



Our ABA Reciprocal Marina - Sutera Harbour

Borneo's Gem

Set In Malaysia's First Marine Park

The latest news from our ABA reciprocal marina Sutera Harbour, brought to you by man on the beat **Bruce Maxwell**



Bruce published Asia-Pacific Boating for 25 years until 2001. Since then he has written for Yachts, Luxmedia and other print and online titles, and handles marine consultancies and nautical books. In this 2nd installment, Bruce continues his series of benefits Raffles Marina members can enjoy while visiting any of the 13-strong Aseanarean Bluewater Alliance (ABA) marinas.

Voyaging to the exotic North Borneo Coast needs more time and planning than Peninsula Malaysia and the nearby Indonesian islands. But exploring gems like Sutera Harbour at Kota Kinabalu in Sabah can be richly rewarding, even if it means taking a short flight to get there, rather than passage-making.

Singapore to Kota Kinabalu is about 800 nautical miles, so that's a little over three days at 10knots. If you're using one of Sutera Harbour's 104 immaculate berths for 35-footers to 200-foot-plus superyachts, Raffles Marina members can stay for 14 days in one calendar year, plus enjoy the same rates and privileges as local owners. Water, shore power, 24-hour security, laundry and other services are provided.

This lovely 384-acre property also has swimming pools and spas, a wide spectrum of excellent restaurants and bars to suit all budgets, a bowling alley, movie theatre, and a well-kept 27-hole championship golf course. A unique "tour" owned by Sutera Harbour is a steam train ride along the coast and into the hinterland, complete with colonial-style multi-layer tiffin trays for lunch.



Offshore is a series of small islands that form Malaysia's first designated marine park. Snorkelling and diving are popular, while other guests laze about on the beaches, and take part in picnics or sometimes in quite sophisticated luncheon parties beneath the palms. Marine ecology initiatives, such as turtle hatcheries, may also be visited.

Fishing is prohibited within the marine park, but expeditions take place to waters just beyond it. Keen anglers may be interested in the annual tournament,



usually in late April, which sees varied vessels ply to Malaysia's



Layang Layang base in the nearby Spratly Islands. Contacts for that are sabahangers@gmail.com or chrisjustinus@gmail.com.

Fauna and flora in the tropical forests of Borneo are much acclaimed. You'll find proboscis monkeys, orang utans, pigmy elephants, colourful hornbills, and the world's largest Rafflesia flower. Climbing to the peak of Mount Kinabalu is another activity favoured by fitter visitors, but since a serious mid-2015 eruption, check carefully about the latest seismic situation.

Sutera Harbour itself is the far-reaching concept of Singaporean Edward Ong Han Nam, who sits on Raffles Marina's Advisory Board. Realising it would take half a lifetime to see the project to fruition, he sat on his balcony one day, wondering whether to go ahead, when a rare bird of paradise alighted there. Taking this as a sign, he did, and the bird of paradise became Sutera Harbour's emblem. He retains an equity interest, and the property in recent years is run by GSH Corporation, listed on Singapore's main board.

Boaters with time on their hands can use Sutera Harbour as a base for all sorts of interesting mini-voyages, even venturing down the Makassar Strait to Bali. Otherwise when returning to Singapore, calls at Labuan, Brunei, Miri and upriver Kuching in Sarawak are recommended. ⚓



Those arriving by either plane or boat can take advantage of 50 to 60 percent discounts on rack rates at The Pacific Sutera and The Magellan Sutera. A Deluxe Golf View at The Pacific Sutera, with breakfast, thus becomes only \$129++, rising to \$245++ for the most expensive Executive Suite. At The Magellan Sutera, a Deluxe Garden View room is \$163++, and the Magellan Club ranges from \$210++ to \$338++ for the Suite. Service and tax are 16 percent.