects, audits, and recognises hotels and other tourism products and services that meet the faith-based needs of Muslim travellers. This serves as a quality assurance for cleanliness, hygiene and quality service and a valuable and non-intrusive initiative that enhances the value of Malaysian tourism products and services without imposing undue burdens on the tourism industry players and operators.

Meanwhile, MFTG equips tour guides with the necessary skills and knowledge to cater to the Muslim tourist market, providing them with an unforgettable travel experience. The training programme covers Islamic Tourism concept, Muslim tourist needs, the Malaysian Standard (MS) 2610 – Muslim-Friendly Hospitality, Halal and Shariah concepts, and effective communication skills, among others.

ITC's efforts have not gone unnoticed. In 2021, it received the Strategic Business Alliance Award at The BrandLaureate World Halal Best Brand E-Branding Awards 2021, and the Best Islamic Tourism Leadership Gold Award 2021 by Malaysia Tourism Council. These accolades are a true testament to ITC's unwavering dedication and innovative strategies in navigating the "new normal" of the business landscape, while simultaneously driving growth and sustainability in the Islamic tourism sector in Malaysia.





Meanwhile, Malaysia was named the top country in the world in the State of the Global Islamic Economy (SGIE) 2022 report, and continued to hold the top spot as the most sought-after destination for Muslim travellers in the MasterCard-CrescentRating Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) since 2015. These remarkable achievements are a clear reflection of ITC's hard work and tireless efforts in elevating Malaysia's position as a premier destination for Muslim travellers.

Malaysia's focus on the MFTH sector has helped create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for Muslim travellers. By catering to their specific needs and preferences, Malaysia has set a standard for how nations can create a niche tourism market that is not only profitable but also promotes diversity and tolerance.

"We see so much potential for Sabah and Sarawak to be an even stronger Muslim-Friendly destination. ITC is always ready to welcome interested tourism industry stakeholders in Sabah and Sarawak to expand their MFTH adoption with the schemes and standards we have developed", ITC's Acting Director General, Nur Alyssa Coraline Yussin remarked.



As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, initiatives like those spearheaded by ITC will undoubtedly play a critical role in promoting a more inclusive and harmonious world.

 www.itc.gov.my   [itc_my](https://www.instagram.com/itc_my)  [Islamic Tourism Centre](https://www.facebook.com/IslamicTourismCentre)

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Kuching Floating Mosque

EXPLORE MUSLIM-FRIENDLY SARAWAK

Sarawak, a gem in Malaysia's tourism crown, has always been a haven for travellers seeking an enchanting mix of rich culture, vibrant traditions, endless adventures, breath-taking natural wonders, exciting festivals, amazing food, and warm hospitality.

Sarawak offers a unique experience for Muslim travellers as it combines a plethora of tourism offerings with the comforts of a faith-based lifestyle. To promote Sarawak as a viable destination for Muslim travellers, the State is actively developing its Muslim-Friendly Tourism and Hospitality (MFTH) and working with the Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC) to offer Muslim-Friendly Tourist Guide (MFTG) and Mosque Visit Guide (MosVi) training programmes.

"Sarawak is already a strong tourism destination with its beautiful blend of cultures, traditions, customs, and natural heritage. Its existing Islamic Tourism ecosystem with accessible halal food, prayer rooms and water-friendly washrooms helps to expand these attractions, making it an ideal tourism spot for Muslim tourists," Nur Alyssa Coraline Yussin, Acting Director-General, ITC.

Muslim travellers looking for a fulfilling and exciting experience will not be disappointed with Sarawak's tourism offerings. There's something for everyone, from exploring museums and charming villages to discovering archaeological sites and diving into underwater wonders. Sarawak has it all!

- Discover the rich and vibrant culture of Sarawak at the **Borneo Cultures Museum (BCM)** in Kuching. With five levels of themed exhibitions showcasing the region's diverse traditions and lifestyles, BCM is a fascinating and educational journey for all visitors. The building itself is quite a sight to behold.
- Right next door to BCM lies the **Sarawak Islamic Heritage Museum**, which was first built in 1930 as Madrasah Melayu Sarawak. In 1992, it was reopened as a museum with seven galleries showcasing different aspects of Islamic history and culture in Sarawak.
- The **Sultan Tengah Mausoleum** at Jalan Sultan Tengah in Santubong houses the tomb of Sarawak's only sultan and offers a glimpse



Sarawak Islamic Heritage Museum



Niah National Park



Clearwater Cave



Sibu Central Market

into the state's fascinating past. The tomb was first discovered in 1993 in Kampong Batu Buaya, and the mausoleum is located near some of Santubong's many attractions.

- Head to **Sarawak Cultural Village**, where you can watch traditional performances and explore life-sized replicas of traditional ethnic homes of Sarawak. This "village" offers a unique and immersive journey into the state's rich cultural heritage.
- From the historic **Kuching Old State Mosque** dating back to 1840, to the stunning **Kuching Floating Mosque** at sunset, the mosques of Kuching are a must-see for Muslim tourists. Soak in the beauty and history of these majestic structures and witness the Region's devotion to their faith.
- Take a river taxi known as Penambang across the Kuching Waterfront to **Kampung Boyan** and enjoy traditional Malay snacks, dishes, and seafood while enjoying traditional Malay performances such as bermukun.
- Prepare to journey back in time at **Niah National Park** in Miri, where the oldest human remains in Southeast Asia were discovered. The park boasts an array of fascinating caves and archaeological sites to explore, as well as a lush rainforest teeming with exotic flora and fauna.
- Get ready to be captivated by the awe-inspiring wonders of **Mulu**, also in Miri! Start your adventure with a visit to the breath-taking **Deer Cave** in the afternoon, just in time for the unforgettable sight of thousands of bats taking flight later in the evening. The next morning, hop on a boat and head to the mesmerising **Clearwater Cave**. And if you're up for a more challenging exploration, the Pinnacles will leave you awestruck.
- Dive into the wonders of Miri's vibrant marine life at the **Miri-Sibuti Coral Reefs National Park** and be amazed by the thriving coral reefs that are

considered among the most beautiful in the world. From exploring shipwrecks to spotting majestic creatures like sharks and whales, the possibilities for adventure and discovery are endless.

- The **Sibu Central Market** in Sibu is the largest indoor market in Malaysia. This bustling marketplace houses thousands of stalls and shops offering anything from fresh produce to general merchandise. What's more, the market merges the former wet market and the native Lembangan market into one clean and hygienic space.
- Step into the **Sibu Heritage Centre**. Originally built in 1963 as the Sibu Municipal Council, this historic building was transformed into the Sibu Heritage Centre in 2011. Explore the museum's fascinating exhibits, which showcase the diverse ethnic groups of central Sarawak and Sibu's history. Learn about the legendary Rosli Dhobi, a prominent figure in Sarawak's history.

With its rich and diverse offerings, Sarawak has so much for Muslim tourists to discover and explore, while enjoying the comforts of a faith-based lifestyle, thanks to its active development of Muslim-Friendly Tourism and Hospitality. Whether it's witnessing the beauty and history of the region's mosques, exploring its cultural heritage, or delving into its natural wonders, Sarawak offers a unique and fulfilling experience that will leave Muslim travellers captivated and inspired.

MUSLIM-FRIENDLY MALAYSIA AT A GLANCE
MUSLIM TOURISTS TRAVELLING AROUND SARAWAK
CAN LOOK OUT FOR THESE LOGOS:



for tourism products and services that meet your faith-based needs.



for a Muslim-Friendly tour guiding experience.



for Halal-certified food and beverage.