BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

# Brunei Darussalam

# HIGHLIGHTS

- Kampung Ayer checking out the heart and soul of the capital from the Sungai Brunei (p47)
- **Royal Regalia Museum** finding the answer to the question of what you give the man who has everything (p46)
- Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque savouring the otherworldly appearance of this mosque as it floats over its surrounding lagoon (p46)
- $lue{}$  Ulu Temburong National Park trekking in the pristine rainforests of this national park (p51)
- **Off the beaten track** taking a fantastic speedboat ride through *nipa*-lined waterways to Bangar (p48)

# **FAST FACTS**

- Budget US\$30 to US\$40 a day
- Capital Bandar Seri Begawan (BSB)
- Costs cheap room B\$30, cheap meal B\$4, local bus ride B\$1
- Country code ☎ 673
- Languages Malay, English
- Money US\$1 = B\$1.51 (Brunei dollar)
- Phrases selamat pagi (good morning), selamat petang (good afternoon), selamat jalan (goodbye), terima kasih (thank you)
- Population 375,000
- Time GMT + eight hours
- Visas not needed for citizens of the UK, Germany, New Zealand or the US; most others get a 14-day visa on arrival

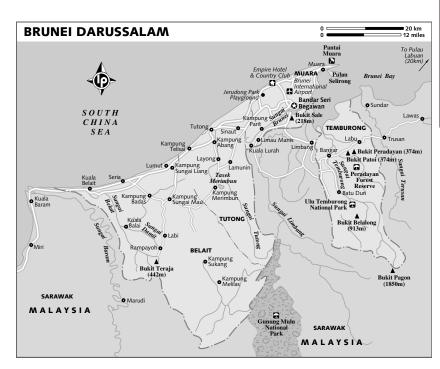


### TRAVEL HINT

Fill up on cheap food at night markets, but be warned that the nutritional value will often be minimal.

# **OVERLAND ROUTES**

From Brunei you can travel west into Sarawak and east into another fraction of Sarawak and on to Sabah. Both Sabah and Sarawak are Malaysian states (Malaysian Borneo, to be exact).



The last remnants of an empire that once included all of Borneo and the southwest Philippines, Brunei is now one of the smallest countries on earth – two tiny slivers of land lodged in the northern coast of Sarawak. This tiny country is blessed with some of the largest oil fields in Southeast Asia and, perhaps not surprisingly, one of the wealthiest rulers on earth. Thanks to these underground riches, Brunei has been able to spare most of its above-ground resources, and the country boasts some of the most intact primary rainforest in all of Borneo.

Chances are this little country will surprise you, for it is neither the mini Dubai nor the strict Muslim theocracy that most people expect. Instead, it is a rather relaxed and even charming little corner of Borneo with enough attractions to make it an interesting stop between Sabah and Sarawak. First there is the capital of Bandar Seri Begawan (BSB), with its soaring mosques and picturesque water villages. Then there is the aforementioned rainforest, which is best experienced in the fine Ulu Temburong National Park. Beyond these, there is a thrilling boat ride between the capital and Bangar, one of the highlights of Borneo.

# **CURRENT EVENTS**

From the outside, Brunei appears to be an immensely wealthy country with few socio-economic problems: all local education and medical treatment is free, there's no income tax and the government loans cash to all prospective home buyers. But the sources of the sultanate's financial contentment – oil and natural gas – are predicted to run out in the next few decades, and when this happens it will have a profound effect on how the next generation of Bruneians live and work. The

government, overseen by Sultan Sir Hassanal Bolkiah, is beginning to prepare for this by concentrating on the development of tourism and aquaculture industries, as well as investing widely abroad. How this will allow Bruneians to live in the manner to which they've become accustomed remains to be seen.

# HISTORY Early Years

The first recorded references to Brunei are in documents regarding China's trading

connections with 'Puni' in the 6th century AD during the Tang dynasty. Before the region embraced Islam, Brunei was within the boundaries of the Sumatran Srivijaya empire, then the Majapahit empire of Java. It may be hard to believe considering the country's current diminutive size, but in the 15th and 16th centuries the sultanate held sway throughout Borneo and into the Philippines.

# The Coming of the Europeans

In 1838, British adventurer (and budding imperialist) James Brooke helped the sultan put down a rebellion from warlike inland tribes. As a reward, the sultan granted Brooke power over part of Sarawak, which in hindsight was a big mistake.

Appointing himself Raja Brooke, James Brooke pacified the tribespeople, eliminated the much-feared Borneo pirates and forced a series of 'treaties' onto the sultan, whittling the country away until finally, in 1890, it was actually divided in half. This situation still exists today - if Bruneians want to get to the Temburong district, they have to go through Sarawak.

# **British Influence**

Facing encroachment by land-grabbing European nations, Brunei became a British protectorate in 1888. But it got its own back when oil was discovered in 1929. The development of offshore oil fields in the 1960s allowed Brunei to flourish. In 1984 Sultan Sir Hassanal Bolkiah, the 29th of his line, led his country somewhat reluctantly into independence from Britain. He celebrated in typically grandiose style by building a US\$350 million palace.

# **Currency Crisis & Scandals**

The Asian crisis of 1997 (when Thailand's currency nose-dived after too many years of unsustainable growth, sparking similar recessions across Southeast Asia) was a wake-up call for Brunei, with the sultan's personal fortune being considerably depleted. But the greatest shock to the country was delivered by the sultan's younger brother, Prince Jefri, who around the same time apparently managed to go on a US\$16 billion spending spree. This included gambling debts that totalled nearly US\$25 million. He was eventually reeled in by his brother and forced to hold an auction in 2001, where many of his prized possessions, including gold-plated toilet-roll holders and a helicopter flight simulator, went under the hammer.

# **Recent History**

In 1998 the sultan's son, Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah, was proclaimed heir to the throne and began preparing for the role as Brunei's next ruler and 30th sultan. That preparation included the 30-year-old prince's wedding in September 2004 to 17-year-old Sarah Salleh, in a ceremony attended by thousands of guests. While Brunei may not be facing the same promise of prosperity that existed when the current sultan took the throne in 1967, it's clear that the sultan sees the crown prince's careful apprenticeship as crucial for the continuing (and absolute) rule of the monarchy.

There was a whiff of reform in November 2004 when the sultan amended the constitution to allow for the first parliamentary elections in 40 years. However, only one-third of parliamentarians will be publicly elected and the rest will still be hand-picked by the sultan, when and if the election ever happens (Bruneians are still waiting).

In February 2007, Brunei joined Malaysia and Indonesia in signing a pledge to conserve and/or sustainably manage a 220,000-sq-km tract of rainforest in the heart of the island.

# THE CULTURE

Brunei is the most observant Islamic country in Southeast Asia. The sale of alcohol was banned in 1991, stricter dress codes were introduced and, in 1992, Melayu Islam Beraja (MIB; the national ideology that stresses Malay culture, Islam and monarchy) became a compulsory subject in schools. The country is also ruled by an Islamic monarchy. The sultan is head of the religion of the country, and holds the three key cabinet positions: prime minister, defence minister and finance minister.

However, don't expect to find some grim Southeast Asian enclave of fundamentalism. Bruneians enjoy all the material comforts of the modern age and harbour an international perspective and openness towards visitors.

Overall, Bruneian customs, beliefs and pastimes are very similar, if not identical, to

## LEGAL AGE

In Brunei:

- you can begin driving at 18
- heterosexual sex is legal at 14 for males and 16 for females

## MUST READ

lonelyplanet.com

Green Days in Brunei, by Bruce Sterling, is a classic cyberpunk short story (albeit less punkish than the work of contemporaries such as William Gibson), in which programmer Turner Choi slowly comes to grips with this multiracial society and, in the process, himself. You can read it in the collection of Sterling's stories called Crystal Express.

those of the Malays of western Malaysia (see p416). Adat (customary law) governs many local ceremonies, particularly royal ceremonies and formal state occasions.

People of Malay heritage and indigenous Kedayan, Tutong, Belait, Bisayah, Dusun and Murut peoples make up approximately 67% of the 375,000-strong population. Iban, Kelabit and other tribes contribute to around 6%, and people of Chinese heritage account for 15% of the population. Westerners, Thais, Filipinos, Indonesians, Indians and Bangladeshis – generally the population of temporary workers - make up the rest.

# RELIGION

Although Brunei is a strict Muslim country, with a Ministry of Religious Affairs that fosters and promotes Islam, only 67% of the population is actually Muslim. Buddhists and Christians make up 13% and 10% of the population respectively, and 10% of people have kept their indigenous beliefs.

# **ARTS**

Traditional arts have all but disappeared in modern Brunei. In its heyday, the sultanate was a source of brassware in the form of gongs, cannons and household vessels (such as kettles and betel containers) that were prized throughout Borneo and beyond. The lost-wax technique used to cast bronze declined with the old fortunes of the Brunei sultanate. Brunei's silversmiths were also celebrated. Jong sarat sarongs, using gold thread, are still prized for ceremonial occasions, and the art of weaving has survived.

# **ENVIRONMENT** The Land

Brunei consists of two areas, separated by the Limbang district of Sarawak, and covers a total area of just 5765 sq km. The western part of Brunei contains the main towns: BSB, the oil town of Seria (where the sultanate's billionth barrel was filled in 1991) and the commercial town of Kuala Belait. The eastern part of the country, the rural Temburong district, is much less developed. Away from the coast, Brunei is mainly jungle, with approximately 78% of the country still covered by forest.

# Wildlife

Wildlife species found in Brunei are similar to those found in the rest of Borneo. Proboscis monkeys, gibbons, hornbills, deer, monitor lizards, crocodiles and the rare clouded leopard live in the rainforest.

# **National Parks**

Brunei has several recreational parks and forest reserves, plus one national park – the superb Ulu Temburong National Park, a 500-sq-km swathe of protected primary rainforest.

# TRANSPORT

# **GETTING THERE & AWAY**

Brunei's sole airport is 10km from the centre of the capital. The national airline, Royal Brunei Airlines (code BI: 221 2222; www.bruneiair.com), has direct flights between BSB and major Asian destinations such as Jakarta, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur and Manila, as well as flights to Kota Kinabalu in Sabah. Malaysia Airlines (code MH; 222 4141; www.malaysiaairlines .com), Singapore Airlines (code SQ; a 224 4901; www .singaporeair.com) and Thai Airways International (THAI, code TG; 224 2991; www.thaiair.com) also fly into BSB

# Land

The main overland route to the west is between Kuala Belait in Brunei and Miri in Sarawak, which is a straightforward journey by bus or taxi; see p50 for more information.

# **DEPARTURE TAX**

The departure tax at Brunei International Airport is B\$5 for flights to Sabah and Sarawak and B\$12 to west Malaysia, Singapore and all other destinations. It must be paid in Brunei dollars.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Brunei has a cattle station in Australia that is larger than Brunei itself. The 5986-sq-km station in Willaroo, in the Northern Territory, supplies Brunei with beef and other meat products. The live cattle are brought direct to Brunei from Darwin and slaughtered according to halal practices.

It's also possible to travel between BSB and Limbang and Lawas in Sarawak and onward to Kota Kinabalu in Sabah, but it's an extremely time-consuming and fiddly journey. For details on this journey, see p51.

If you're heading to/from Limbang or Kota Kinabalu, we recommend going by boat (see p49).

# Sea

There are boats between Brunei and Pulau Labuan in Sabah and Limbang in Sarawak. These boats operate from the Muara Ferry Terminal, 25km northeast of BSB. There's also a boat service running between BSB itself and Limbang. For details on these services, see p49.

# **GETTING AROUND** Boat

The only significant boat service within Brunei connects BSB with Bangar in the Temburong district (see p48).

Most short water-taxi trips cost around B\$2, and you can hire your own water taxi for B\$20 to B\$25 per hour. To flag one down, head out to one of the many jetties jutting onto the river in and around BSB, and simply wave. The city's waterfront is filled with buzzing water taxis, even at night.

# Bus

Brunei isn't a huge place, but outside BSB and off the main routes it's hard to get around without a car. The local bus system within and around BSB is very good and gets you to most places for B\$1 to B\$2. However, services stop at 6pm and after that you'll have to rely on expensive taxis (if you can find one).

# Car

Renting a car is the easiest way to get around Brunei, and Bruneian drivers are quite sane by Southeast Asian standards. However, it's

expensive (rental starts from B\$70 per day) and involves a steep learning curve if you're not used to driving on the left-hand side.

# Hitching

Hitching is remarkably easy in Brunei. Chances are if you stick out your thumb you'll get a ride instantly, and it's a great way to meet local people. Women travellers, however, should take extreme care and consider going by other means.

# **BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN**

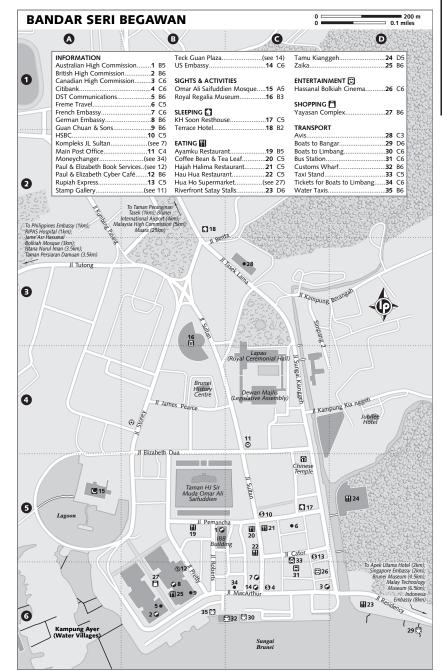
pop 81,500

Bandar Seri Begawan (usually called BSB or Bandar) is the capital of Brunei and is most notable for the absence of the mayhem that most travellers in Southeast Asia expect to greet them upon arrival. In fact, central BSB introduces itself to the traveller as a quiet, pleasant, greenery-dotted city with a low skyline that's decorated with minarets and neat arrangements of buildings. But despite the city's rather sterile atmosphere and almost total lack of nightlife, it's still an interesting place to spend a day or two.

To start with, you can visit the Royal Regalia Museum and then wander over to the nearby Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque. Then, you can take a bus down to the Brunei Museum and check out the Islamic Art Gallery contained therein. Finally, as another brilliant Borneo sunset starts to set the sky on fire, you can hail a water taxi and cruise around the water villages.

# ORIENTATION

The centre of BSB lies at the confluence of the Sungai Brunei and Sungai Kedayan, and is compact enough to explore in about an hour. Jl Sultan runs down the middle of the city and forms its main artery. It's also home to the major banks, the post office, airline offices, coffee shops and some good restaurants, as well as the fine Royal Regalia Museum. The western edge of the city is marked by the magnificent Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque. The Brunei Museum is about 6km southeast of the city centre, on Jl Residency, overlooking the Sungai Brunei and accessible by bus or taxi. With the exception of this museum, most of the sights are in the city centre and within easy walking distance of the main hotels.



# **INFORMATION** Bookshops

Paul & Elizabeth Book Services ( 222 0958; 2nd fl, Block B, Yayasan Complex, JI Pretty) Has a small range of English-language paperbacks but no city or country maps.

# **Emergency**

Ambulance ( 291) Fire ( 295) Police ( 2 993)

# **Internet Access**

Paul & Elizabeth Cyber Café ( 222 0958; 2nd fl, Block B, Yayasan Complex, JI Pretty; per hr B\$1; Sam-9.30pm) On the 2nd floor overlooking the central atrium in the northern building of the Yayasan complex. Decent connections.

# **Medical Services**

RIPAS Hospital ( 224 2424; Jl Tutong; 24hr) A fully equipped, modern hospital across the Edinburgh bridge on the western side of Sungai Kedayan.

# Money

HSBC ( 225 2222: cnr Jl Sultan & Jl Pemancha: 9am-3.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-11am Sat, closed Sun) Charges B\$15 to change most travellers cheques and has

Rupiah Express (Ground fl, Britannia House, 1 Jl Cator; 8am-5.30pm Mon-Sat, 8am-3pm Sun) Exchanges cash only.

# Post

Main post office (cnr Jl Sultan & Jl Elizabeth Dua; 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Thu & Sat, 8.30am-11.30am & 2-4pm Fri, closed Sun) Be sure to stop into the adjoining stamp gallery (same hours as post office).

# Telephone

Payphones are common in the city centre, and they accept 10c or 20c coins. Phonecards are available from post offices and many re-

tail shops and hotels. SIM cards can only be purchased from **DST Communications** ( **223** 2903; ground fl, Yayasan Complex, Jl Pretty; 🕑 9am-4pm Mon-Thu & Sat, 9am-11am & 2.30-4pm Fri, closed Sun).

# Travel Agencies

Freme Travel ( 223 4280; www.freme.com; Unit 403B, Wisma Jaya, JI Permancha) The best place to buy air tickets and arrange tours within the country.

# SIGHTS **Royal Regalia Museum**

A celebration of the sultan and all the trappings of Bruneian royalty, this museum ( 222 8358; Jl Sultan; admission free; 🕑 8.30am-5pm Sat-Thu & Sun, 9-11.30am & 2.30-5pm Fri) belongs at the top of any Brunei itinerary. The 1st floor is dominated by a recreation of the sultan's coronation day parade, including a huge gilded royal cart, on which the newly crowned sultan was pulled through the streets of BSB. More interesting are the displays on the mezzanine level overlooking the atrium. Here, the gifts that the sultan has received from various heads of state and royal families are displayed. If you've ever wondered what to give the man who has everything, you'll find plenty of gift ideas on display here (hint: you'll never go wrong with priceless gold and jewels).

# Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque

Named after the 28th sultan of Brunei, the Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque ( 222 2623; admission free; non-prayer-time visits 8am-noon, 2-3pm, 5-6pm & 8-9pm Sat-Wed) was built in 1958 at a cost of about US\$5 million. The golden-domed structure stands close to the Sungai Brunei in its own artificial lagoon and is one of the tallest buildings in the city. The mosque is only open to non-Muslims outside prayer times. Ask if you can climb the minaret. Evening is the best time to visit - the

## **GETTING INTO TOWN**

BSB's modern airport is 10km northwest of the city. Buses 23, 24 and 38 will get you to/from the airport for B\$1. As you leave the terminal, walk diagonally south for 300m to reach the bus stop. You'll end up at the bus station right in the centre of town, from where you can easily walk to most of the accommodation listed in this chapter.

Taxis will charge around B\$20 for trips between the airport and city centre (the price goes up by at least B\$5 after 6pm); taxis are unmetered so agree on the price before getting in.

All boats from Labuan and most from Limbang (Sarawak) arrive at Muara Port, from which it's a B\$2 bus ride and a B\$40 taxi ride into BSB. Some boats from Limbang arrive at a jetty off JI McArthur, also in the centre of town.

illuminated mosque appears to float like an apparition over its lagoon.

# Kampung Ayer

The rustic collective of 30 stilt villages on either side of Sungai Brunei is referred to as Kampung Ayer (Water Village). It's home to a population of around 32,000, who pursue a mostly traditional way of life, albeit in prefab dwellings with plumbing, electricity and colour TV.

The best way to see the water villages is from a water taxi, which can be chartered along the waterfront for B\$20 per hour (don't worry about finding one – any time a foreign tourist goes anywhere near the waterfront in BSB, a small school of taxi boats forms with eager drivers offering their services). Be sure to ask the driver to stop off at Taman Persiaran Damuan for great views of the sultan's palace.

Late afternoon or early evening is best for a tour, not only because the midday heat is unbearable, but also to enjoy the sunset over the city. If there's any wind about, you will see kites come rising out of the kampung (kite flying is a popular pastime in Brunei).

# Brunei Museum

The Brunei Museum ( 222 3235; Jl Kota Batu; admission free: 9.30am-5pm Sat-Thu & Sun, 9-11,30am & 2,30-4.30pm Fri) is 6km east of central BSB, sitting on a bluff overlooking the Sungai Brunei. The main building contains the excellent Islamic Art Gallery, which has some wonderful illuminated (decorated) copies of the Koran, as well as an incredible model of the Dome of the Rock executed in mother of pearl and abalone shell.

In the same building, the Oil and Gas Gallery is surprisingly interesting. It answers all your questions about how they get the stuff from under the ground to your nearest petrol pump. Finally, don't miss the Brunei Traditional Culture Gallery, also in the main building. It has good exhibits on all aspects of Bruneian culture, including a picture of two young fellows enjoying a spot of grass sledding – a sport we didn't know existed until we visited this museum.

Descend the stairs from the car park behind the museum, then turn right to reach the Malay **Technology Museum** (admission free; 9.30am-5pm Sat-Thu & Sun, 9-11.30am & 2.30-4.30pm Fri). A pair of rooms here have interesting life-sized re-creations of stilt houses with accompanying information on traditional cultures. The rest of the large building, however, is strangely empty.

To get to the museum, take bus 39 from the bus terminal in downtown BSB.

# Other Attractions

A fine example of Islamic architecture is Jame'Asr Hassanal Bolkiah Mosque ( 223 8741; Jl Hassan Bolkiah, Gadong; admission free; 8 8am-noon, 2-3pm, 5-6pm & 8-9pm Sat-Wed), the largest mosque in the country. This fabulous sight is in Gadong, a few kilometres northwest of town. Equally photogenic is the Istana Nurul Iman ( 222 9988; JI Tutong), the sultan's magnificent palace, which looks particularly impressive when illuminated at night. The Istana is open to the public only at the end of the fasting month of Ramadan and is 2.5km out of town. The best vantage points are from the river and Taman Persiaran Damuan, a landscaped park nearby. From BSB, take a water taxi there in the early evening and get off at the park.

Taman Peranginan Tasek is a beautiful forested area with waterfalls and trails. In the early morning or late evening, you may be lucky enough to see some proboscis monkeys. Walk or take a bus past the Terrace Hotel. After passing two sets of traffic lights, turn right and you'll see the entrance.

# **SLEEPING**

Most of BSB's accommodation options are located in the city centre. Unlike the rest of Borneo, there are few budget options.

KH Soon Resthouse ( 222 2052; email khsoon\_ resthouse\_brunei@hotmail.com; 2nd fl, 140 Jl Pemancha; s B\$30-35, d B\$35-39; **₹**) This simple guesthouse is a decent budget choice for those seeking a central location. Rooms are spartan but huge and an extra B\$5 snags you an attached bathroom. If all you need is a clean place to lay your head in BSB, this should suit.

Apek Utama Hotel ( 222 0808; Simpang 229, Jl Kota Batu, Kampung Pintu Malim; r from B\$30; 🔀 ) This basic hotel has acceptable rooms with fan or air-con. The management is friendly and a good source of information on travelling around Brunei. The downside is the somewhat inconvenient location: it's 3km east of town, accessed by bus 39 or by water taxi. Note that buses stop running at 6pm, so plan accordingly.

Terrace Hotel ( 224 3554; www.terracebrunei.com; JI Tasek Lama; r from B\$60; 🔀 🗩 ) Since you may only be in town for a day or two, consider

spending a little more to enjoy the comforts of this excellent midrange hotel. Rooms are clean and well taken care of, and there's a great little swimming pool and wi-fi. There's also a decent restaurant on the ground floor. Deluxe rooms cost about B\$10 more than standard rooms, but are well worth the price.

# **EATING**

Hajah Halima Restaurant ( 223 4803; 54 Jl Sultan; meals from B\$2; 🔄 breakfast, lunch & dinner) This popular and friendly Indian Muslim place has just about everything the traveller could ask for: good coffee, tea, fresh juice and roti in the morning, and great biryani and set meals for lunch and dinner, not to mention great mee goreng (fried noodles) and murtabak (roti stuffed with meat or vegetables). It's the best of the three similar joints on this part of Il Sultan. There is no sign - look for the blue paint around the entrance. It's almost directly opposite the Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf.

Riverfront satay stalls (JI Residency; Yenoon to early evening) This collection of satay and drink vendors right on the riverfront offer one of life's great combinations: satay and fresh coconut juice. You can get 10 sticks of chicken or beef satav here for about B\$2.50. A fresh coconut will add another B\$1.50. This is a great place to watch the sunset - when the colours really start working, why not jump into a waiting water taxi and enjoy the view from sea level?

Ayamku Restaurant (JI Permancha; meals from B\$3.50; Unch & dinner) Brunei's answer to KFC, this may be the cheapest place in town to get a meal. You can get a big piece of fried chicken, some rice and a drink for about B\$3. And, the chicken is surprisingly good.

Hau Hua ( 222 5396; 48 JI Sultan; meals B\$10; 😭 lunch & dinner) This surprisingly good Chinese restaurant does all the standard Chinese dishes and a few lesser known ones, like broccoli with crab meat. There is an excellent drinks menu that includes daily changing specials and good fresh juices.

Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf (cnr Jl Sultan & Jl Permancha: coffee drinks from B\$3; ( breakfast, lunch & dinner) Travellers and expats alike are drawn like moths to the invisible waves of wi-fi and the aroma of good coffee emanating from this downtown caffeine emporium. Drop by in the afternoon and you'll run into about half of the Western tourists in BSB at any one time.

Zaika ( 223 1155; Block C, Yayasan Complex; meals from B\$15; So lunch & dinner) This dimly lit northern Indian restaurant is the place to go for a proper sit-down meal in BSB. The kitchen does well with favourites such as kebabs, nan bread and standard curries. but its attempts at more creative dishes are sometimes less successful.

Book accommodation online at lonelyplanet.com

Tamu Kianggeh (Jl Sungai Kianggeh; 🕑 breakfast, lunch & dinner) Self-caterers can walk across the canal to this local produce market, where food stalls are sometimes set up.

Hua Ho Supermarket ( 223 1120; basement, Yayasan Complex, Jl Pretty; ( 10am-10pm) Housed in the basement of the Yayasan complex, look for shrink-wrapped durian here (just don't try sneaking it into your hotel room).

# ENTERTAINMENT

Hassanal Bolkiha Cinema (JI Sungai Kianggeh; admission B\$4-8) This small cinema screens a variety of Hollywood action films and Hong Kong kung fu movies. It's about the only game in town as far as 'nightlife' goes in BSB.

# **GETTING THERE & AWAY**

See p43 for airlines flying to BSB.

Boats to/from Bangar (B\$6, 45 minutes, roughly one per hour departing BSB from 7am to 1pm) operate from the jetty just east of the riverfront satay stalls, along Jl Residency. Bangar is the starting point for attractions in Brunei's Temburong district. Boats generally don't depart until they have enough passengers to warrant the trip, so you might have to wait around for a while.

Even if you do nothing more than grab a quick cup of tea in Bangar and then return to BSB, we highly recommend this journey. The speedboats tear through nipa-lined waterways at incredible speeds and you wonder how they manage not to get lost in this watery maze.

# **GETTING AROUND**

Water taxis are a good way of getting around if your destination is anywhere near the river. You can find them on the waterfront at the southern end of town (or, more likely, they'll find you). Fares for short trips shouldn't cost more than B\$2 - don't accept higher rates (the locals certainly don't). Hourly rates

should be no more than B\$20 and you might be able to negotiate a rate as low as B\$15 per hour.

# Bus

BSB's reliable bus network operates from 6am to 6pm. The bus station is beneath the multistorey car park on Jl Cator. All trips within BSB proper cost B\$1.

An express bus (B\$2, 40 minutes) departs from this bus station about once an hour between 7am and 2pm for the Muara Ferry Terminal.

# Car

Prices for car rental start at B\$75 per day.

Avis ( 242 6345; nscsb@brunet.bn; Sheraton Utama Hotel, JI Tasek Lama; compact cars per day from B\$75) will send cars to the airport for those with reservations.

# Taxi

Taxis are hard to find in Brunei and you should never count on being able to flag one down on the street. The only place where you can reliably find taxis is outside the bus station on Jl Caor. Otherwise, arrange a taxi through vour hotel.

Taxis in BSB are all unmetered and you need to negotiate the fare with the driver. A trip across town will usually cost B\$10, but rates can climb by as much as 30% after 6pm.

# AROUND BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN .. Pantai Muara 49 AROUND BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN The serene expanses of forest around Panadar Sari Programs portionlarly those

Bandar Seri Begawan, particularly those located within the protective borders of Ulu Temburong National Park, make for excellent day trips from the Bruneian capital. To the north of the city there are also some nice beaches, a massive amusement park, and a grand hotel that must be seen to be believed.

# **PANTAI MUARA**

Pantai Muara (Muara Beach) is a popular weekend retreat located 2km from Muara town, which is 25km northeast of BSB. The white sand is clean but like many Borneo beaches it's fairly shallow and littered with flotsam and jetsam. If you want solitude, don't go on the weekend.

To get to Muara, take an express bus (B\$2) from the bus station in downtown BSB. Once at Muara, bus 33 will take you from Muara town to either Pantai Muara or Pantai Serasa for B\$1.

# **JERUDONG**

The Jerudong area to the northwest of BSB has a couple of sites that make decent halfday trips out of the city, particularly for

## **GETTING TO MALAYSIA**

# To Pulau Labuan

For those heading north to Kota Kinabalu in Sabah, the easiest way is to go by boat via Pulau Labuan in Sabah. From Muara Port, 25km northeast of BSB, express boats go to Pulau Labuan (B\$15, 11/2 hours, six departures between 7.30am and 4.40pm). From Pulau Labuan, you can easily travel by boat onward to Kota Kinabalu. Check the ferries link on www.bruneibay.net for the latest schedules from Muara. Passengers are charged B\$1 departure tax at the ferry terminal.

For info on getting to BSB from Pulau Labuan see the boxed text, p484.

Boats to Limbang in Sarawak (B\$10, 30 minutes) make irregular morning departures from the riverfront along JI MacArthur, but the service is highly unreliable and departures are often delayed until more passengers turn up. Buy your ticket from the moneychanger along the waterfront (Map p45). An alternative to the boat trip is to catch bus 42, 44 or 48 south to Kuala Lurah (B\$1, 30 minutes, last departure 5pm) on the Brunei–Sarawak border. After crossing the **border** ( 6am-9pm), you can take another bus (RM5.50) or taxi (RM20) to Limbang.

Note that return boat services from Limbang are as unreliable as those in the other direction and you may have to re-enter Brunei by road; for more on the return trip see the boxed text, p508.

# **DID YOU KNOW?**

The Empire Hotel & Country Club, on the Brunei coast, is said to have cost over US\$1 billion, making it the world's most expensive hotel (to build).

those fascinated by ostentatious displays

The Empire Hotel & Country Club ( 241 8999; www.empire.com.bn; Muara-Tutong Rd) is a prominent reminder of Prince Jefri's scandalous spending habits. The palatial Empire cost US\$1.1 billion to build, and it shows - from the soaring height of the monumentally lavish atrium to the Jack Nicklaus-designed golf course. While it's true that the hotel has all the subtlety of a Las Vegas casino, it's definitely a spectacle worth seeing. And, as you wander the grounds, you can't help but wonder how they ever expect this place to pay for itself.

Jerudong Park Playground ( 261 1894; Jerudong; admission & unlimited rides B\$15, or admission B\$1 & individual rides B\$3; ( 5pm-midnight Wed-Fri & Sun, 5pm-2am Sat) is a sprawling amusement park which the sultan built as a gift to his people. Divided into two sections, one for older kids and adults, and one for smaller children, it's now in a semi-dormant state - over half of the rides are 'closed for maintenance' (read: closed forever, or, at least until Michael Jackson comes back to stage another concert). This gives the park a rather surreal air, and you may feel like you're living out a child's fantasy of having an amusement park all to yourself (albeit with most of the rides closed). If you go on a weekend, you'll be less lonely and find a few more rides in operation.

Bus 55 travels to Jerudong (B\$1) from the BSB bus terminal, passing near the amusement park. From the last stop on the route it's a 25-minute walk along the highway to the Empire Hotel. However, the service inconveniently stops running after 5.30pm. Due to the difficulty of going by bus, we recommend sharing a taxi with some other travellers (the ride costs about B\$30 each way).

Some hostels and hotels in BSB can arrange group tours to Jerudong, including stops at the Empire Hotel and the Jerudong Park Playground.

# **KUALA BELAIT**

Buses to/from Sarawak (Miri/Sibu/Kuching etc) operate from this small town near the Sarawak border. There's really no reason to stay here unless you miss your onward connection. The HSBC bank opposite the bus station has an ATM - handy for arrivals from Sarawak.

lonelyplanet.com

If you do find yourself in need of a place to stay, the **Sentosa Hotel** ( a 333 4341; www.bruneisen tosahotel.com; 92 Jln McKerron; s/d from B\$70/88; 🔲 🔀 ) is an excellent midrange hotel. It's just up the street from the bus and taxi stations.

From Kuala Belait there are regular buses to Seria (B\$1) and from there frequent services to BSB (B\$6). There are also buses to/from Miri and other points in Sarawak.

# **TEMBURONG**

Temburong is the eastern slice of Brunei that is surrounded by a claw of Sarawak. It's a region of lush virgin rainforest that is usually reached by a thrilling speedboat ride from BSB. You can explore Temburong on a tour from BSB (p55), or rock up in Bangar and try to organise things yourself.

# Bangar

Bangar is a small town on the banks of Sungai Temburong that seems perpetually halfasleep, even though it's the administrative centre of (and gateway to) the Temburong district.

The Temburong tourist information centre ( \$\old{\oldsystem}\$ 522 1439; 13 Kedai Rakyat Jati; \$\old{\oldsystem}\$ 8am-noon & 1.30-4.30pm Mon-Sat, 8am-noon Sun) provides useful information and books tours. Exiting the boat wharf in Bangar, turn left and you'll find the information centre in the cinnamon-coloured block of offices just before the road bridge.

The basic **Youth Hostel** ( **5**22 1694, 522 1718; dm B\$10) is part of a youth centre and sits in a fenced compound almost directly behind

## **GETTING TO MALAYSIA**

To get to Sarawak from Kuala Belait, take an express bus (B\$15, two hours) or a taxi (per car B\$50 to B\$80) to Miri. Immigration and customs formalities are taken care of on both sides of the Brunei-Sarawak border ( ( 6am-9pm). For information on crossing the border in the other direction, see the boxed text, p506.

# **GETTING TO MALAYSIA**

Travelling from Bangar (Brunei) to Lawas or Limbang (both in Malaysia) is extremely fiddly, time consuming and expensive. There is no public transport, so private taxis are the only option; drivers congregate near the wharf, or you can ask at the **Temburong tourist information centre** ( 522 1439; 13 Kedai Rakyat Jati; 🕑 8am-noon & 1.30-4.30pm Mon-Sat, 8am-noon Sun). Taxis don't have meters and prices must be negotiated.

We'd recommend heading back to Bandar Seri Begawan (BSB) and crossing into Malaysia from there; in particular, those heading on to Kota Kinabalu are advised to travel to Pulau Labuan and

If you do go by road, note that border posts are open daily from 6am to 9pm.

# **Getting to Lawas**

If you can find a taxi, the trip from Bangar to the eastern Sarawak border costs around B\$30. You may be able to persuade the driver to take you all the way to Lawas, but this will cost around B\$80. See p509 for details on doing the trip in the opposite direction.

There are buses from Lawas to Kota Kinabalu (RM20) at 7am and 1pm daily.

# **Getting to Limbang**

A private taxi (if you can find one) from Bangar to the western Sarawak border costs around B\$30. If you can persuade your driver to continue on to Limbang, the trip will cost around B\$80. See p508 for information on doing the trip in the reverse direction.

the information centre. It offers bunk beds in clean fan-cooled rooms.

Bangar Resthouse ( \$\overline{\omega}\$ 522 1239; Jl Batang Duri; dm B\$15-30; **₹**) is a government-run complex with hospitable staff and lots of sixbed rooms, each with attached bathroom, a small fridge and TV. Families or small groups might also consider renting one of the four-person chalets (B\$80 per night). From the boat wharf, walk to the bridge, turn right and head 200m to the Jl Batang Duri turn-off - the resthouse is on the corner, signed 'Rumah Persinggahan Keragaan Daerah Temburong'. Bring your own towel and soap.

The first restaurant in the row of shops on your right as you walk from the boat jetty to the information centre, RR Max Cafe (1 Kedai Pekan Bangar; meals B\$2-6; Streakfast, lunch & dinner) is a simple kedai kopi (coffee shop) that serves a surprisingly good plate of fried noodles and good hot or iced tea to wash it down.

Boats from BSB to Bangar (B\$6, 45 minutes, roughly one per hour from 7am to 1pm) operate from the jetty just east of the riverfront satay stalls, along Jl Residency. The last boat back to BSB leaves Bangar at 3.30pm.

# **Ulu Temburong National Park**

The Ulu Temburong National Park (admission B\$5), with an area of 500 sq km, is surrounded by the Batu Apoi Forest Reserve, which covers most of southern Temburong. One of the many pleasures of visiting this stronghold of primary rainforest is that the only access is by longboat. The park contains an excellent canopy walkway and has simple accommodation in the form of cabins within the park (call the Temburong tourist information centre three days prior to your visit if you want to stay in the park accommodation).

Unfortunately, it's difficult and expensive to visit the park on your own. Access to the park is limited by the availability of the longboats that make the journey to the park from the jetty at Batu Duri (these are usually used by BSB-based tour operators; see p46). If you are on your own and haven't arranged a tour, the best thing to do is to arrive at the information office in Bangar before 9am and ask to join one of the day's tours.

# **Peradayan Forest Reserve**

Fifteen kilometres southeast of Bangar and protected within the Peradayan Forest Reserve (admission free) are the peaks of Bukit Patoi and Bukit Peradayan, which can be reached along walking tracks (bring your own water and trail food). The climb through rainforest to Bukit Patoi (5km, one hour) has fine views and starts at the park entrance. Most walkers descend back down this trail but it's possible to continue over the summit and around to Bukit Peradayan (four hours) on a harder, less distinct path.

The Temburong tourist information centre in Bangar can arrange transport to the reserve. A private car (the only means of getting there), will cost about B\$10 each way.

# **BRUNEI DIRECTORY**

# **ACCOMMODATION**

If you're arriving from other countries in Southeast Asia, be prepared for a shock – accommodation in Brunei is expensive. The youth hostel in BSB was closed at the time of research and there is only one truly budget place to stay. Accommodation in Bangar in the Temburong district is reasonably priced. Except for most hostels and the cheapest hotels, room prices will include an attached bathroom.

# **ACTIVITIES**

Besides swimming at a couple of reasonable beaches to the north of BSB (see p49), the only activity of note in Brunei is walking and jungle trekking. At Ulu Temburong National Park and the nearby Peradayan Forest Reserve walkers can stride through undisturbed rainforest and up jungle-covered hills.

# **BOOKS**

For more in-depth coverage of travel in Brunei, grab a copy of Lonely Planet's *Malaysia*, *Singapore & Brunei* guidebook.

History of Brunei (2002) by Graham Saunders is a thorough, up-to-date history of the sultanate from its beginnings to modern times.

Time and the River (2000) by Prince Mohamed Bolkiah describes the changes to the country as seen through the eyes of the sultan's youngest brother.

By God's Will – A Portrait of the Sultan of Brunei (1989) by Lord Chalfont takes a measured look at the sultan and his dominion.

New World Hegemony in the Malay World (2000) by Geoffrey C Gunn gives an insight into the more contemporary political issues for Brunei and the region.

# **BUSINESS HOURS**

Usual business hours in Brunei:

**Banks** 9am to 3pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 11am Saturday

Government offices 7.45am-12.15pm and 1.30pm to

4.30pm Monday to Thursday and Saturday **Kedai kopi** 7am to 6pm (sometimes 9pm)

**Offices** 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday, 8am to noon Saturday

Restaurants 11am to 9pm Shops 10am to 9.30pm

Exceptions to the above hours are noted in individual reviews. During Ramadan, office hours are often shorter.

# **CLIMATE**

Brunei is warm to hot year-round, with heavy (albeit variable) rainfall that peaks from September to January. See the BSB climate chart on p916.

# **CUSTOMS**

Brunei is a strict Muslim country and does not sell alcohol. However, non-Muslims are permitted to bring in up to 12 cans of beer and two bottles of liquor for their personal consumption. You must declare any alcohol to customs upon entering Brunei or risk being charged with trafficking an illegal substance, which is an extremely serious charge.

# **DRIVING LICENCE**

An International Driving Permit (IDP) is required to drive in Brunei.

# EMBASSIES & CONSULATES Embassies & Consulates in Brunei

For locations of the following embassies and consulates, see the BSB map (p45).

Australia ( a 222 9435; austhicom.brunei@dfat.gov.au; 6th fl, DAR Takaful IBB Utama, JI Pemancha)

Canada ( 222 0043; hicomcda@brunet.bn; 5th fl, Jl McArthur Bldg, 1 Jl McArthur)

France ( 222 0960; france@brunet.bn; 3rd fl, 301-306 Kompleks JI Sultan, 51-55 JI Sultan)

**Germany** ( 222 5547; prgerman@brunet.bn; 2nd fl, Unit 2.01, Block A, Yayasan Complex, JI Pretty)

Malaysia ( 238 1095; mwbrunei@brunet.bn; 61 Simpang 336, Jl Kebangsaan)

Philippines ( 224 1465; bruneipe@brunet.bn; 17 Simpang 126, Km 2, Jl Tutong)

Singapore ( 222 7583; singa@brunet.bn; 8 Simpang 74. Jl Subok)

UK ( a 222 2231; brithc@brunet.bn; 2nd fl, Unit 2.01, Block D, Yayasan Complex, Jl Pretty)

**USA** ( a 222 0384; amembassybrunei@state.gov; 3rd fl, Teck Guan Plaza, Jl Sultan)

# **Brunei Embassies & Consulates Abroad**

**Australia** ( **a** 02-6285 4500; 10 Beale Cres, Deakin, ACT 2600)

**Canada** ( **a** 613-234 5656; 395 Laurier Ave East, Ottawa ON, K1N 6R4)

**France** ( **a** 01-53 64 67 60; 7 rue de Presbourg, Paris 75017)

**Germany** ( **a** 030-206 07 600; Kronenstrasse 55-58, 10117 Berlin)

**Japan** ( **a** 03-3447 7997; 5-2 Kita-Shinagawa 6-Chome, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 141-0001)

UK (富 020-7581 0521; 19 Belgrave Sq, London SW1X 8PG)
USA (富 202-237 1838; www.bruneiembassy.org; 3520
International Court, Washington DC 2008)

For details of visa requirements, see p55.

# **FESTIVALS & EVENTS**

**Hari Raya Aidilfitri** Feasting and celebration marking the end of Ramadan (a variable date, based on the Islamic calendar). Sultan's palace is open to visitors.

**National Day** Parade and procession in central BSB on 23 February.

**Sultan's Birthday** Marked by fireworks and various processions on 15 July.

# FOOD & DRINK Food

Bruneian cookery is almost identical to Malaysian cuisine (see p513), with strong Chinese and Indian influences. There are also a few Western-style restaurants and cafés to please expats, businesspeople and tourists. One traditional Bruneian dish to look out for is *ambuyat*, which is prepared sago served in a gluey mass and eaten with chopsticks.

At markets and in food courts you can expect to pay from B\$1 to B\$5 for simple dishes, while a typical *kedai kopi* meal usually costs from B\$4 to B\$8.

# Drink

Drinks are also similar to those you will find in Malaysia, with tea and coffee predominating (see p513). Unlike Malaysia, however, you won't find anything with alcohol in it.

# **GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS**

Homosexual acts are illegal in Brunei; those caught can be subject to 10 years of imprison-

ment and a fine of up to B\$30,000. Needless to say, whatever gay scene there is in Brunei is rather discreet.

# HOLIDAYS

As in Malaysia, the dates of most religious festivals are not fixed as they are based on the Islamic calendar. Fixed holidays:

New Year's Day 1 January

National Day 23 February Anniversary of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces 31 May

**Sultan's Birthday** 15 July **Christmas Day** 25 December

Variable holidays:

Chinese New Year January/February Hari Moulud (Prophet's Birthday) March

Israk Mikraj July

Ramadan August/September

Nuzul Al-Quran September

Hari Raya Aidilfitri September

Anniversary of the Revelation of the Quran September/October

Hari Raya Haji November/December

Hijrah December/January

School holidays occur from mid-November to the beginning of January, and for a week at the end of March, the last two weeks of June and the second week of September.

# **INTERNET ACCESS**

Internet cafés are becoming more common in Brunei and connections are fast. The price per hour is generally B\$1. Wireless internet is also becoming common, and several hotels and coffee shops in B\$B and elsewhere offer free wi-fi to their customers.

# INTERNET RESOURCES

**Borneo Bulletin Online** (www.brunet.bn/news/bb) Website of the *Borneo Bulletin*, the most popular Englishlanguage newspaper in Brunei, with plenty of news on the sultanate.

**Brunei Bay** (www.bruneibay.net) Plugs programmes for Intrepid Tours and is geared to an upmarket crowd, but has detailed information, including a very useful ferry schedule. **Brunei Tourism** (www.tourismbrunei.com) Official tourism website, lacking in practical details but has a BSB map and accommodation and travel agency listings.

# LEGAL MATTERS

Drug trafficking in Brunei does carry a mandatory death penalty, and being a foreigner

will not save you from the gallows. If you do happen to bring alcohol into this strict Islamic country without declaring it to customs and you are caught, you face severe penalties. See p52 for a summary of what visitors are permitted to bring in when it comes to the subject of alcohol.

# MAPS

At some hotels in Brunei, you may be able to find a copy of Brunei: A Kingdom of Unexpected Treasures, a leaflet which has a BSB map and bus route info. The best map of the sultanate is probably the Road Map and Street Index of Brunei Darussalam, published by Shell, which can sometimes be found in local bookstores.

# MONEY

The official currency is the Brunei dollar (B\$), but Singapore dollars are widely used and have the same value as the Brunei dollar, meaning they are accepted at face value. Don't worry if you receive Singapore dollars as change from a Brunei dollar bill - you'll have no trouble using them anywhere in Brunei.

Banks give around 10% less for cash than travellers cheques.

Brunei uses 1c, 5c, 20c and 50c coins, and notes in denominations of B\$1, B\$5, B\$10, B\$50, B\$100, B\$500, B\$1000 and B\$10,000.

ATMs are common, and if the banks are closed you can usually find a moneychanger who can also change travellers cheques. Bargaining is reserved for taxis, water taxis and markets (not for food). Credit cards are widely accepted.

Exchange rates at the time of writing:

Country	Unit	Brunei dollars (B\$)
Australia	A\$1	1.28
Canada	C\$1	1.47
Euro zone	€1	2.10
Japan	¥100	1.31
Malaysia	RM10	4.36
New Zealand	NZ\$1	1.08
UK	£1	3.04
USA	US\$1	1.51

# **POST**

Postal services in Brunei are quite reliable. BSB's main post office has a poste restante service. Post offices are open from 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and Saturday, and from 8.30am to 11.30am and 2pm to 4pm Friday.

The cost of an airmail postcard to Malaysia and Singapore is B\$0.20; to most other countries in Southeast Asia B\$0.35; to Europe, Africa, Australia and the Pacific B\$0.50; and to the Americas B\$0.60.

# RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Bruneians are scrupulous about keeping their cities and towns relatively clean, due in no small part to some rigid social standards. It's out in the fragile rainforest that visitors can play their part. Just remember the golden rule when it comes to walking or trekking: if you carry it in, carry it out. This applies to easily forgotten items such as foil, plastic wrapping and tissues. Never bury your rubbish - it may be out of sight, but it won't be out of reach of animals.

Bruneians are also quite conservative in terms of dress. Though you don't have to adopt Islamic dress code when travelling here, it is best to dress somewhat conservatively as a mark of respect to the locals. Sleeveless Tshirts and ripped jeans are inappropriate for men, and tube tops and short shorts are unacceptable for women (and save those bikini tops for empty beaches).

# TELEPHONE

Brunei has no area codes. The country code is 673 and the international access code is **a** 00. Payphones are common in the city centre, and they accept 10c or 20c coins. Phonecards are available from post offices and many retail shops and hotels. There are three types of phone cards: Hallo, JTB and Zippi. SIM cards are only available at DST Communications in BSB (see p46).

# TOILETS

Toilets in Brunei are a mixture of Westernstyle devices and Asian-style squat toilets, with the latter predominating once you get outside BSB. Toilet paper isn't usually provided in most public bathrooms; if using a hose or a bucket of water isn't to your liking, carry your own roll of toilet paper or a packet of tissues.

# **TOURIST INFORMATION**

Brunei's tourist infrastructure isn't well established and at this stage is a cooperative effort between government and private enterprise. At the time of writing, the only real tourist information centre was the office in

Bangar (see p50). The information centre in the capital has plenty of material to look at, and helpful staff.

# **TOURS**

lonelyplanet.com

An organised tour is often the cheapest and most trouble-free way to explore the rainforest of Brunei's Temburong District. Freme Travel ( 223 4280; www.freme.com; Unit 403B, Wisma Jaya, Jl Permancha, BSB) is the best established and most reliable tour operator in the country.

# TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

The streets of BSB are easier to negotiate than those of neighbouring Malaysia and most other countries of Southeast Asia. Ramps for wheelchairs and public transport that allows ready access to the mobility impaired are unfortunately still lacking. On the plus side, most hotels in the capital have lifts.

# VISAS

Countries whose citizens are eligible for visa-free entry for 14 days include Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Indonesia, Italy and Japan. Nationals of Germany, Ireland, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea and the UK are among those eligible for 30-day visa-free entry. US citizens do not need a visa for visits of up to 90 days. Australians are issued on arrival with a visa valid for a 14-day stay or can apply on arrival for a 30-day multiple-entry visa (B\$20), which is useful if you are traversing the country overland, say, from Miri up to the country overland, say, from Miri up to Kota Kinabalu.

It's a good idea to ring your nearest Bruneian embassy or consulate (see p53) to confirm what visa options are available to you.

There are visa-granting facilities at the borders with Sabah and Sarawak, but the process is time-consuming - it's much easier if you can organise one in advance of your visit.

# **WOMEN TRAVELLERS**

Brunei is a relatively safe country for women travelling on their own. Several women readers, however, have written to report that they were subject to catcalls, hissing and other forms of harassment, mostly from occupants of passing cars, when they were walking alone. Blond women in particular seem to come in for this kind of abuse, probably because they stick out so much in Brunei. Try to respect local customs and avoid wearing shorts above the knee and sleeveless shirts.

© Lonely Planet Publications. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'