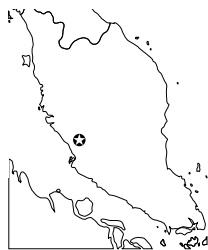


# Kuala Lumpur



Kuala Lumpur's metamorphosis from the jungle hovel of tin prospectors to a gleaming 21st-century city of high-rises and highways seems like a triumph of man over nature. However, peer down on KL (as it's commonly known) from the bird's-eye height of Menara KL and it's clear that nature continues to fight back: this remains one of the greenest cities in Southeast Asia and is all the better for it.

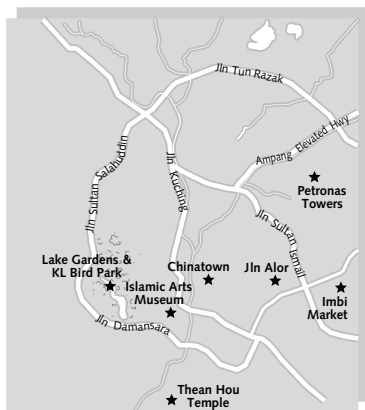
The blueprint was set early by the British who, in their colonial wisdom, crafted the Lake Gardens. This lush lung remains intact, as does the hillock of rainforest on which Menara KL rests and the old cricket field (now Merdeka Square) on which independence was declared back in 1957. The iconic Petronas Towers were developed alongside a beautifully landscaped park and to the north of the city more greenery surrounds Lake Titiwangsa.

In its built environment, few cities can compare to KL for diversity and daring. Imagine Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* crossed with an Arabian Nights Moorish fantasy and you begin to grasp a place where Chinese, Indian, Malay and contemporary structures coalesce into a fascinating whole.

The cream of Malaysian creativity can be experienced here also in the traditional crafts and cutting-edge art, design and fashion that can be found in KL's abundant malls and markets. Each ethnic community brings something to the table – most importantly in a delicious array of cuisines that make dining out the stellar experience in this star Southeast Asian urban performer.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Discovering vibrant **Chinatown** (p105) on a walking tour
- Marvelling at the steel-clad **Petronas Towers** (p95) and the swank Suria KLCC mall
- Breakfasting at **Imbi Market** (p115) and enjoying supper at **Jln Alor** (p114)
- Reviving in the greenery of the **Lake Gardens** (p102), with its showpiece **KL Bird Park** (p101)
- Admiring the beauty of Islamic art at the **Islamic Arts Museum** (p102)
- Paying respects to the heavenly mother at the **Thean Hou Temple** (p104)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 03

■ POPULATION: 1.38 MILLION

■ AREA: 243 SQ KM

## HISTORY

In 1857, 87 Chinese prospectors in search of tin landed at the apex of the Klang and Gombak Rivers and imaginatively named the place Kuala Lumpur, meaning 'muddy confluence'. Within a month all but 17 of the prospectors had died of malaria and other tropical diseases, but the tin they discovered in Ampang attracted more miners and KL quickly became a brawling, noisy, violent boomtown.

As in other parts of the Malay Peninsula, the local sultan appointed a proxy (known as Kapitan China) to bring the unruly Chinese fortune-seekers and their secret societies into line. The successful candidate Yap Ah Loy (Kapitan China from 1868 to 1885) took on the task with such ruthless relish that he's now credited as the founder of KL.

Loy had barely established control, however, when fighting broke out between local sultans for the throne of Perak. KL was swept up in the conflict and burnt to the ground in 1881. This allowed the British government representative Frank Swettenham to push through a radical new town plan that transferred the central government here, from Klang. By 1886 a railway line linked KL to Klang; by 1887 several thousand brick buildings had been built; and in 1896 the city became the capital of the newly formed Federated Malay States.

After occupation by Japanese forces during WWII (when many Chinese were tortured and killed, and many Indians sent to work on Burma's 'Death Railway'), the British temporarily returned, only to be ousted when Malaysia declared its independence here in 1957.

KL's darkest hour came on 13 May 1969 when race riots mainly between the Malays and Chinese communities claimed hundreds, perhaps thousands, of lives. A year later local government elections were suspended – ever since KL's mayor has been appointed by the Federal Territories Minister. In 1974 the sultan of Selangor ceded the city's land to the state so it could officially become the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. The city has prospered ever since as Malaysia's political and commercial capital.

## CLIMATE

Temperature ranges from 21°C to 33°C and the average humidity exceeds 82%. Although there's rain throughout the year, March to April and September to November are the wettest months.

## ORIENTATION

Central KL is quite compact, even though its hilly terrain, multilane highways and paucity of footpaths conspire against walkers.

The city's colonial heart is Merdeka Sq. Southeast from here is bustling Chinatown, while immediately south, across a band of highways and train tracks, are the Masjid Negara (National Mosque), historic KL Train Station and the peaceful Lake Gardens. South of the Lake Gardens is KL Sentral, a regional and international train terminus with direct connections to the airport. KL Sentral is part of the area known as Brickfields. On the other side of the tracks further south is Bangsar Baru, a nucleus of trendy shops, restaurants and bars.

Another major arrival and departure point is the Puduraya long-distance bus station. East of Puduraya, the intersection of Jln Sultan Ismail and Jln Bukit Bintang marks the heart of the Golden Triangle, KL's premier business, shopping and entertainment district. Stacked with hotels, the Golden Triangle encompasses an area that stretches north to the Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC) development anchored by the Petronas Towers. Back at Merdeka Sq, if you head against the one-way traffic north-east along Jln Tuanku A Rahman (commonly called Jln TAR) you'll soon hit Little India, and further north, Chow Kit, a red-light area famed for its lively market. Immediately west of Chow Kit is the old Malay area of Kampung Baru. Jln Raja Laut runs almost parallel to Jln TAR and takes the northbound traffic towards Jln Tun Razak marking the outer northern boundary of the city centre; around here you'll find Lake Titivangsa and the National Art Gallery, Library and Theatre.

## INFORMATION

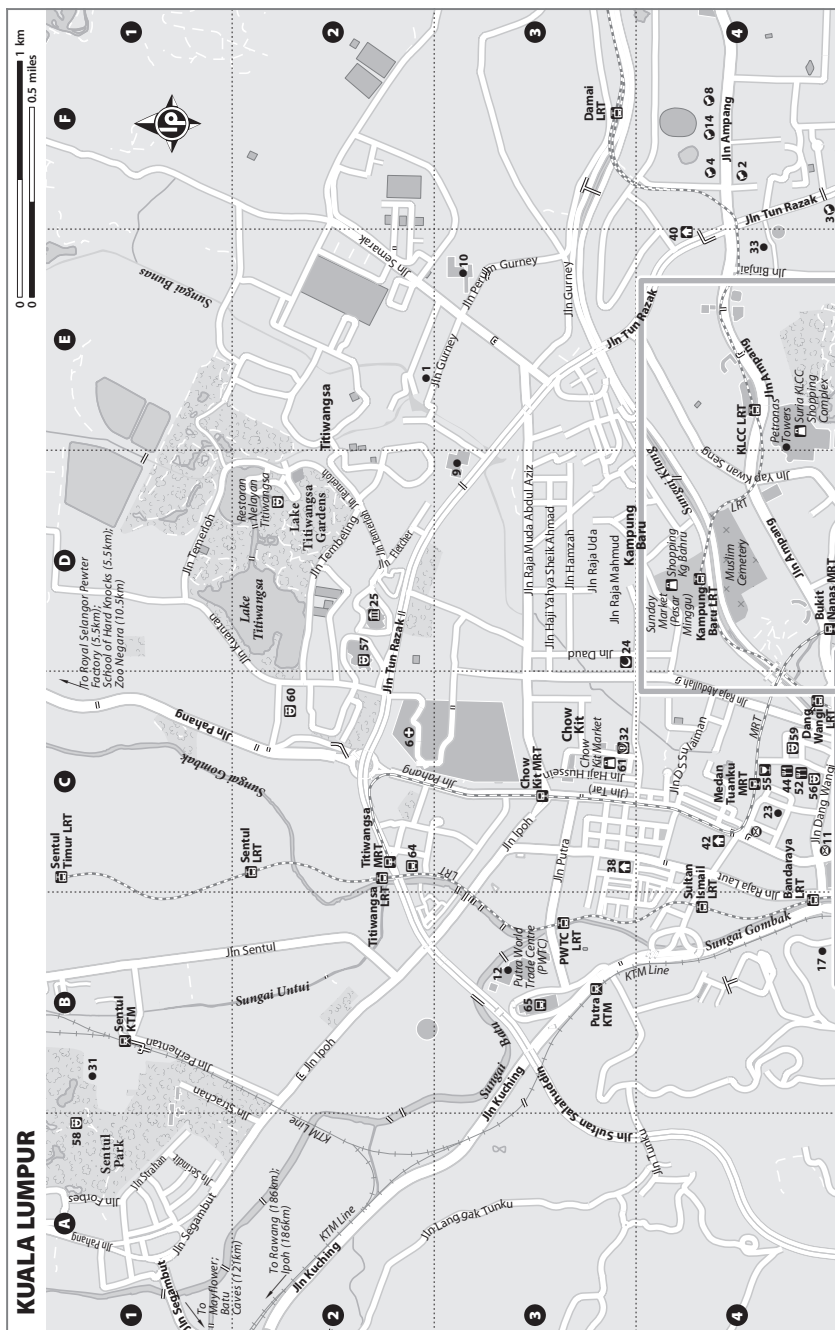
### Bookshops

**Borders** (Map p96; ☎ 2141 0288; Level 2, Berjaya Times Sq, Jln Imbi; ☎ 10am-10pm)

**Kinokuniya** (Map p96; ☎ 2164 8133; Level 4, Suria KLCC, Jln Ampang; ☎ 10am-10pm) Excellent range of English-language titles.

**MPH Bookstores** ([www.mph.com.my](http://www.mph.com.my)) Bangsar (Map p118; ☎ 2287 3600; 2nd fl Bangsar Village II, 2 Jln Telawi 1; ☎ 10.30am-10.30pm); Golden Triangle (Map p96; ☎ 2142 8231; Ground fl, BB Plaza, Jln Bukit Bintang; ☎ 10.30am-9.30pm)

**Silverfish Books** (Map p118; ☎ 2284 4837; [www.silverfishbooks.com](http://www.silverfishbooks.com); 58-1 Jln Telawi, Bangsar; ☎ 10am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm Sat) Publisher of contemporary Malaysian literature.





<b>INFORMATION</b>	Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre.....(see 58)	Gem Restaurant..... <b>47</b> B8
Alliance Française..... <b>1</b> E2	Lok Mansion..... <b>23</b> C4	Hornbill Restaurant.....(see 22)
British Embassy..... <b>2</b> F4	Masjid Kampung Baru..... <b>24</b> D3	Ibunda..... <b>48</b> F6
Brunei Embassy..... <b>3</b> F4	National Art Gallery..... <b>25</b> D2	Ikan Bakar Jalan Bellamy..... <b>49</b> C8
Canadian Embassy.....(see 3)	National Monument..... <b>26</b> A5	Kompleks Makan Tanglin..... <b>50</b> B6
French Embassy..... <b>4</b> F4	National Museum..... <b>27</b> B7	Pusat Makanan Peng Hwa..... <b>51</b> E7
German Embassy.....(see 3)	Pudu Market..... <b>29</b> E7	Restoran Buharry..... <b>52</b> C4
Goethe Institut..... <b>5</b> F5	Sam Kow Tong Temple..... <b>30</b> B7	Siu Siu..... <b>53</b> B8
Hospital Kuala Lumpur..... <b>6</b> C2	Sentul Park Koi Centre..... <b>31</b> B1	Vishal..... <b>54</b> B7
Indonesian Embassy..... <b>7</b> F6	Sikh Temple..... <b>32</b> C3	Yu Ri Tei.....(see 31)
Irish Embassy..... <b>8</b> F4	Tabung Haji..... <b>33</b> E4	<b>DRINKING</b> ☑
National Library of Malaysia..... <b>9</b> D3	Taman Bunga Raya.....(see 34)	Bar Savanh..... <b>55</b> C4
National Survey & Mapping Department..... <b>10</b> E3	Taman Orkid..... <b>34</b> B6	Zeta Bar.....(see 41)
Netherlands Embassy.....(see 8)	Taman Rama Rama..... <b>35</b> B6	<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b> ☑
Post Office..... <b>11</b> C4	Temple of Fine Arts..... <b>36</b> B8	Chynna.....(see 41)
Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC)..... <b>12</b> B3	Vivekananda Ashram..... <b>37</b> A8	Cynna..... <b>56</b> C4
Singapore Embassy..... <b>13</b> F5	<b>SLEEPING</b> ☑	Istana Budaya (National Theatre)..... <b>57</b> D2
Thai Embassy..... <b>14</b> F4	Ben Soo Homestay..... <b>38</b> C3	Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre..... <b>58</b> A1
Tourism Malaysia.....(see 12)	Carcosa Seri Negara..... <b>39</b> A6	Loft.....(see 56)
Tourism Malaysia..... <b>15</b> A7	Highland Resthouse Holdings Bungalows Office..... <b>40</b> E4	Maison..... <b>59</b> C4
US Embassy..... <b>16</b> F5	Hilton Kuala Lumpur..... <b>41</b> A7	Sutra Dance Theatre..... <b>60</b> C2
<b>SIGHTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>	Tune Hotel..... <b>42</b> C4	<b>SHOPPING</b> ☑
Bank Negara Malaysia Museum & Art Gallery..... <b>17</b> B4	YMCA..... <b>43</b> B7	Chow Kit Market..... <b>61</b> C3
Buddhist Maha Vihar..... <b>18</b> B8	<b>EATING</b> ☑	Wei-Ling Gallery..... <b>62</b> B7
Choon Wan Kong..... <b>19</b> E7	Annalakshmi.....(see 36)	<b>TRANSPORT</b>
Islamic Arts Museum..... <b>20</b> B6	Bisou..... <b>44</b> C4	KL Sentral..... <b>63</b> B7
Istana Budaya (National Theatre).....(see 57)	Café Café..... <b>45</b> D7	Pekeliling Bus Station..... <b>64</b> C2
Istana Negara..... <b>21</b> C7	Café Café.....(see 39)	Putra Bus Station..... <b>65</b> B3
KL Bird Park..... <b>22</b> B6	Fukuya..... <b>46</b> F6	

## Cultural Centres & Libraries

**Alliance Française** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2694 7880;

<http://kl.alliancefrancaise.org.my>; 15 Lg Gurney)

**Australian Information Library** (Map p96; ☎ 2146 5555; 6 Jln Yap Kwan Seng)

**British Council** (Map p96; ☎ 2723 7900; [www.britishcouncil.org/malaysia](http://www.britishcouncil.org/malaysia); Ground fl, West Block, Wisma Selangor Dredging, 142C Jln Ampang)

**Goethe Institut** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2164 2011; [www.goethe.de/ins/my/kua/deindex.htm](http://www.goethe.de/ins/my/kua/deindex.htm); 6th fl Menara See Hoy Chan, 374 Jln Tun Razak).

**Japan Foundation** (off Map pp92-3; ☎ 2284 6228; [www.jfkl.org.my](http://www.jfkl.org.my); 18th fl Northpoint, Block B, Mid-Valley City, Medan Syed Putra)

**National Library of Malaysia** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2687 1700; [www.pnm.gov.my](http://www.pnm.gov.my); 232 Jln Tun Razak)

## Immigration Offices

**Immigration Office** (off Map pp92-3; ☎ 2095 5077; Block I, Pusat Bandar Damansara) It's 2km west of the Lake Gardens; handles visa extensions.

## Internet Access

Internet cafes are everywhere; the going rate per hour is RM3. If you're travelling with a wi-fi-enabled device, you can get online at

hundreds of cafes, restaurants, bars and several hotels for free; sign up for an account with **Wireless@KL** ([www.wirelesskl.com](http://www.wirelesskl.com)), which has 1500 hot spots around the city.

## Media

**Juice** ([www.juiceonline.com](http://www.juiceonline.com)) Free clubbing-orientated monthly magazine available in top-end hotels, restaurants and bars.

**KLue** ([www.klue.com.my](http://www.klue.com.my); RM5) Excellent local listings magazine, with many interesting features about what's going on in and around the city.

**Time Out** ([www.timeoutkl.com](http://www.timeoutkl.com)) Monthly magazine in a globally familiar format; sign up online for their weekly what's-going-on digest.

## Medical Services

Pharmacies are all over town; the most common is Guardian, in most shopping malls.

**Hospital Kuala Lumpur** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2615 5555; [www.hkl.com.my](http://www.hkl.com.my); Jln Pahang)

**Tung Shin Hospital** (Map p96; ☎ 2072 1655; <http://tungshin.com.my>; 102 Jln Pudu)

**Twin Towers Medical Centre KLCC** (Map p96; ☎ 2382 3500; [www.ttmcklcc.com.my](http://www.ttmcklcc.com.my); Level 4, Suria KLCC, Jln Ampang; ☎ 8.30am-6pm Mon-Sat)

## Money

You'll seldom be far from a bank/ATM. Moneychangers offer better rates than banks for changing cash and (at times) travellers cheques; they're usually open later hours and on weekends and are found in shopping malls.

## Post

Following are details for the main post office, and other useful branches around town.

**Little India** (Map pp92-3; Jln TAR) Near the crossing with Jln Sultan Ismail.

**Main post office** (Map p100; Jln Raja Laut; ☎ 8.30am-6pm Mon-Sat, closed 1st Sat of month) Across the river from the Central Market. Has poste restante and packaging is available for reasonable rates at the post-office store.

**Sungei Wang Plaza** (Map p96; 3rd fl, Jln Sultan Ismail)

**Suria KLCC** (Map p96; basement, Suria KLCC, Jln Ampang)

## Telephone & Fax

Many internet cafes offer competitive net-phone and fax services.

**Telekom Malaysia** (Map p100; Jln Raja Chulan; ☎ 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-12.30pm Sat) You can make international calls and send faxes.

## Tourist Information

**Malaysian Tourist Centre** (MaTiC; Map p96; ☎ 9235 4900; www.mtc.gov.my; 109 Jln Ampang; ☎ 8am-10pm) Housed in a mansion built in 1935 for rubber and tin tycoon Eu Tong Seng, and almost a tourist attraction in its

own right, this is KL's most useful tourist office; it hosts good cultural performances (see p122).

**Tourism Malaysia** (www.tourismmalaysia.gov.my) KL Sentral (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2274 5823; ☎ 9am-6pm); Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA; ☎ 8776 5651; International Arrival Hall, Sepang); Putra World Trade Centre (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2615 8188; Level 17, 45 Jln Tun Ismail; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Sat)

## SIGHTS

Six-lane highways and flyovers may slice up the city, but even so, the best way to get a feel for KL's vibrant atmosphere is to walk. The city centre is surprisingly compact – from Chinatown to Little India takes little more than 10 minutes on foot – and some sights are so close together that it's often quicker to walk than take public transport or grab a cab (which can easily become snarled in traffic and KL's tortuous one-way system). For a couple of walking routes, see p105. Apart from the major sights listed here, also explore some of the city's eye-boggling shopping malls (p123) – all part of the essential KL experience.

## Golden Triangle

### PETRONAS TOWERS & KLCC

Anchoring the huge Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC) urban development (with a park, convention and shopping centre and world-class concert hall) are the iconic **Petronas Towers** (Map p96; www.petronastwintowers.com.my; KLCC, Jln Ampang). A visit to KL just isn't complete unless you've been here.

## KUALA LUMPUR IN...

### Two Days

Head to **Imbi Market** (p115) for breakfast then move on to the Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC) to secure one of the limited free tickets for the skybridge of the **Petronas Towers** (above). Alternatively head up **Menara KL** (p98) and get your bearings of the city from the revolving restaurant **Seri Angkasa** (p114). Spend the afternoon at the **National Museum** (p102). Go souvenir shopping at the **Central Market** (p123), then explore **Chinatown** (p98), ending up at **Jln Petaling** (p98) for food and the night market.

On day two experience the avian orchestra tuning up in the Lake Gardens' **KL Bird Park** (p101). Cool down inside the **Islamic Arts Museum** (p102) followed by late-afternoon tea at **Jarcasa Seri Negara** (p112). Enjoy cocktails at **SkyBar** (p120), then trawl the night food stalls of **Jln Alor** (p114).

### Three Days

Start day three with a gentle stroll around **Lake Titiwangsa** (p103) and a visit to the **National Art Gallery** (p103). Amble through the Malay area of **Kampung Baru** (p103) or **Little India** (p102), then take a taxi to the splendid **Thean Hou Temple** (p104). Choose one of the many restaurants in the basement of **Starhill Gallery** (p124) for dinner, followed by a concert at the **Dewan Filharmonik Petronas** (p121) or **No Black Tie** (p121), and a nightcap at **Palate Palette** (p120).



**INFORMATION**

AAM (Automobile Association of Malaysia).....	1	D1
Australian Embassy.....	2	C1
Australian Information Library.....	(see 2)	
Borders.....	(see 88)	
British Council.....	3	B2
Kinokuniya.....	(see 97)	
Malaysian Tourist Centre (MaTiC).....	4	B2
MPH Bookstore.....	(see 87)	
New Zealand Embassy.....	5	B3
Post Office.....	(see 96)	
Post Office.....	(see 97)	
Tung Shin Hospital.....	6	A5
Twin Towers Medical Centre KLCC.....	7	C2

**SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES**

Aquaria KLCC.....	8	C3
Asianel Reflexology Spa.....	(see 94)	
Badan Warisan Malaysia.....	9	D4
Bukit Nanas Forest Reserve.....	(see 14)	
California Fitness.....	(see 91)	
Dewan Filharmonik Petronas.....	(see 97)	
Donna Spa.....	(see 94)	
Fitness First.....	(see 5)	
Fitness First.....	10	C2
Flying Fox Park.....	(see 14)	
Foot Master Dr Fish Spa.....	(see 88)	
Galeri Petronas.....	(see 97)	
Genting Highlands Booking Office.....	11	C4
JoJoBa Spa.....	(see 88)	
KLCC Park.....	12	D3
Lightworks.....	13	B4
Menara KL.....	14	A3
Morino Kaze.....	(see 32)	
Old Asia.....	15	B5
Petronas Towers.....	16	C2
Petrosains.....	(see 97)	
Rumah Penghulu.....	17	D4
Skybridge.....	(see 16)	
Spa Village.....	18	D5
Starhill Spa.....	(see 94)	
Tour 51 Malaysia.....	(see 4)	

**SLEEPING**

41 Berangan.....	19	B4
Alpha Genesis.....	20	B5
Bedz KL.....	21	B5
Bintang Warisan Hotel.....	22	B5
Classic Inn.....	23	C6
Coronade Hotel.....	24	C5
Green Hut Lodge.....	25	B5
Hotel Capitol.....	26	B5
Hotel Istana.....	27	B4
Hotel Maya.....	28	B2
Impiana.....	29	C3
Lodge Paradise Hotel.....	30	C4
Number Eight Guesthouse.....	31	B5
Pacific Regency Hotel Suites.....	(see 72)	

Piccolo Hotel.....	32	C5
Prince Hotel & Residence Kuala Lumpur.....	33	C4
Radius International Hotel.....	34	B5
Red Palm.....	35	B5
Royale Bintang Kuala Lumpur.....	36	B5
Shangri-La Hotel.....	37	B3
Swiss-Garden Hotel.....	38	B5
Traders Hotel Kuala Lumpur.....	39	D3
Trekker Lodge.....	40	B4
Westin Kuala Lumpur.....	41	D4

**EATING**

1+1.....	42	B5
Betty's Café.....	43	C4
Bijan.....	44	A4
Blue Boy Vegetarian Food Centre.....	45	A5
Bunn Choon.....	(see 53)	
Chiaroscuro.....	46	B4
Cold Storage.....	(see 82)	
Crystal Jade La Mian Xiao Long Bao.....	47	C5
El Cerdito.....	(see 48)	
Elcerdo.....	48	B5
Enak.....	(see 94)	
Food Republic.....	(see 92)	
Frangipani.....	49	B5
Frog Porridge Stall.....	50	B5
Hakka.....	51	C4
Ikan Bakar Berempah.....	52	A1
Imbi Market.....	53	D5
Isetan.....	(see 91)	
La Bodega @ Pavillion KL.....	(see 77)	
Little Penang Kafé.....	(see 97)	
Loaf.....	54	C4
Magnificent Fish & Chip Bar.....	55	B4
Mercado.....	(see 92)	
Mythai Jim Thompson.....	(see 71)	
Neroteca.....	56	B4
Nerovivo.....	57	A4
Ngau Kee Beef Ball Noodles.....	58	B5
Rakuzen.....	59	D4
Rasa Food Arena.....	(see 97)	
Restoran Nagansari Curry House.....	60	B4
Sao Nam.....	61	B5
Seri Angkasa.....	(see 14)	
Signatures Food Court.....	(see 97)	
Sisters Popiah.....	(see 53)	
Teluk Intan Chee Cheung Fun.....	(see 53)	
Top Hat.....	62	D3
Twentyone Kitchen & Bar.....	63	B4
Vansh.....	(see 94)	
Warong Perasan.....	64	B1
Werner's on Changkat.....	65	B4
Wong Ah Wah.....	66	B5

Aseana.....	(see 82)	
BB Plaza.....	87	C5
Berjaya Times Square.....	88	C6
iKARTINI.....	(see 97)	
Imbi Plaza.....	89	C5
Jendela.....	(see 94)	
Kompleks Budaya Kraf Lot 10.....	90	D4
Pavilion KL.....	92	C4
Plaza Low Yat.....	93	B5
Pucuk Rebung.....	(see 97)	
Starhill Gallery.....	94	C5
Sunday Market.....	95	B1
Sungei Wang Plaza.....	96	C5
Suria KLCC.....	97	C2

**DRINKING**

Blue Boy.....	67	C4
Ceylon Bar.....	68	B4
Finnegan's.....	69	C4
Frangipani Bar.....	(see 49)	
Green Man.....	70	B4
J Co Donuts & Coffee.....	(see 92)	
Lecka Lecka.....	71	C4
Luk Yu Tea House.....	(see 94)	
Luna.....	72	A3
Olé Café.....	(see 70)	
Palate Palette.....	73	B4
Quattro.....	74	C2
Sixty Nine Bistro.....	75	B6
Skybar.....	(see 39)	
Social.....	(see 55)	
The Apartment Downtown.....	76	C2
Village Bar.....	(see 94)	

**ENTERTAINMENT**

Cloth and Clef.....	(see 55)	
Cosmo's World Theme Park Theatre.....	(see 88)	
Golden Screen Cinemas.....	77	C4
Golden Screen Cinemas.....	(see 92)	
No Black Tie.....	78	B4
Oblique.....	79	B3
Orange Club.....	80	D4
Seri Melayu.....	81	D4
Tanjung Golden Village.....	82	C4
Thermos.....	83	C2
Time Out Comedy Thursday.....	84	B4
Wings.....	85	B6
Zouk.....	86	B2

**SHOPPING**

Aseana.....	(see 82)	
BB Plaza.....	87	C5
Berjaya Times Square.....	88	C6
iKARTINI.....	(see 97)	
Imbi Plaza.....	89	C5
Jendela.....	(see 94)	
Kompleks Budaya Kraf Lot 10.....	90	D4
Pavilion KL.....	92	C4
Plaza Low Yat.....	93	B5
Pucuk Rebung.....	(see 97)	
Starhill Gallery.....	94	C5
Sunday Market.....	95	B1
Sungei Wang Plaza.....	96	C5
Suria KLCC.....	97	C2

**TRANSPORT**

Aeroline.....	98	D1
Avis.....	99	B2
Berjaya Air.....	(see 88)	
Cathay Pacific Airways.....	100	B3
China Airlines.....	101	C5
Garuda Indonesian Airlines.....	102	C1
Hertz.....	103	C3
Japan Airlines.....	104	D1
Lufthansa.....	105	B3
Malaysia Airlines.....	106	B3
Orix.....	107	B5
Royal Brunei Airlines.....	108	B3
Shuttle Bus Stop to Menara KL.....	109	A3
Thai Airways International.....	110	B4
Transtar Travel.....	111	D5



Opened in 1998, the 88-storey steel-clad twin towers rise up 451.9m. They are the headquarters of the national oil and gas company Petronas (p47) and also house several other companies, as well as Al Jazeera's Asian broadcasting centre. Designed by Argentinian architect Cesar Pelli, the twin towers' floor plan is based on an eight-sided star that echoes arabesque patterns. Islamic influences are also evident in each tower's five tiers – representing the five pillars of Islam – and in the 63m masts that crown them, calling to mind the minarets of a mosque and the Star of Islam.

The highest you can go is the 41st-floor **Skybridge** (Map p96; ☎ 9am-1pm & 2.30-7pm Tue-Sun) connecting the two towers, a modest 170m above ground. Only 1640 free tickets are issued daily, so be in line at the ticket counter in the basement as soon as you can after it opens at 8.30am to ensure your place. Also avoid visiting on weekends and public holidays.

Apart from shopping or dining in the Suria KLCC (p123) at the base of the towers, there are still plenty of other things of interest. The spacious **KLCC park** (Map p96) has a great kids' playground, paddling pools and synchronised fountains. All the family will enjoy both the interactive science discovery centre **Petrosains** (Map p96; ☎ 2331 8181; www.petrosains.com.my; Level 4, Suria KLCC; adult/child RM12/4; ☎ 9.30am-4pm Tue-Fri, 9.30am-5pm Sat, Sun & holidays) and the well-stocked **Aquaria KLCC** (Map p96; ☎ 2333 1888; www.klaquaria.com; Concourse Level, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre; adult/child RM38/26; ☎ 11am-8pm) where you can view sand tiger sharks and giant groupers in a 90m-long underwater tunnel.

**Galeri Petronas** (Map p96; ☎ 2051 7770; www.galeripetronas.com; 3rd fl, Suria KLCC; admission free; ☎ 10am-8pm Tue-Sun) offers top-class exhibitions of contemporary photography and paintings. Consider booking a ticket for a classical-music concert in the Dewan Filharmonik Petronas (p121) to see inside the beautiful state-of-the-art hall.

### MENARA KL & BUKIT NANAS FOREST RESERVE

Built atop the **Bukit Nanas Forest Reserve**, the 421m **Menara KL** (KL Tower; Map p96; ☎ 2020 5448; www.menaraku.com.my; 2 Jln Puncak; adult/child RM38/28; ☎ 9am-10pm; last tickets up 9.30pm) easily trumps the Petronas Towers when it comes to providing

the highest view you're going to get of the city, bar chartering a helicopter. The tower's bulbous pinnacle is inspired by a Malaysian spinning top and, inside, the **viewing deck** is, at 276m, at least 100m higher than the Petronas Towers' skybridge. One floor higher, you can have a meal or afternoon tea at the revolving restaurant **Seri Angkasa** (p114).

A **shuttle bus** (free; ☎ 9am-9.30pm) runs up every 15 minutes to the tower from the gate on Jln Puncak opposite the PanGlobal building. Alternatively get a workout climbing the short and well-labelled nature trails that run through the lowland dipterocarp forest reserve, which you can either explore alone or on a free guided tour starting from the entrance to the tower at 11am, 12.30pm, 2.30pm and 4.30pm daily and lasting about 45 minutes. There are also good displays and leaflets in the **Forest Information Centre** (Map p100; ☎ 2026 4741; www.forestry.gov.my; Jln Raja Chulan; ☎ 9am-5pm) at the base of the hill.

Also at the entrance to the tower, sign up for the **Flying Fox Park** (Map p96; ☎ 2020 5145; www.aj-hackett.com; adult/child R30/15; ☎ 11am-7pm) if you fancy being strapped in a harness and sent flying down a 100m wire rope stung down one side of the hill.

### BADAN WARISAN MALAYSIA & RUMAH PENGHULU

Find out about the work of built heritage preservation society **Badan Warisan Malaysia** (Heritage of Malaysia Trust; Map p96; ☎ 2144 9273; www.badanwarisan.org.my; 2 Jln Stonor; ☎ 10am-5.30pm Mon-Sat) at its head office in a 1925 colonial bungalow in the shadow the Petronas Towers. The property's grounds contain the **Rumah Penghulu**, a handsome example of a restored Malay-style wooden house from Kedah. Tours of the house are held at 11am and 3pm Monday to Saturday (suggested donation of RM5). The trust also holds exhibitions in the bungalow, where you'll find a good bookshop and an excellent gift store stocking wooden antique furniture and local handcrafted items.

### Chinatown & Merdeka Square

Just strolling around bustling Chinatown, with its daily market along Jln Petaling, is an experience (p105). Immediately northwest is Merdeka Square, the heart of colonial KL.

### JALAN PETALING

The commercial heart of Chinatown is one of the most colourful and busiest shopping

## PROTECTING THE PAST: ELIZABETH CARDOSA

Malaysia's National Heritage Act is supposed to protect outstanding pieces of the nation's architecture, but with development rampant it doesn't always work, as proved by the destruction of KL's historic Bok House in 2006. Fighting to save other heritage buildings is Elizabeth Cardosa, Executive Director of Badan Warisan Malaysia, a nongovernmental organization that is Malaysia's equivalent of the UK's National Trust.

**What does Badan Warisan do?** Its principal aim is to promote the preservation of Malaysia's built heritage. We do this in a number of ways – by advocacy, trying to have an impact on official policy from top-level government down to the local level; by influencing public opinion through our publications; and by education – going into schools and getting people involved at the community level. We also provide practical conservation and heritage consultancy services.

**What are among your successes?** As lead conservation consultants, we recently won a Unesco award for excellence for our work on restoring Stadium Merdeka (Map p100) – it was purpose built for the declaration of independence in 1957 and is the only building of its type in Southeast Asia. We're managing 8 Hereen St in Melaka (p243), where we've also designed a walking tour highlighting the city's endangered trades. We're also hoping to take over the management of the recently restored Suffolk House in Penang (p187).

**What's on the danger list?** More modest buildings that form part of the streetscape – alone they may not be outstanding, but together they define the character of the area. For example, plans are afoot to redevelop part of Kampung Baru (p103) – local government has an area plan but there's a lot of conflict resolution needed to get an outcome that pleases everyone. It's hard getting the conservation message across, that such buildings have a value for society. For droughts or air pollution, these are problems that affect and resonate with everyone. But when it comes to saving old buildings, unless someone has a personal connection to the structure it's difficult to convince them of the worth of preservation.

parades in KL, particularly at night when stalls cram the covered **street** (Map p100; ☎ 10am-11pm). It offers everything from fresh fruit and cheap clothes and shoes to copies of brand-name watches and handbags, and pirated CDs and DVDs. Be prepared to bargain hard.

### SRI MAHAMARIAMMAN TEMPLE

This large and ornate South Indian Hindu **temple** (Map p100; 163 Jln Tun HS Lee; ☎ 8am-8pm), dating from 1873, houses a large silver chariot that's paraded to the Batu Caves (p131) during the Thaipusam festival in January or February each year. Its polychromatic, deity-clad *gopurum* (entrance gate) was under wraps for renovations when we recently passed by, so it should be looking even more dazzling than ever when you show up.

### SZE YA TEMPLE

Squashed between Jln Tun HS Lee and Lebuhraya Pudu (a position apparently determined by feng shui) is this fascinating Taoist **temple** (Map p100; ☎ 8am-8pm). Its construction was organised in 1864 by 'Kapitan China' Yap Ah Loy (see p91); you can see a small statue of the man to the left of the altar. Near here you

could also go shopping or grab something to eat in the Central Market (p123).

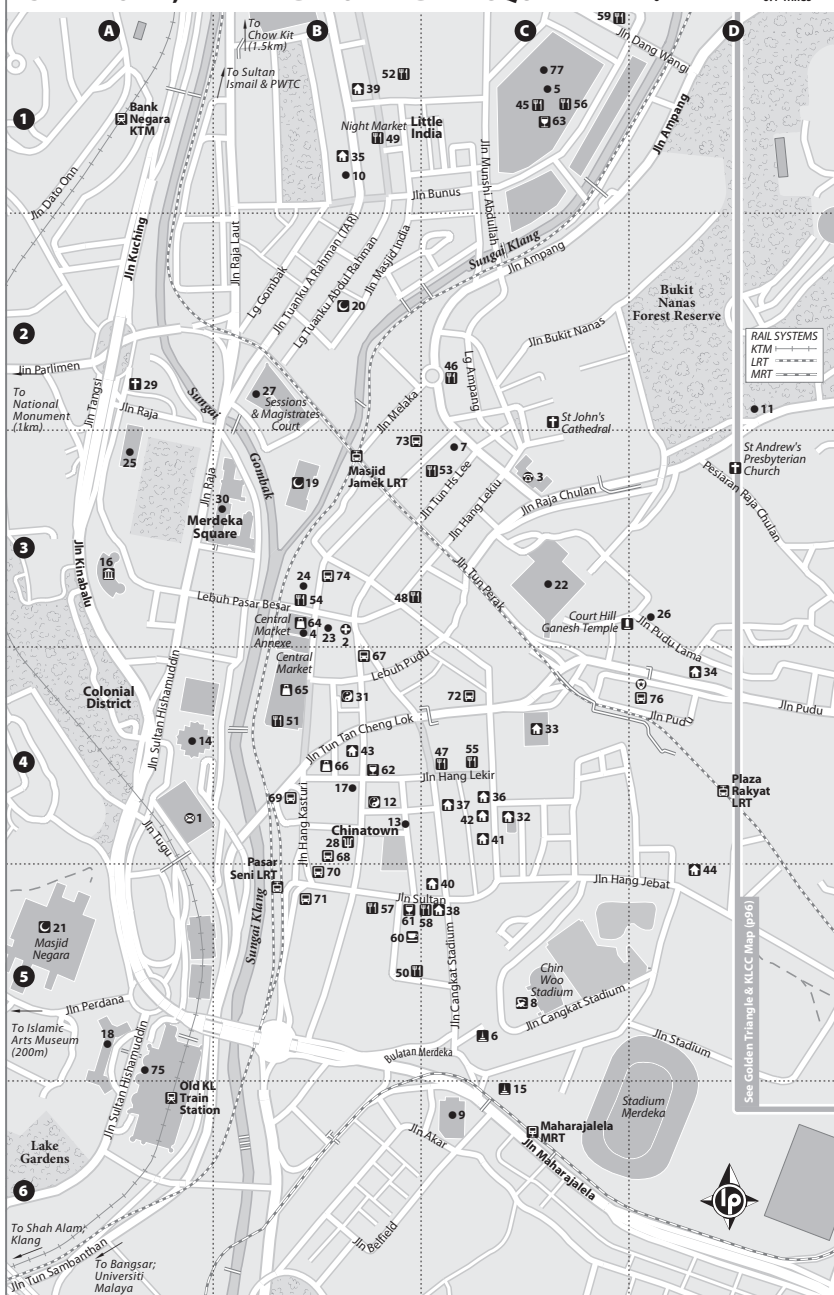
### MERDEKA SQUARE

This one-time cricket field formerly known as the Padang is where Malaysia's independence (Merdeka) was proclaimed at midnight on 31 August 1957. As such it's hallowed ground to many Malaysians and is speared by a 100m-high freestanding flagpole – claimed to be the world's tallest. Crowds gather here for New Year's Eve and on National Day to watch the parades (see p109).

The square is surrounded by a handsome architectural ensemble. On the west side is the **Royal Selangor Club** (Map p100; www.rscweb.my), an extended mock-Tudor building that was the social centre for high society in KL's tin-boom days of the 1890s, and remains a gathering place for the city's elite. It's also where the, now worldwide, running and drinking club the Hash House Harriers kicked off in 1938.

Opposite the club, across Jln Raja Laut, is the fantasy-like **Sultan Abdul Samad Building** (Map p100) with its distinctive copper-plated cupolas. This blend of Victorian, Moorish and Mogul architecture is typical of many of KL's

**CHINATOWN, LITTLE INDIA & MERDEKA SQUARE**



<b>INFORMATION</b>		Sri Mahamariamman Temple.....	28 B4	Sagar.....	52 B1
Main Post Office.....	1 A4	St Mary's Cathedral.....	29 A2	Sangeetha.....	53 C3
MS Ally Company.....	2 B3	Sultan Abdul Samad Building.....	30 B3	Sing Seng Nam.....	54 B3
Telekom Malaysia.....	3 C3	Size Ya Temple.....	31 B4	Tang City Food Court.....	55 C4
<b>SIGHTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>SLEEPING</b>		Thai-la.....	56 C1
C Works Design.....	4 B3	5 Elements Hotel.....	32 C4	UO Supermarket.....	57 B5
CapSquare.....	5 C1	AnCasa Hotel and Spa Kuala Lumpur.....	33 C4	West Lake Restoran.....	58 C5
Chan See Shu Yuen Temple.....	6 C5	Citin Hotel.....	34 D4	Yut Kee.....	59 C1
Chettiar House.....	7 C3	Coliseum Hotel.....	35 B1	<b>DRINKING</b>	
Chin Woo Stadium Swimming Pool.....	8 C5	Grocer's Inn.....	36 C4	Central Market Annexe.....	(see 64)
Chinese Assembly Hall.....	9 C6	Hotel China Town Inn.....	37 C4	Ikopi.....	60 B5
Coliseum Cinema.....	10 B1	Hotel Lok Ann.....	38 C5	OM.....	(see 64)
Forest Information Centre.....	11 D2	Hotel Noble.....	39 B1	Purple Cane Tea House.....	(see 60)
Going Places Tours.....	(see 41)	Lee Mun Guest House.....	40 C5	Purple Cane Tea Shop.....	61 B5
Guandi Temple.....	12 B4	Original Backpackers Travellers Inn.....	41 C4	Reggae Bar.....	62 B4
Jalan Sang Guna.....	13 B4	Swiss-Inn.....	42 C4	Urban Attic.....	63 C1
Kompleks Dayabumi.....	14 A4	Wheelers Guest House.....	43 B4	<b>SHOPPING</b>	
Koon Yam Temple.....	15 C6	YWCA.....	44 D5	Annexe Gallery.....	64 B3
Kuala Lumpur Memorial Library.....	16 A3	<b>EATING</b>		Central Market.....	65 B4
Lee Rubber Building.....	17 B4	Betty's Café.....	45 C1	Peter Hoe Beyond.....	(see 17)
Little India Pasar Malam (Night Market).....	(see 49)	Bilal Restoran.....	46 C2	Peter Hoe Evolution.....	66 B4
Malayan Railway Administration Building.....	18 A5	Boe Jet Kei.....	(see 55)	<b>TRANSPORT</b>	
Masjid Jamek.....	19 B3	Central Market Food Court.....	(see 65)	Bangkok Bank Bus Stop.....	67 B4
Masjid Little India.....	20 B2	Coliseum Café.....	(see 35)	Bus Information Booth.....	68 B4
Masjid Negara.....	21 A5	Ikan Panggang Stall.....	47 C4	Central Market Bus Stop.....	69 B4
Menara Maybank.....	22 C3	Khukri.....	48 B3	Jalan Sultan Mohammed Bus Stop.....	70 B5
OCBC Building.....	23 B3	Little India Pasar Malam (Night Market).....	49 B1	Klang Bus Station.....	71 B5
Painted Shophouses.....	24 B3	Old China Café.....	50 B5	Kota Raya Bus Stop.....	72 C4
Royal Selangor Club.....	25 A3	Precious.....	51 B4	Lebuh Ampang Bus Stop.....	73 B3
Senjakala.....	26 D3	Purple Cane Tea Restaurant.....	(see 9)	Medan Pasar Bus Stop.....	74 B3
Sessions & Magistrates Court.....	27 B2			Nice Coaches.....	(see 75)
				Plusliner.....	75 A5
				Puduraya Bus Station.....	76 D4
				Singapore Airlines.....	77 C1

colonial buildings. Designed by AC Norman (an associate of AB Hubbock, architect of the KL Train Station) and built between 1894 and 1897, it was once the Secretariat Building for the British administration and now houses a branch of Malaysia's High Court. It looks particularly attractive at night when fairy lights illuminate its exterior.

At the square's north end are low **memorial arches** inscribed with 'Dataran Merdeka' (Merdeka Sq) and across the road is another of AC Norman's creations, **St Mary's Cathedral** (Map p100), dating from 1894 and housing a fine pipe-organ dedicated to Sir Henry Gurney, the British high commissioner to Malaya, assassinated in 1951 during the Emergency (see p37).

## Lake Gardens & Around

Southwest of Chinatown, Lake Gardens – 92-hectares of landscaped hillside gardens originally laid out by the British – seems cut off by railway lines and highways, but it is possible to walk here: take the pedestrian bridge

across from the Central Market to Kompleks Dayabumi and then head south around the back of the post office to the underpass leading to the Masjid Negara.

Alternatively, the KL Hop-On-Hop-Off Bus (p109) stops at Masjid Negara, KL Bird Park, the National Monument and the National Museum. Once in the Lake Gardens you're at the mercy of taxi drivers, who insist on charging RM15 to RM18 to cover the short distance back to the city and refuse to use the meter.

## KL BIRD PARK

The highlight of the Lake Gardens is undoubtedly the **KL Bird Park** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2272 1010; www.klbirdpark.com; adult/child RM39/29; 🕒 9am-6pm), the world's largest walk-in aviary with some 200 (mostly Southeast Asian) species of birds. Check the website for different birds' feeding times throughout the day. The park's **Hornbill Restaurant** (Map pp92-3 ☎ 2693 8086; 🕒 9am-10pm) is also good for an inexpensive feed, its balcony providing a great view into the treetops.

### ISLAMIC ARTS MUSEUM

Containing one of the best collections of Islamic decorative arts in the world is KL's outstanding **Islamic Arts Museum** (Muzium Kesenian Islam Malaysia; Map pp92-3; ☎ 2274 2020; www.iamm.org.my; Jln Lembah Perdana; adult/child RM12/6; ☎ 10am-6pm). Aside from the quality of the exhibits, which include fabulous textiles, carpets, jewellery, calligraphy-inscribed pottery and an amazing reconstruction of an ornate Ottoman room, the building itself is a stunner, with beautifully decorated domes and glazed tilework. There's a Lebanese restaurant offering a set lunch (RM43; closed Monday) and a well-stocked shop selling beautiful high-quality crafts products and art books.

### NATIONAL MUSEUM

A major renovation and creation of an entirely new gallery has breathed new life into the **National Museum** (Muzium Negara; Map pp92-3; ☎ 2282 6255; www.muziumnegara.gov.my; Jln Damansara; adult/child RM2/free; ☎ 9am-6pm), which is packed with interesting displays on Malaysia's history, economy, arts, crafts and various cultures. It's worth timing your visit to coincide with one of the free **guided tours** (English 11am Tue, Thu & Sat; French 9am & noon Thu). The building has a distinctive Minangkabau-styled roof and two beautiful front murals made of Italian mosaic glass depicting Malaysian life. A walkway over the highway connects the museum with the southern stretch of the Lake Gardens.

### LAKE GARDENS

Elsewhere in the Lake Gardens you'll find thousands of butterflies fluttering through the **Taman Rama Rama** (Butterfly Park; Map pp92-3; ☎ 2693 4799; Jln Cendarasari; adult/child RM15/8, to take photos extra RM1; ☎ 9am-6pm). Exit through an insect gallery and marvel at the size of the spiders awaiting you in the Cameron Highlands.

Nearby are the **Taman Orkid** (Orchid Garden; Map pp92-3; admission free; ☎ 9am-6pm) and the adjacent **Taman Bunga Raya** (Hibiscus Garden; Map pp92-3; admission free; ☎ 9am-6pm).

The quirky **National Planetarium** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2273 5484; 53 Jln Perdana; admission RM1; ☎ 10am-4pm Tue-Sun) shows short generic international science films (RM1 to RM6) in the theatre at regular intervals throughout the day. It's an interesting place to take children for a fun educational experience.

In the garden's northern quarter the massive **National Monument** (Map pp92-3), sculpted

in bronze in 1966 by Felix de Weldon, the creator of the Iwo Jima monument in Washington, DC, commemorates the communist defeat in 1950.

At the centre of the gardens lies **Tasik Perdana** (Premier Lake). You can rent boats on weekends and watch t'ai chi practitioners in the early morning.

West of lake and accessed via Persiaran Mahameru is the luxury hotel **Carcosa Seri Negara** (p112), which was once the official residence of the British government representative.

### MASJID NEGARA

The contemporary-styled **Masjid Negara** (National Mosque; Map p100; Jln Perdana; ☎ 9am-12.30pm, 2-3.30pm & 5-6.30pm) is distinguished by a spikey 73m-high minaret and star-shaped main dome, its 18 points symbolising the 13 states of Malaysia and the five pillars of Islam. The overall design was inspired by the Grand Mosque in Mecca. To go inside you must remove your shoes and dress appropriately (no shorts or skimpy clothing).

### KL TRAIN STATION

The British architect AB Hubbock's Moorish and Mogul-inspired fantasy, **Kuala Lumpur Station** (Map p100) dates from 1911. Sadly, the station is looking shabby and forlorn especially since KL Sentral took over most of its services. This said, it's still a visually handsome building and is best seen from the forecourt of the superb **Malayan Railway Administration Building** (Map p100) opposite; step inside this building to admire the soaring central stairwell. An underpass from here leads you across the busy highway to inside the station where KTM Komuter trains still stop.

### Little India & Around

Little India is another area that is best explored on foot (see p107). The best time to visit is late Saturday afternoon when Lg TAR fills up with the area's **pasar malam** (Map p100; night market; ☎ 4pm-midnight).

A new focus of the area is **CapSquare** (Map p100; www.capsquare.com.my), an attractive complex for business, residential and entertainment purposes bordered by Jln Munshi Abdullah, Jln Dang Wangi and the muddy Sungai Kelang (Kelang River) – head here on the first and third weekends of the month

for a bazaar featuring food, fashion and interesting knick-knacks.

Yet to open at the time of research but looking very promising is the **Bank Negara Malaysia Museum & Art Gallery** (Map pp92-3; <http://museum.bnm.gov.my>), located in a futuristically designed metal-clad complex west of Jln Kuching and within walking distance of Bank Negara train station.

### LOKE MANSION

Rescued from the brink of dereliction by the law firm Cheang & Ariff, **Loke Mansion** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2691 0803; [www.cheangariff.com](http://www.cheangariff.com); 273A Jln Medan Tuanku) was once the home of self-made tin tycoon Loke Yew, although the original part of the structure was built in the 1860s by another rich merchant Cheow Ah Yeok. The Japanese high command also set up base here in 1942. After years of neglect, the mansion has been beautifully restored; it's possible to gain access by appointment only, although there's nothing to stop you walking by and admiring the whitewashed exterior.

### MASJID JAMEK

Set in a grove of palm trees is KL's most delightful mosque, **Masjid Jamek** (Friday Mosque; Map p100; off Jln Tun Perak; ☎ 8.30am-12.30pm & 2.30-4pm, closed 11am-2.30pm Fri). Built in 1907, the mosque is a tranquil creation of onion domes and minarets of layered pink and cream bricks. Designed again by AB Hubbock, who sought inspiration from Mogul mosques in India, it stands at the confluence of the Sungai Klang and Sungai Gombak – where KL's founders first set foot. Dress appropriately if you wish to enter.

### Kampung Baru & Chow Kit KAMPUNG BARU

The charm of this Malay area (Map pp92-3) lies in just wandering the streets. Somehow the district has managed to retain its sleepy village atmosphere in the midst of the city: traditional Malay wooden houses stand amid leafy gardens and people go quietly about their daily lives – with the exception of Saturday night when a lively *pasar malam* (night market) takes over the area close to the Kampung Baru Light Rail Transit (LRT) station.

A stroll in the area could be combined with a visit to Chow Kit Market (right) to the west. Head east along Jln Raja Alang from Jln TAR and you'll soon pass the impressive **Sikh Temple** (Map pp92-3), the largest in Southeast

Asia and spiritual home of KL's 75,000 Sikhs. Further along the road is the focus of the area's Muslim faithful, the **Masjid Kampung Baru** (Map pp92-3), built in 1924, with its gateway decorated in beautiful glazed tiles. Explore the streets around here at the junction with Jln Daud to find many old wooden houses. Even outside of Saturday night, this is a great area to come for tasty home-cooked Malay food at unpretentious roadside cafes and stalls.

### CHOW KIT MARKET

It's sensory overload at this lively **market** (Map pp92-3; 469-473 Jln TAR; ☎ 6am-8pm), where tightly jammed stalls sell clothes, toys, buckets, stationary, noodles, spices, fresh meat and live, flapping fish, as well as a staggering array of weird and wonderful tropical fruit. Shops in the lanes around the market, particularly Jln Haji Hussein, specialise in made-to-order *songkok*, the traditional Malay-style fez.

### Northern Kuala Lumpur LAKE TITIWANGSA

For a picture-postcard view of the city skyline head to Lake Titiwangsa (Map pp92-3) and the relaxing park that surrounds it. If you're feeling energetic, hire row boats, pedal boats and canoes (per hour from RM3) to glide across the lake, or go for a jog. The park is a favourite spot for courting Malaysian couples – and religious police on the lookout for improper behaviour!

Lake Titiwangsa is an 800m walk east of the Titiwangsa monorail station. Buses 101, 102 and 103 run between Titiwangsa and Medan Pasar, while bus 104 runs here from KLCC.

### NATIONAL ART GALLERY

Squashed between Jln Tun Razak and the park is the worthwhile **National Art Gallery** (Balai Seni Lukis Negara; Map pp92-3; ☎ 4026 7000; [www.artgallery.org.my](http://www.artgallery.org.my); 2 Jln Temerloh, off Jln Tun Razak; admission free; ☎ 10am-6pm). A striking mural, Graffiti, by Mahadhir Masri, covers the walkway wall leading up the gallery, the interior of which is dominated by a swirly Guggenheim Museum-style staircase. Among the works to look out for in the gallery's permanent collection, which was only started in 1958, are paintings by Zulkifi Moh'd Dohalan, Wong Hoi Cheong, Ahad Osman and the renowned batik artist Chuah Than Teng. The gallery also hosts many temporary exhibitions.

## ISTANA BUDAYA

Looming over the gallery is its neighbour, the **Istana Budaya** (National Theatre; see p122), with its blue-tiled roof reminiscent of an enormous piece of origami. Designed by Mohammed Ka'amur Yaakub, the building's giant roof is based on a traditional Malay floral decoration of betel leaves, while its footprint resembles a *wau bulan* (moon kite). Every Saturday from 6pm to 11pm, there's the Laman Santai – free live music and dance performances staged in front of the theatre – along with cheap food stalls.

## Southern Kuala Lumpur

### THEAN HOU TEMPLE

Off Jln Syed Putra, the multilayered and highly ornate **Thean Hou Temple** (off Map pp92-3; ☎ 2274 7088; www.hainanet.com; 65 Persiaran Endah; admission free; ☎ 9am-6pm) is one of the most visually impressive in Malaysia. It's dedicated to the Heavenly Mother, Thean Hou. Her statue takes centre stage in the main hall, with Guanyin (the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy) on her right and Shuiwei Shengniang (the Goddess of the Waterfront) to her left. Statues of Milefo (the laughing Buddha), Weituo and Guandi further contribute to this Taoist/Buddhist hodgepodge.

There are great views from the temple's upper decks, while at its base are tourist restaurants and shops. To reach the temple, 3km south of the centre of town, either take a taxi or bus 27 or 52 from Klang bus station (Map p100) and then walk up the hill (ask to be dropped off near the temple). Another route is to take the monorail to Tun Sambanthan station, cross Jln Syed Putra using the overpass and walk up the hill.

### BRICKFIELDS

Dragons fly off the corners of the **Sam Kow Tong Temple** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2274 1239; 16 Jln Thambapillai), just around the corner from the monorail terminus in Brickfields, making for a striking contrast with the soaring hotel towers above KL Sentral.

Other interesting buildings to be seen in this distinctly Indian area include the Buddhist Pagoda (see Meditation, p108), the Temple of Fine Arts (p108), and Wei-Ling Gallery (p122).

## PUDU MARKET

Arrive early to experience KL's largest wet (produce) **market** (Map pp92-3; Jln Pasar Baharu; ☎ 6am-2pm) at its most frantic. Here you can get every imaginable type of fruit, vegetable, fish and meat – from the foot of a chicken slaughtered and butchered on the spot to a stingray fillet or a pig's penis. Attached is Pusat Makanan Peng Hwa, an old-fashioned 24-hour food court where you can join locals and market traders wolfing down rice porridge, noodle soup or chicken rice (all under RM10).

The market is five minutes' walk from Pudu LRT station; from the station go south along Jln Pudu, right onto Jln Pasar, then right down Jln Pasar Baharu, passing the colourful **Choon Wan Kong** (Map pp92-3), a Chinese temple dating from 1879.

## ACTIVITIES

### Gyms & Yoga

Many gyms have classes including yoga. Enquire about short-term membership deals for the gyms; these can work out far cheaper than the usual day-rate of RM50.

**California Fitness** (Map p96; ☎ 2145 1000; www.californiafitness.com; Lot 10, 50 Jln Sultan Ismail; ☎ 6.30am-midnight Mon-Fri, 8am-8pm Sat & Sun) Also branches at Mid Valley and Sunway Pyramid.

**Fitness First** (Map p96; ☎ 2711 3299; www.fitnessfirst.com.my; Wisma SPK, 22 Jln Sultan Ismail; ☎ 6.30am-11pm Mon-Fri, 7am-7pm Sat & Sun) It also has a branch in Menara Maxis at the KLCC (Map p96).

**Lightworks** (Map p96; ☎ 2143 2966; www.lightworks.com.my; 19 Jln Mesui) New Age centre that offers hatha yoga classes with an expat instructor. Drop-in classes are R50 per session and are held Tuesday at noon or Wednesday at 7pm.

**Vivekananda Ashram** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2272 5051; 220 Jln Tun Sambanthan, Brickfields) This historic Indian ashram is part of the global Ramakrishna movement. Call for details of kundalini yoga classes.

**Yoga 2 Health** (Map p118; ☎ 2282 3866; www.yoga2health.com.my; 1st fl, 21A Jln Telawi 3, Bangsar Baru) Membership is RM35 and its RM35 per class.

### Spas, Massage Parlours & Reflexology

The top-end spas are competitively priced (anything from around RM150 for a standard massage to RM700 for a three-hour pamper package) but if your budget is limited there are plenty of alternatives. There's an abundance of Chinese massage and reflexology places scattered throughout the city, with a concentration along Jln Bukit Bintang

## QUIRKY KUALA LUMPUR

- Join the **Tugu Drum Circle** at the National Monument (Map pp92–3) in the Lake Gardens from 5.30pm to 8.30pm every Sunday, when they gather to make percussive music.
- Discover a little piece of Japan and beautiful *koi carp* at the **Sentul Park Koi Centre** (Map pp92–3; ☎ 4045 1311; www.sentulpark-koi.com; Jln Strachan; ☹ 9am–6pm).
- Catch the changing of the guards on the hour outside the gates of the **Istana Negara** (Map pp92–3; Jln Istana).
- Check out the ‘**space rocks**’ and **scale model of Stonehenge** on the way to the Planetarium in the Lake Gardens (p102).
- Have your fortune told, along with a bubble tea or mango shake, at the **Sixty Nine Bistro** (p119).
- Go paddling at KL’s numerous ‘fish spas’ (p107).

(Map p96), south of BB Plaza. The pricing is fairly consistent (an hour-long full-body massage RM65), but because of the intense competition, you can usually bargain this down to about RM50. In Brickfields there are several operations manned by blind masseurs along Jln Thambapillai; here the rates can drop as low as RM40 per hour. Expect to pay no more than RM30 for 30 minutes of foot reflexology.

**Asianel Reflexology Spa** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 1397; www.asianel.com; Pamper Level, Starhill Gallery, 181 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☹ 10am–10pm) Upmarket reflexology spa RM148 for foot, shoulder and neck massage.

**Donna Spa** (☎ 2141 8999; www.donnaspa.net) One of many massage operations on the same floor as Asianel, Donna Spa is Balinese style.

**JoJoba Spa** (Map p96; ☎ 2141 7766; www.jojoba.com.my; 15th fl, East Wing Tower, Berjaya Times Sq, 1 Jln Imbi; ☹ 11am–midnight) Claims to be Malaysia’s largest tourist spa.

**Old Asia** (Map p96; ☎ 2143 9888; 14 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☹ 10am–10pm) One of the more pleasantly designed places on the strip, offering spa treatments as well as massages.

**Senjakala** (Map p100; ☎ 2031 8082; www.senjakala.com; 20 Jln Pudu Lama; ☹ noon–10pm) Tastefully designed men-only spa. Treatment options include barbering and body-hair trimming. Discount available for massage and scrub packages on Tuesday and Thursday.

**Spa Village** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 8000; Ritz Carlton Hotel, 168 Jln Imbi; ☹ 8am–9pm) Indoor and outdoor beauty and massage treatments, a sensory room, and a second outdoor pool with waterfalls. Health club facilities include 24-hour fitness centre, sauna, steam room and whirlpool.

**Starhill Spa** (Map p96; ☎ 2719 8342; www.ytlhotels.com; Starhill Gallery, Jln Bukit Bintang; ☹ 6.30am–10pm

Mon–Sat, to 8pm Sun) Award-winning spa and gym featuring more than 40 bath and body treatments.

## Swimming

Better for splashing around rather than swimming is the Sunway Lagoon (p138).

**Bangsar Sports Complex** (off Map p118; ☎ 2284 6065; 3 Jln Terasek Tiga, Bangsar Baru; admission RM3; ☹ 9.30am–noon, 2–4.30pm, 6–8.30pm, closed Sun mornings) Twenty-five-metre pool, which can get crowded. Also has tennis courts, and squash and badminton facilities.

**Chin Woo Stadium Swimming Pool** (Map p100; off Jln Hang Jebat; adult/child RM4/1.50; ☹ 2–8pm Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm Sat & Sun) Quiet 50m outdoor pool.

## WALKING TOURS

These walking tours of the central KL are a great way to gain an insight into daily city life and the interaction between each of the city’s main ethnic groups.

### Chinatown Walk

Walk south from the station along Jln Benteng, which runs beside the Sungai Klang, across which you’ll get a great view of **Masjid Jamek** (1; p103). When you reach the junction with the south end of Lebuhr Ampang, you’ll be at **Medan Pasar** (2), site of KL’s original market square. In the centre stands a clock tower built in 1937 to commemorate the coronation of King George IV. Note the **painted shophouses** (3), at Nos 2 to 8, dating from 1906; you could pause for breakfast or coffee at **Sing Seng Nam** (4; p115).

Where Medan Pasar meets Lebuhr Ampang, where you’ll see the **OCBC Building** (5), a graceful Art Deco structure built in 1938 for the



Overseas Chinese Banking Company. Turn east along Lebuhs Pasar Besar, to the corner with Jln Tun HS Lee, where you'll find **MS Ally Company (6)**, a pharmacy in business since 1909. Twenty metres down Jln Tun HS Lee on your right is the ornate, colourful but time-ravaged **Bank Simpanan Building (7)**, bearing the date 1914.

Cross Lebuhs Pudu, turn right, and after 25m duck left into an alleyway leading to the atmospheric **Sze Ya Temple (8)**; p99), KL's oldest Taoist temple. Note the two gilded sedan chairs, dating from 1893 and encased in glass, flanking the temple's main entrance.

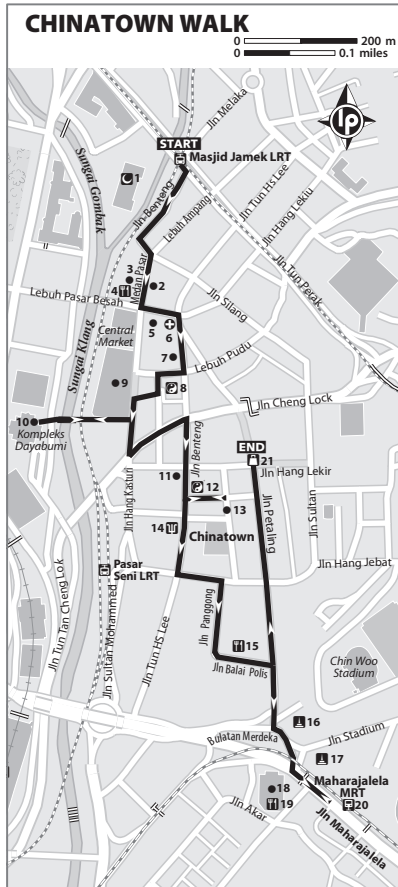
Exit the way you came in, cross the street and walk through the alley opposite the **Central Market (9)**; p123). Previously the city's produce market, the Central Market, designed by TY Lee, is a fine Art Deco building that was saved by preservationists and refurbished as a centre for handicraft, antique and art sales, as well as a venue for art exhibitions and cultural shows.

Use the pedestrian bridge over the Sungai Klang to get a closer look at the 35-storey marble-clad **Kompleks Dayabumi (10)**. Designed by Nik Mohammed, the previous headquarters of Petronas is one of KL's most graceful buildings, with Islamic arches and recurring motifs.

Return to the southern end of Central Market. Head a short distance south, turn left onto Jln Cheng Lock, then right onto Jln Tun HS Lee. The shophouses along here are among Chinatown's oldest; note the unique feature of a 5ft way (pavement) lower than the road level. The competing scents of dried fish, herbs and fresh flowers hit you as you continue down to the junction with Jln Hang Lekir. On the south corner is the pale yellow-painted Art Deco-styled **Lee Rubber Building (11)**, occupied by Popular bookstore on the ground floor.

Further south along Jln Tun HS Lee, you won't miss the bright-red, incense-wreathed **Guandi Temple (12)**, which is also known as the Kwong Siew Free School. The figure at the rear of the temple is Guandi – the Taoist God of War – and on the altar in front of him are an impressive sword and halberd. Next door, duck into **Jln Sang Guna (13)**, a covered arcade housing Chinatown's atmospheric wet- and fresh-produce market.

Having taken note of the fish, pigs' trotters and tofu at the market, return to Jln Tun HS Lee to admire the 22m-high gate tower to the **Sri Mahamariamman Temple (14)**; p99), and to breathe in the sweet jasmine of the flower sellers outside. Continue south after exploring the temple to Jln Sultan, where you turn left and then right onto Jln Panggong, which sweeps around into Jln Balai Polis; along here is **Old China Café (15)**; p115), one of the nicest places to eat in Chinatown.



### WALK FACTS

**Start** Masjid Jamek LRT station

**Finish** Maharajalela MRT station or Jln Petaling

**Distance** 1.6km

**Duration** 1½ hours

### FEEDING THE DOCTOR FISH

Often combined with foot reflexology operations, fish spas are all the rage in KL and bring a new meaning to feeding the fish. Immerse your feet in a tank filled with the small *Garra rufa* and *Cyprinion macrostomus*, also known as Doctor Fish, and allow the flapping podiatrists to gently nibble away at the dead skin. It's an initially ticklish, but not wholly unpleasant, experience lasting 30 minutes (or as long as you can stand it!).

Among the places you can sample this service, which costs RM20 to RM30, are the KLCC aquarium (see p98) and the following:

**Foot Master Dr Fish Spa** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 3319; 6th fl, Berjaya Times Square; 🕒 10am-10pm)

**Morino Kaze** (Map p96; www.morinokaze.com.my; ☎ 2141 1916; 2nd fl Piccolo Galleria, 101 Jln Bukit Bintang;

🕒 1pm-1am) They also have a branch in Bangsar Baru (Map p118; ☎ 2288 1916; 9 Jln Telawi 3, Bangsar Baru;

🕒 noon-midnight).

Don't stop yet, though, as there are a couple more temples to check out further south around the busy traffic roundabout of Bulatan Merdeka: the ornate ancestral **Chan See Shu Yuen Temple (16)** and, across Jln Stadium, the **Koon Yam (Guanyin) Temple (17)**, dedicated to the Goddess of Mercy. The central effigy inside is Sakyamuni, to whose right is a statue of the South Sea Guanyin (complete with flashing halo); to Sakyamuni's left is a Qianshou (Thousand Arm) Guanyin.

Over the footbridge is the **Chinese Assembly Hall (18)**; plays and musical performances occasionally happen here, and at the back is the **Purple Cane Tea Restaurant (19)**; p115).

The **Maharajalela monorail station (20)** is close by if you want to finish your walk here. However, if it's evening, return to **Jln Petaling (21)** to experience the visceral excitement of the night market.

### Little India Walk

Starting from Masjid Jamek LRT Station walk one block southeast to Lebu Ampang. This atmospheric street, lined with moneychangers, Indian cafes, and street vendors selling Indian sweets and flower garlands, has long been the preserve of the Chettiers from South India. Note the striking **old shophouses (1)** at Nos 16 to 18 and Nos 24 to 30, and the ceramic peacock tiles on the **Chettiar House (2)** at No 85.

Return to the station, next to which you'll find the **Masjid Jamek (3)**; p103). If you're dressed appropriately, enter the compound to experience the calm core of this pretty mosque. Next to the mosque on the corner of Jln Tun Perak and Jln Tuanku Abdul Rahman (TAR) is the Mogul-inspired **Sessions and Magistrates Courts (4)** building.

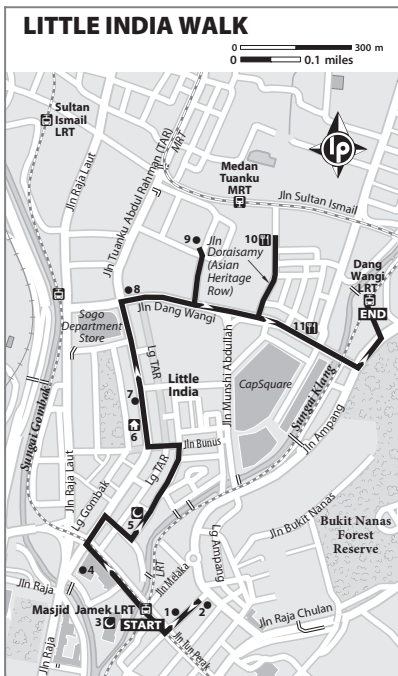
Turn right onto Jln TAR, then turn right again onto Jln Melayu and proceed towards the covered arcade of market stalls at the pedestrianised end of Jln Masjid India. Pick your way through the tightly packed stalls to find the Indian Muslim-style mosque **Masjid India (5)**, after which the street is named. You're now in the thick of KL's Little India, an energetic area defined by its preponderance of sari and scarf stalls, gold jewellers and DVD and CD shops playing Bollywood soundtracks at full blast.

The bazaar-like atmosphere of the streets is enhanced every Saturday from late afternoon when a *pasar malam* (night market) sets up along Lg TAR, the lane sandwiched between Jln TAR and Jln Masjid India.

A colonial relic surviving at the south end of Jln TAR is the **Coliseum Hotel (6)**; p110), where Somerset Maugham once drank; stop here for a reviving beer or even a meal at the Coliseum Café. The Coliseum Cinema next door is of the same era and screens the latest Bollywood extravaganzas, while heading north along Jln TAR you'll pass scores of fabric shops including the Art Deco beauty (highlighted with gold and flamingo pink) at No 126, home of **Euro Moda (7)**.

Another Art Deco movie house, the **Odeon (8)**, is on the corner of Jln Dang Wangi and Jln TAR, opposite Sogo department store. Head east along Jln Dang Wangi, then take the first road on the left: on the next corner, opposite the car park, you'll get a glimpse of the grand colonial era **Loke Mansion (9)**; p103).

The parallel street to the east is Jln Doraisamy, a restored strip of shophouses turned into bars, clubs and restaurants and rebranded Asian Heritage Row. You could grab a coffee and cake at **Bisou (10)**; p116), ending your walk at the nearby Medan Tuanku



### WALK FACTS

**Start** Masjid Jamek LRT station  
**Finish** Medan Tuanku monorail or Dang Wangi LRT station  
**Distance** 1.5km  
**Duration** 1½ hours

monorail stop. It's better, though, to continue down Jln Dang Wangi to the venerable *kopitiam* **Yut Kee** (11, p116) to finish up at Dang Wangi LRT.

## COURSES

Check directly with each of the listings for prices and exact course times and details.

### ARTS & CRAFTS

**C Works Design** (Map p100; ☎ 012-257 2344; Ground fl, Central Market Annex; ☎ 10am-9pm) Paint your own batik panel from RM15. Choose a prepared design or create your own. It also has an outlet at Kompleks Budaya Kraf. **Kompleks Budaya Kraf** (Map p96; ☎ 2162 7533; www.malaysiancraft.com; Jln Conlay; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 7pm Sat & Sun) Try your hand at traditional Malay

crafts such as batik or pottery at the craft village in the grounds of this one-stop crafts complex. See also p123.

**School of Hard Knocks** (off Map pp92-3; ☎ 4145 6122; www.visitorcentre.royalselangor.com; Royal Selangor Pewter Factory, 4 Jln Usahawan 6, Setapak Jaya) This famous pewter centre offers entertaining 30-minute classes where you make your own pewter bowl; advance booking required.

### COOKING

**LaZat Malaysian Home Cooking Class** (☎ 019-238 1198; www.malaysia-klcookingclass.com) Held on Tuesday & Saturday mornings, a 25 min drive from central KL; check the website for the different menus on offer.

**Rohani Jelani** (www.rohanijelani.com) Book online for courses with cookbook author Rohani Jelani in her kitchen out at Sungai Penchala, 10km southwest of KL.

### LANGUAGES

**YMCA** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2274 1439; www.ymcakl.com; 95 Jln Padang Belia, Brickfields) Offers Bahasa Malaysia classes as well as courses studying Thai, Mandarin/Cantonese, and Japanese. You can also study martial arts and different types of dancing here.

### MEDITATION

**Buddhist Maha Vihar** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2274 1141; www.buddhistmahavihara.com; 123 Jln Berhala) Built in the 1800s by Sinhalese Buddhists from Sri Lanka, this Brickfields landmark offers a variety of courses at its institute. Meditation and chanting classes are held daily.

### MUSIC & DANCE

**Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre** (KL Pac; Map pp92-3; ☎ 4047 9060; www.klpac.com; Sentul Park, Jln Strachan) A variety of performing-arts courses are offered here, including courses in traditional instruments such as the gamelan.

**Sutra Dance Theatre** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 4021 1092; www.sutradancetheatre.com; 12 Persiaran Titiwangsa 3, Titiwangsa) Study Odissi and other forms of classical Indian dance at this cultural centre near Taman Tasik Titiwangsa. See also p122.

**Temple of Fine Arts** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2274 3709; www.tfa.org.my; 114-116 Jln Berhala, Brickfields) Offers courses in classical Indian dance, song and music. Stage shows take place here throughout the year.

## KUALA LUMPUR FOR CHILDREN

There are dozens of attractions around KL set up specifically to keep little ones entertained. A good starting point is the Lake Gardens, particularly the KL Bird Park (p101), the Butterfly Park (Taman Rama Rama; p102) and the playground and boating pond in the Lake Gardens Park. The waterfall splash pool in the KLCC Park (p98) is also great for waterbabies,

as is the adjacent adventure playground and the Aquaria KLCC (p98).

Kids will also enjoy KL's malls. Berjaya Times Square (p123) has shops for kids of all ages, plus an indoor theme park. For younger kids, try **Megakidz** (off Map pp92-3; ☎ 2282 9300; [www.megakidz.com.my](http://www.megakidz.com.my); 3rd fl, North Court, Mid Valley Megamall; admission weekday/weekend RM19/25) in the Mid Valley Megamall – there are storytelling sessions, art activities and an indoor adventure playground, and the centre provides a crèche service (RM30 to RM35 for two hours) for kids aged four and over.

There are more theme parks dotted around KL, including the indoor and outdoor parks at Genting Highlands (p132) and the wet and wild park at Sunway Lagoon (p138). For nature activities, head to Zoo Negara (p132) or the canopy walkway at the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (p132).

## TOURS

**Going Places Tours** (Map p100; ☎ 2078 4008; [www.goingplaces-kl.com](http://www.goingplaces-kl.com); Original Backpackers Inn, 60a Jln Sultan, Chinatown) Offers tours tailored to the backpacker market, including adventurous options such as rafting, caving and rock-climbing.

**KL Hop-On Hop-Off** (☎ 2166 6162; [www.myhoponhopoff.com](http://www.myhoponhopoff.com); adult/child RM38/17; 🕒 8.30am-8.30pm) This double-decker air-con tourist bus makes a circuit of the main tourist sites half-hourly throughout the day. Stops include the KLCC, Jln Bukit Bintang, Menara KL, Chinatown, Merdeka Square and the attractions of Lake Gardens. Tickets, which can be bought on the bus, last all day and you can get on and off as often as you like.

**Tour 51 Malaysia** (Map p96; ☎ 2161 8830; MaTiC, 109 Jln Ampang) Runs a decent selection of half-day city tours (RM60) and day trips to places such as Putrajaya, Kuala Selangor and Pulau Ketam (RM150-180).

## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The capital is a good venue for Malaysia's major holidays and festivals, including Chinese New Year and Deepavali; see p470 for more information.

**City Day** KL commemorates becoming a federal territory on 1 February, typically with celebrations at Tasik Perdana and Lake Titivangsa.

**KL Design Week** ([www.kldesignweek.com](http://www.kldesignweek.com)) Events were held at CapSquare, MaTiC, Menara KL, the Annexe Gallery and the National Art Gallery for the inaugural design week in March 2009 – it's a great opportunity to catch up on the latest in design from Malaysia and the region.

**Malaysian Grand Prix** ([www.malaysiangp.com.my](http://www.malaysiangp.com.my)) End March-early April sees special shopping promotions and

other events in the city to accompany the annual Formula 1 race at Sepang (p138).

**KL Festival** ([www.klfestival.org.my](http://www.klfestival.org.my)) July is a month of events showcasing Malaysian art, dance, theatre and music.

**National Day** At midnight on 31 August join the crowds in Merdeka Sq to celebrate the anniversary of Malaysia's independence in 1957. There are parades and festivities the next morning, usually at Commonwealth Stadium.

**Freedom Film Fest** (<http://freedomfilmfest.komas.org>) Local independent film makers get to show their cutting-edge and controversial docs and shorts in this festival with a political/social theme.

**KL International Tower Jump** ([www.kltowerjump.com](http://www.kltowerjump.com)) The only time you'll be able to see people legally flinging themselves off the Menara KL is when the international BASE-jumping fraternity are in town in October.

**KL International Film Festival** ([www.sinemamalaysia.com.my](http://www.sinemamalaysia.com.my)) Catch screenings and symposiums on local and international films in November.

## SLEEPING

KL is awash with both budget and luxury hotels, although many of the cheapies are grubby flea-pits offering windowless boxy rooms, appealing only for their rock-bottom rates. Characterful midrange options are thin on the ground.

Always ask about special deals as practically all midrange and top-end places offer promotions that can substantially slash rack rates. The only time you should book ahead to be sure of accommodation is public holidays, when room discounts will not apply. Chinatown is crammed with budget places (most pretty awful) but there's also a very healthy backpacker scene in the Golden Triangle – this is where you'll find the pick of budget guest-houses and hostels. The best places will fill up quickly, so book ahead. If other locations are full, Little India and the seedy Chow Kit area further north also have plenty of low-priced accommodation, although many places are brothels, or close enough.

In KL budget means hostels offering a dorm bed and budget hotels offering a double room with attached bathroom for under RM100 net; midrange properties have double rooms with attached bathrooms for RM100 to RM400 net; top-end places charge over RM400 to which you'll also need to add 10% service and 5% tax (expressed as ++).

## Budget

### CHINATOWN

**Wheeler's Guest House** (Map p100; ☎ 2070 1386; [www.backpackerskl.com/wheelers.htm](http://www.backpackerskl.com/wheelers.htm); Level 2, 131-133 Jln Tun HS

Lee; dm/r with shared bathroom RM10/25, r with bathroom RM50; (☎) (📶) One of KL's quirkier hostels, Wheeler's has a mini-aquarium, gay-friendly staff and great rooftop terrace where free Friday night dinners are hosted. We also love that it offers home-made yoghurt and muesli for breakfast.

**Original Backpackers Travellers Inn** (Map p100; ☎ 2078 2473; www.backpackerskl.com; 60B Jln Sultan; dm/s/d with shared bathroom RM11/28/30, r with bathroom from RM54; (☎) (📶) The highlight of this long-established and well-run hostel with perfunctory rooms is its rooftop bar where you can get breakfast as well as hook up with fellow travellers. It also runs a travel agency and can arrange a variety of trips (see p109).

**Grocer's Inn** (Map p100; ☎ 2078 7906; www.grocersinn.com.my; 78 Jln Sultan; dm/s/d from RM13/35/45; (☎) (📶) Occupying a handsome century-old building that was once home to the Grocers' Association, this backpackers has a decent range of fan and air-con rooms as well as a rooftop dorm and balconies overlooking Chinatown's bustle. The entrance is in an alley, just off Jln Sultan.

**YWCA** (Map p100; ☎ 2070 1623; ywcamalaysia.org/accommodations\_KL.html; 12 Jln Hang Jebat; s/d/tr with shared bathroom RM30/50/70) A throwback to another generation, this quiet establishment tucked away east of Chinatown offers plain but very acceptable rooms with fan, desk and wardrobe. Only for women, couples and families.

**Hotel China Town Inn** (Map p100; ☎ 2070 4008; www.chinatowninn.com; 52-54 Jln Petaling; r from RM79; (☎) (📶) Even though it's in the thick of Chinatown, a calm atmosphere reigns at this well-managed, good-value hotel. All rooms have attached showers and TV (DVD players can be hired). The more expensive deluxe rooms with windows overlook noisy Jln Petaling market.

Also recommended:

**Lee Mun Guest House** (Map p100; ☎ 2078 0639; 5th fl, 109 Jln Petaling; dm/s/d RM10/25/35; (☎) No-frills cheapie where the cardboard partition walls are covered with a colourful collage of magazine clippings. The entrance is on Jln Sultan.

**Hotel Lok Ann** (Map p100; ☎ 2078 9544; 113A Jln Petaling; s/d RM50/60; (☎) Good value standard hotel, offering clean, spacious rooms with windows, TV, phone and large shower rooms.

## GOLDEN TRIANGLE & KLCC

**Red Palm** (Map p96; ☎ 2143 1279; www.redpalm-kl.com; 5 Tingkat Tong Shin; dm/s/d/tr with breakfast & shared bath-

room RM25/50/70/105; (📶) Its rooms are tiny and separated by thin walls, but with its friendly management and colourful, comfy communal areas Red Palm feels more like a home than a hotel.

**Green Hut Lodge** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 3339; www.thegreenhut.com; 48 Tingkat Tong Shin; dm/s/d with breakfast & shared bathroom RM25/50/65, d with breakfast & bathroom RM90; (☎) (📶) A classic traveller's choice, complete with towel-draped 12-bed dorm, noticeboards and staff that speak Bahasa Backpacker. It's spotless and the jungle mural on the lobby wall is rather eye-catching.

**Trekker Lodge** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 4633; www.trekkerlodge.com; 1-1 Jln Angsoka; dm/s/d with shared bathroom RM25/50/65; d with bathroom RM90; (☎) (📶) In an old apartment block, this place offers pretty much the same deal as the Green Hut Lodge – no surprise, since it's owned by the same people.

**Bedz KL** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 2339; www.bedzkl.com; 58 Changkat Bukit Bintang; dm RM30; (☎) (📶) There are only dorms at this smart new choice, shielded from busy Changkat Bukit Bintang by a grove of bamboo. Rain showers, futsal, plenty of internet terminals and souvenir T-shirts are also part of the package.

**ourpick Classic Inn** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 8648; www.classicinn.com.my; Lorong 1/77A, Changkat Thambi Dollah; dm/s/d R35/88/118; (☎) (📶) Occupying a smartly renovated, yellow-painted shophouse on the southern edge of the Golden Triangle, this is a retro-charming choice with dorms and private rooms (all with windows), a small grassy garden and welcoming staff.

**Lodge Paradise Hotel** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 0122; www.lodgeparadize.com; 2 Jln Tengah; dm/r RM35/100; (P) (☎) (📶) Although its kidney-shaped swimming pool is currently just for show, this revamped hotel in a four-storey 1940s building couldn't be better placed and promises to offer a great deal once its renovation is complete.

## LITTLE INDIA & CHOW KIT

**Ben Soo Homestay** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2691 8096, 012-675 6110; bensoohome@yahoo.com; 2nd fl, 61B Jln Tiong Nam; s/d without air-con RM35/40, with use of air-con RM40/46; (☎) (📶) Down-at-heel but quirkily charming, this homestay offers just two plain clean rooms with wooden floors and shared bathrooms, and the family who runs it is very welcoming.

**Coliseum Hotel** (Map p100; ☎ 2692 6270; 98-100 Jln TAR; s/d RM38/45; (☎) If high-ceilinged rooms with ancient electric switches and furnishings

are your thing, you'll consider staying here money well spent. All bathrooms are shared. Book well in advance, as it's often full.

## BRICKFIELDS

**YMCA** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2274 1439; www.ymca.com; 95 Jln Padang Belia; d/tr RM80/100; 🚽) Close to KL Sentral, the rooms here are spotless and come with TV, telephone and that rarity in a cheap KL hotel: a wardrobe in which to hang your clothes.

## Midrange

### CHINATOWN

**Citin Hotel** (Map p100; ☎ 2031 7777; www.citinhoteles.com; 38 Jln Pudu; r with breakfast from RM145; 🚽 📺) You could hardly get closer to Puduraya bus station, which ensures a steady flow of customers for this cut-above-the-average hotel on an otherwise downmarket strip.

**5 Elements Hotel** (Map p100; ☎ 2031 6888; www.the5elementshotel.com.my; Lot 243 Jln Sultan; s/d from RM149.50/184; 🚽 📺) With rates that include breakfast and a good range of rooms, some with views towards KL Tower, this new hotel makes a credible stab at boutique stylings. We particularly liked the sensuous design motif snaking its way across the corridor and bedroom walls.

**Swiss-Inn** (Map p100; ☎ 2072 3333; www.swissinn.kualalumpur.com; 62 Jln Sultan; d with breakfast from RM150; 🚽 📺) Comfortable, clean and centrally located, this is a justly popular choice. The cheapest rooms are windowless but still appealing, with blonde-wood fittings and pastel coverings over spacious beds.

**AnCasa Hotel and Spa Kuala Lumpur** (Map p100; ☎ 2026 6060; www.ancasa-hotel.com; Jln Tun Tan Cheng Lock; d from RM350; 🚽 📺) Promotions slash the rack rates by more than half at one of Chinatown's best midrange option, which recently added a Balinese-style spa. Comfortable rooms feature satellite TV, small fridge, kettle and in-room safe.

### GOLDEN TRIANGLE

**Number Eight Guesthouse** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 2050; www.numbereight.com.my; 8-10 Tingkat Tong Shin; d with shared bathroom RM90, with bathroom RM120-140, both with breakfast; 🚽 📺) Although it's starting to look a little worn, Number Eight's minimalist design remains super-stylish and its value-for-money rooms, some with TVs and DVD players, leave most competitors standing. It does its bit for the environment with solar-heated water.

**41 Berangan** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 8691; www.41berangan.com; 41 Jln Berangan; d with breakfast from RM120; 🚽 📺) This sleek new property offers zen-style simplicity and innovation: the two courtyard rooms have been built inside shipping crates. There are a couple of cheaper rooms with shared bathrooms.

**Alpha Genesis** (Map p96; ☎ 2141 2000; www.alphagenesishotel.com; 45 Tingkat Tong Shin; r with breakfast from RM170; 🚽 📺) The rooms are spacious with contemporary furnishings that verge on boutique territory. The deluxe rooms at the front have great views towards the Petronas Towers, and you can rent DVD players (RM25 per day).

**Radius International Hotel** (Map p96; ☎ 2715 3888; www.radius-international.com; 51A Changkat Bukit Bintang; r with breakfast from RM200; 🚽 📺 📺) Excellently located for the bars and restaurants of Changkat Bukit Bintang, this pleasant hotel offers some great promotions and high standards as well as a decent-sized pool.

**Hotel Capitol** (Map p96; ☎ 2143 7000; www.fhiihotels.com; Jln Bulan; s/d from RM210; 🚽 📺) Go online to get the best rates for this pleasing contemporary-styled hotel. Check out its loft-style and premium corner rooms for their hip furnishings and good views. Guests have access to the nearby Federal Hotel's swimming pool.

**Piccolo Hotel** (Map p96; ☎ 2303 8000; www.piccolohotel.com; 101 Jln Bukit Bintang; r from RM287.50; 🚽 📺) Striking marine images decorate the rooms at this new hotel that's going after the boutique crowd. Practically perpetual promotional rates and an excellent location make it a fine choice for business or pleasure.

**Royale Bintang Kuala Lumpur** (Map p96; ☎ 2143 9898; www.royale-bintang-hotel.com.my; 17-21 Jln Bukit Bintang; r from RM310; 🚽 📺 📺) Stylish property offering spacious, comfortable rooms (with high-speed internet access, cable TV, complimentary newspaper), a bar, restaurant, and reasonable-sized gym and pool.

**Prince Hotel & Residence Kuala Lumpur** (Map p96; ☎ 2170 8888; www.princehotelkl.com.my; 4 Jln Conlay; d/ apt from RM370/480; 🚽 📺 📺) The Prince offers outstanding value for its modern, cream-coloured rooms. Some nice facilities include a kids' club, and its serviced apartments are good for long-term stays.

Also recommended:

**Bintang Warisan Hotel** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 8111; www.bintangwarisan.com; 68 Jln Bukit Bintang; r RM170; 🚽) Attractive small hotel with a pre-Independence façade but modern rooms.

**Coronade Hotel** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 6888; www.coronade.com; Jln Walter Grenier; d from RM276; 🚗 📺 📺) Behind Lot 10, but with good views from upper floors.

**Swiss-Garden Hotel** (Map p96; ☎ 2141 3333; www.swissgarden.com; 117 Jln Pudu; d with breakfast RM276; 🚗 📺 📺) High-standard rooms and facilities.

## LITTLE INDIA

**Tune Hotel** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 7962 5888; www.tunehotels.com; 316 Jln TAR; r RM50-150; 🚗 📺 📺) This innovative operation uses the low-cost approach of local budget airline AirAsia: book online well in advance and it's possible to snag a room with a bathroom for under RM50. The basic rate, however, just gets you the room – air-con, toiletries, wi-fi access are extra. Each floor is sponsored, which means you'll find yourself gazing at an ad for, say, McDonald's, Maggi or Nippon Paints in your room and along the corridors. There's also a branch next to the LCC-T (Low Cost Carrier Terminal).

**Hotel Noble** (Map p100; ☎ 2711 7111; www.hotelnoble.com; 165 Jln TAR; d with breakfast RM150; 🚗 📺) Staff are polite and the ambience is smart, clean and comfortable at this modern hotel on the doorstep of Little India. Rooms with a bathroom come with minibar, safety deposit box, coffee-/tea-making facilities and TV.

## Top End

### GOLDEN TRIANGLE & KLCC

**Impiana** (Map p96; ☎ 2147 1111; www.impiana.com; 13 Jln Pinang; d with breakfast from RM450; 🚗 📺 📺) The chic Impiana offers spacious rooms with parquet floors and lots of seductive amenities, including an infinity pool with a view across to the Petronas Towers partly marred by construction of yet another luxe hotel in the KLCC quadrant.

**Pacific Regency Hotel Suites** (Map p96; ☎ 2332 7777; www.pacific-regency.com; Menara Panglobal, Jln Puncak; apt from R450; 🚗 📺 📺) These upmarket self-catering studios and serviced apartments are fine value compared to rooms of a similar standard at KL's other five-star properties. Head to the roof to enjoy the rooftop pool and Luna (p119), one of the city's best bars.

**Westin Kuala Lumpur** (Map p96; ☎ 2731 8333; www.westin.com/kualalumpur; 199 Jln Bukit Bintang; d/apt from RM525/1250; 🚗 📺 📺) The Westin's spacious rooms are modern and appealing, and it's easy to see why long-term residents love its serviced apartments, which have full kitchens and glassed-in balconies. It also has a good gym and stylish restaurants and bars.

**ourpick Traders Hotel Kuala Lumpur** (Map p96; ☎ 2332 9888; www.tradershotels.com; KLCC, off Jln Kia Peng; r/ste from RM610/890; 🚗 📺 📺) Lovely as it is inside, you're going to want to opt for a room with a view across to the Petronas Towers at this contemporary-design addition to KL's portfolio of luxe hotels.

**Shangri-La Hotel** (Map p96; ☎ 2032 2388; www.shangri-la.com; 11 Jln Sultan Ismail; r/ste from RM660/1910; 🚗 📺 📺) A jaw-droppingly opulent hotel with an impressive range of facilities and several top-class restaurants. The rooms are spacious and well equipped.

**Hotel Maya** (Map p96; ☎ 2711 8866; www.hotelmaya.com.my; 138 Jln Ampang; r/ste with breakfast from RM700/1000; 🚗 📺 📺) Even though it remains one of KL's most stylish hotels, the Maya is beginning to show wear and tear in its sleek timber-floored studios and suites. Rates include airport transfers, as well as a host of other goodies.

**Hotel Istana** (Map p96; ☎ 2141 9988; www.hotelistana.com.my; 73 Jln Raja Chulan; r/ste from RM1100/3500; 🚗 📺 📺) The Istana's soothing rooms – where beds sport batik throws and there are fresh flowers – stand in contrast to the high glitz of its lobby, which boasts giant columns and Malay motifs. There's also a good-sized swimming pool in a garden setting.

### KL SENTRAL & LAKE GARDENS

**Hilton Kuala Lumpur** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2264 2264; www.kuala-lumpur.hilton.com; 3 Jln Stesen Sentral; r/ste RM455/850; 🚗 📺 📺) The super-stylish Hilton's contemporary 'innovation rooms' boast 42-inch plasma TV screens, with X-boxes and Playstations available if you happen to have left your own at home. Sweeping city and Lake Garden views and on-the-spot access to KL Sentral are pluses, along with a fab range of restaurants and bars.

**Carcosa Seri Negara** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2295 0888; www.ghmhotels.com; Taman Tasik Perdana; ste from RM1100; 🚗 📺 📺) Secluded in the lush greenery of the Lake Gardens this heritage property is split between two colonial mansions: Carcosa, once the residence of British government representative Sir Frank Swettenham; and Seri Negara, the official guesthouse. There are 13 conservatively designed, spacious suites, very much suited to non-rock star VIPs. For a taste of how the other half live consider splashing out on a meal in the Dining Room (p117) or on the hotel's traditional afternoon tea (RM69).

### KLIA TRANSIT HOTELS

If all you need to do is freshen up before or after your flight, you might find the **Airside Transit Hotel** (☎ 8787 4848; Gate 5, Satellite Bldg, KLIA; d 6hr RM140; 📶 📺) useful. The hotel includes a fitness centre, business centre, spa and sauna, and all rooms come with attached bathroom and TV.

The budget Tune Hotel (opposite) has a branch next to the LCC-T, while the luxurious **Pan Pacific KLIA** (☎ 8787 3333; www.panpacific.com; r from RM504; 📶 📺 📺) is linked by a bridge to the main KLIA terminal.

### EATING

From Malay and Nonya dishes to practically every permutation of Chinese, Indian, Southeast Asian and European, KL is a nonstop feast. You can dine in incredible elegance or mingle with locals at thousands of street stalls – it's all good and it's seldom heavy on the pocket.

Whether you're on a budget or not, most often the best food is from the hawker stalls, cheap cafes (called *kopitiam*) and inexpensive restaurants (*restoran*). Hygiene standards at hawker stalls are generally good and you should have little to fear from eating at them. However, if this is not your thing – or you just want air-con with your meal – then KL's many food courts, usually located in shopping malls, offer an answer.

If you need more options than those listed below, we highly recommend the website **Fried Chillies** (www.friedchillies.com), which includes spot-on reviews by some of the most enthusiastic foodies we've met, as well as video clips. *Time Out Kuala Lumpur* (see p94) also compiles a monthly top 40 of its favourite culinary picks.

### Golden Triangle & KLCC

#### CHINESE

**Blue Boy Vegetarian Food Centre** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 9011; Jln Tong Shin; meals RM5-10; 🕒 7.30am-9.30pm) It's hard to believe that everything prepared at this spotless place at the base of a backstreet apartment block is vegetarian, but it's true. The *char kway teow* (broad noodles fried in chilli and black-bean sauce) is highly recommended.

**Crystal Jade La Mian Xiao Long Bao** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 2338; Annex Block, Lot 10, 50 Jln Sultan Ismail; meals RM20-40; 🕒 11am-10.30pm Mon-Fri, 10.30am-10.30pm Sat & Sun) Avidly patronised chain that turns out ex-

cellent hand-cut noodles and dim sum (sweet and savoury minidishes), with a photographic menu whose pictures actually resemble the delicious food you're served.

**Hakka** (Map p96; ☎ 2143 1908; meals RM80-100; 90 Jln Raja Chulan; 🕒 noon-3pm, 6-11pm) Specialising in Hakka-style cuisine: try the stuffed crabs and tofu dishes. The outdoor section – atmospheric and hung with fairy lights that complement the view of the illuminated Petronas Towers – is only open in the evenings.

#### EUROPEAN & FUSION

**Loaf** (Map p96; ☎ 2145 3036; www.theloaf.net; Level 3 & 4 Pavilion KL, 168 Jln Bukit Bintang; meals RM10-20; 🕒 10am-10pm) This Euro-style bakery cafe and bistro (in which ex-PM Dr Mahathir is an investor) is a Malaysian take on a Japanese baked-goods shop. Huh? No matter – the baked goods are divine and we love the mini cheesecakes for a quick snack.

**Chiaroscuro** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 8006; Ground fl 38 Bidara, 30, Jln Bedara; meals RM50; 🕒 noon-3pm, 6.30-11pm Mon-Fri, 6.30-11pm Sat) Tuck into fantastic pizza and other Italian dishes at this relaxed trattoria tucked behind the Istana Hotel.

**Magnificent Fish & Chip Bar** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 7021; 28 Changkat Bukit Bintang; meals RM60-80; 🕒 8.30am-1am Mon-Fri, 10.30am-1am Sat & Sun) The high quality of the fish (at least eight types, including barramundi) explains the relatively high price you'll pay for the newspaper-wrapped fish and chips at this thoroughly English operation.

**Twentyone Kitchen & Bar** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 0021; www.twentyone.com.my; 20-1 Changkat Bukit Bintang; meals RM60-80; 🕒 noon-3am) Lots of interesting choices on the menu here, several of which you can sample together on taster plates. The bar upstairs, with a deck overlooking the street, gets cranking at weekends when a DJ spins chill and dance tunes.

**our pick Frangipani** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 3001; www.frangipani.com.my; 25 Changkat Bukit Bintang; meals RM100-150; 🕒 7.30-10.30pm Tue-Sun) Indulge in delicious, creative fusion-style dishes at this outstanding fine-dining restaurant. The dining room, which surrounds a reflecting pool, is divine, and there's an equally stylish upstairs bar.

Stylish **Neroteca** (Map p96; ☎ 2070 0530; www.neroteca.com; the Somerset, 8 Lg Ceylon; meals R50-100; 🕒 10am-midnight Wed-Mon, 6pm-midnight Tue) is the cosy stablemate of nearby **Nerovivo** (Map p96; ☎ 2070 3120; www.nerovivo.com; 3A Jln Ceylon; meals RM50-100; 🕒 noon-midnight Sun-Fri, 6pm-midnight Sat)



and is equally adept at turning out delicious, authentic Italian staples.

A pork lovers' heaven, **Elcerdo** (Map p96; ☎ 2145 0511; www.elcerdokl.com; 43-45 Changkat Bukit Bintang; meals RM80-100; ☎ noon-3pm, 6.30-11pm) is a classy 'nose to tail eating' joint. Next door is its tapas bar, El Cerdito, while across the road the restaurant-bar **Werner's on Changkat** (☎ 2142 5670; www.wernerskl.com; 50 Changkat Bukit Bintang) completes the German owner's hat trick.

## INDIAN

**Restoran Nagansari Curry House** (Map p96; Jln Nagansari; meals RM5-10; ☎ 24hrs) This simple place gets the thumbs up for its authentic banana-leaf meals, including a vegetarian set lunch for RM4.50.

**Vansh** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 6162; Lower ground fl, Starhill Gallery, 181 Jln Bukit Bintang; meals RM80; ☎ noon-1am) Tasty and nicely presented Indian food is served at this super-stylish restaurant.

## JAPANESE

**Rakuzen** (Map p96; ☎ 2145 6200; Chulan Sq, 92 Jln Raja Chulan; meals RM50-70; ☎ lunch & dinner) Great value and nicely presented traditional dishes can be found at this smart place with some Japanese-style rooms at the rear.

**Fukuya** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2144 1022 www.fukuya.com.my; 9 Jln Delima; meals R100; ☎ noon-2.30pm, 6.30-10.30pm Mon-Sat) Based in a quiet suburban area of downtown KL, this 'house of happiness' is where chef Takao Ando makes diners smile with his impeccable *kaiseki* (Japanese fine dining) cuisine.

## MALAY & NONYA

**Betty's Café** (Map p96; ☎ 2031 7880; www.bettysgroup.com; Wisma Conway, Jln Raja Chulan; meals RM8-15; ☎ 10am-6pm) Cutely designed canteen offering simple local dishes such as curry laksa, prawn mee noodles and Ipoh *koay teow* soup. There's also a branch in CapSquare (Map p100; ☎ 2691 7880; G49, CapSquare Centre, Capital Square, 8 Jln Munshi Abdullah; ☎ 10am-10pm).

**Little Penang Kafé** (Map p96; ☎ 2163 0215; Level 4, Suria KLCC, Jln Ampang; meals RM15-20; ☎ 10am-10pm) Set meals (RM13.50) let you sample several of the Nonya dishes that Penang is famous for, including *lobak* (deep-fried tofu-rolled chicken strips) and the spicy Siamese *lemak* laksa (using coconut milk), only available Friday to Sunday.

**Bijan** (Map p96; ☎ 2031 3575; www.bijanrestaurant.com; 3 Jln Ceylon; meals RM60-80; ☎ noon-2.30pm,

6-10.30pm Mon-Sat, 4-11pm Sun) Skilfully cooked traditional dishes in a sophisticated environment. The durian cheesecake is a surprisingly pleasant way of sampling the pungent fruit.

**Top Hat** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 8611; www.top-hat-restaurant.com; 3 Jln Stonor; meals RM60-110; ☎ noon-10.30pm) Serves both traditional British – think oxtail stew and bread-and-butter pudding – and local dishes, such as Nyonya Laksa (R28), which all come with signature 'top hats' (pastry shells filled with sliced veggies) and choice of local dessert.

**Seri Angkasa** (Map p96; ☎ 2020 5055; www.serimelayu.com; Menara KL, Jln Puncak; meals RM70-100; ☎ noon-11.30pm) Watch KL pass by from this revolving restaurant atop Menara KL (KL Tower). The very decent lunch buffet (noon and 2.30pm) is RM66.70. Book for evening meals, especially for sunset dining. There's a dress code, but the staff will provide men wearing shorts with a sarong (to cover the legs).

**Enak** (Map p96; ☎ 2141 8973; www.enakkl.com; Feast fl, Starhill Gallery, 181 Jln Bukit Bintang; meals RM70-100; ☎ noon-1am) Finely presented Malay cuisine with a sophisticated twist, as befits the trendy Starhill Gallery.

**Ibunda** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2142 8488; www.ibunda-finedine.com.my; 251 Jln Bukit Bintang; meals RM80-120; ☎ 11.30am-2.30pm, 6.30-10.30pm Mon-Sat) In a restored colonial mansion Ibunda makes a valiant attempt at Malay-fusion fine dining, serving up eye-popping creations with subtle flavours and textures.

## THAI & VIETNAMESE

**Sao Nam** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 1225; www.saonam.com.my; 25 Tingkat Tong Shin; meals RM50; ☎ noon-2.30pm, 6-11pm Tue-Sun) Great Vietnamese cuisine served in a colourful, propaganda-art setting.

**our pick** **Mythai Jim Thompson** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 6151; www.jimthompson.com; Feast fl, Starhill Gallery, 181 Jln Bukit Bintang; meals RM60-80; ☎ noon-11.30pm) As you'd expect for a Jim Thompson operation, the decor here is lovely, with silk cushions and other decorative items that can be purchased at the store on the gallery's 3rd floor. The food is equally fab and includes dishes that you'd rarely find outside Thailand.

## HAWKER STALLS & FOOD COURTS

Jln Alor is lined with some of the best hawker stalls and restaurants in KL. Locals complain that the prices are on the high side, but it's

## SISTERS ARE DOING IT FOR THEMSELVES: MEI LIM

Mei Lim is obviously doing something right since her Sisters Crispy Popiah stalls can be found in KL's Mid Valley mall, PJ's Sunway Pyramid mall and Putrajaya's Amandala mall, as well as at its humble original location in the Imbi Market.

**How long have you been rolling popiah?** I've been in this business over 20 years.

**What are the ingredients in the roll?** I use egg frost – flakes of deep fried egg; crushed peanuts; fried shallots; slivers of cucumber and carrot; and turnip boiled in soy sauce and garlic. I prepare this in the afternoon so it has time to rest overnight – that way it tastes better.

**What's the secret to your rolls?** There is a secret, but I'm not telling you.

still great value and a wonderful atmosphere. Most stalls open around 5pm and close late, although a few are open all day. We list stand-out options below.

For food courts you can't go wrong with those in the malls. Suria KLCC (Map p96) has two: Signatures on level two specialises in international food, while Rasa Food Arena on level four has more local selections. Pavilion KL's (Map p96) basement level Food Republic food court also offers outstanding choice and swank surroundings.

**Ngau Kee Beef Ball Noodles** (Map p96; Jln Tingkat Tong Shin; meals RM5-10; ☎ 24hr) The dish at this venerable street stall comes in two parts: dry, steamed noodles topped with a thick soy-sauce mince, and the chunky beef balls in a clear soup. Delicious!

**ourpick Imbi Market** (Map p96; Jln Kampung; meal RM10; ☎ 7-11am) The official name is Pasar Baru Bukit Bintang, but everyone knows it simply as Imbi Market. Breakfast is like a party here with all the friendly and curious locals happily recommending their favourite stalls. We like Sisters Popiah (see above); Teluk Intan Chee Cheung Fun, which serves a lovely oyster and peanut congee (rice porridge), and Bunn Choon for the creamy mini-egg tarts.

**1 + 1** (Map p96; 21A Jln Alor; meals R10-15; ☎ 24hr) One of the few round-the-clock operations on this eats street that does good dim sum for breakfast and lunch. Opposite is the frog porridge stall (per bowl RM7; open 5pm to 2am). You can choose to have 'spicy', where the frogs legs (RM7) are served separately, or 'non-spicy', where they're mixed in with the tasty rice gruel.

**ourpick Wong Ah Wah** (Map p96; Jln Alor; meals RM15-20; ☎ 4pm-4am) At the southern end of the street, and justly famous for its seriously addictive chicken wings, this is an ideal spot for a late-night snack with a bottle of beer.

## Chinatown & Around

### CHINESE

**West Lake Restoran** (Map p100; ☎ 2072 3350; 15 Jln Sultan; meals RM10-20; ☎ 11am-midnight) Simple eatery known for its *yong dou fu* (bean curd stuffed with minced fish) and *mee* (noodle) dishes.

**Purple Cane Tea Restaurant** (Map p100; ☎ 2272 3090; 1 Jln Maharajalela; meals RM20-30; ☎ 11am-10pm) Tucked behind the Chinese Assembly Hall is this relaxing place where tea is used in many of the dishes, including a chicken version of *bak kut the* (a soup normally made with pork rib).

### EUROPEAN & FUSION

**Café Café** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2141 8141; www.cafecafekl.com; 175 Jln Maharajalela; meals RM80-100; ☎ 6-11pm) Flickering candles and twinkling crystal decoration conjure a romantic atmosphere at this quirky French-Italian restaurant. Avoid the fancy foie gras dishes, stick to simpler concoctions and you'll do fine.

### MALAY & NONYA

**Sing Seng Nam** (Map p100; 2 Medan Pasar; meals RM10; ☎ 7am-5pm Mon-Sat) KL is fast filling up with new 'old-style' *kopitiam*, but this is the genuine object, busy with lawyers from the nearby courts enjoying breakfast of *kaya* toast and runny boiled egg or a *kopi peng* (iced coffee with milk).

**ourpick Old China Café** (Map p100; ☎ 2072 5915; www.oldchina.com.my; 11 Jln Balai Polis; meals RM40-50; ☎ 11.30am-10pm) The old guild hall of the Selangor & Federal Territory Laundry Association is the atmospheric home for this fine cafe specialising in Nonya dishes from Melaka and Penang – its speciality is the spicy coconut-milk soup, laksa.

**Precious** (Map p100; ☎ 2273 7372; 1st fl, Central Market, Jln Hang Kasturi; meals RM60; ☎ 11.30am-10pm) Decorated with beautiful antiques (most for

sale) and modern Chinese art, this sister establishment to the Old China Café offers a more upscale environment in which to enjoy trademark Nonya cuisine, as well as a bar.

## NEPALI

**Khukri** (Map p100; ☎ 2072 0663; www.malayanepal.com; Jln Silang; meals RM20; ☎ 9am-9pm) Something of a gathering point for Nepalis in KL, this simple restaurant serves authentic Nepalese cuisine, including great *momos* (dumplings), steamed or fried, and spicy chicken and mutton dishes.

## HAWKER STALLS & FOOD COURTS

There's a good food court on level two of **Central Market** (Map p100; Jln Hang Kasturi), but if you want to see all of Chinatown's action, you need to get out on the streets. The easy touristy option is to take a seat at one of the tables outside the Chinese restaurants on Jln Hang Lekir, between Jln Petaling and Jln Sultan.

Better is to join locals enjoying spicy fish and seafood dishes from the **Ikan panggang stall** (Map p100; ☎ 019-315 9448; ☎ 5-11pm Tue-Sun) outside Hong Leong Bank, unsigned and tucked behind the stalls on the corner of Jln Petaling and Jln Hang Lekir. Order ahead – it generally takes 20 minutes for your foil-wrapped pouch of seafood to cook, allowing time to explore the market. Wash the meal down with a glass of *mata kucing* (cat's eye), a refreshing Asian fruit drink, also bought from a stall on the same corner.

Set back from the main drag is the old-style **Tang City Food Court** (Map p100; Jln Hang Lekir). Head to the back to find spicy Burmese noodle dishes served at **Boe Jet Kei** (☎ 4-11.30pm).

## Little India, Kampung Baru & Northern Kuala Lumpur

### CHINESE

**Yut Kee** (Map p100; ☎ 2698 8108; 35 Jln Dang Wangi; meals RM10-15; ☎ 7.30am-4.45pm) It doesn't matter how busy it gets at this much beloved Hainanese *kopitiam*, the staff remain calm and polite. Skip the Western dishes and go for the house specialities such as *roti babi* (deep-fried bread filled with shredded pork and onions) or the fried Hokkien mee noodles.

### EUROPEAN

**Bisou** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2693 0131; www.bisou.com.my; 58 Jln Doraisamy; meals RM10; ☎ 8am-9pm Mon-Fri, 10am-9pm

Sat) One of the cheapest and least pretentious places on Asian Heritage Row. It's a cute spot to grab a Western-style breakfast, sandwich or yummy iced cupcake.

**Coliseum Café** (Map p100; ☎ 2692 6270; 100 Jln TAR; meals RM30; ☎ 10am-10pm) Come for its legendary sizzling steaks and the stuck-in-time colonial-era ambience.

## INDIAN

**Bilal Restoran** (Map p100; ☎ 2078 0804; 33 Jln Ampang; meals RM10; ☎ 8am-10pm) No points for ambience, but the Bilal is highly popular for its South Indian Muslim dishes. There's a large range of *roti canai* (unleavened, flaky flat bread), including egg and *bawang* (onion), plus *ikan* (fish) and *kambing* (mutton) curries.

**Sagar** (Map p100; ☎ 2691 3088; Semua House, Jln Masjid India; meals RM10; ☎ 8am-8pm) Enjoy the good-value *thali* meals (rice or bread served with assorted vegetables and curries; RM8.80 to RM9.80) at this sidewalk cafe, and soak up the street life of Little India. There's also an air-con section inside.

**Sangeetha** (Map p100; ☎ 2032 3333; 65 Lebuah Ampang; meals RM10; ☎ 8am-11pm) This well-run vegetarian restaurant serves lots of South Indian delights such as *idli* (savoury, soft, fermented-rice-and-lentil cakes) and *masala dosa* (rice-and-lentil crepes stuffed with spiced potatoes).

**Restoran Buharry** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2697 7798; www.buharrybistro.com; 22-24 Jln Doraisamy; meals RM10-15; ☎ 6am-2am Mon, to 4am Tue-Thu, to 5am Fri & Sat, 8.30am-1am Sun) Popular hangout for office workers on Asian Heritage Row. All the usual *mamak* (Muslim Indian) favourites are on offer, plus excellent *tom yam* (hot and sour) soup and delicious mango smoothies.

## JAPANESE & THAI

**Yu Ri Tei** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 4044 0422; Sentul Park Koi Centre, Jln Strachan; meals RM15-20; ☎ 11am-9pm) Beside the Sentul Park Koi Centre is this charming tea-house serving simple Japanese dishes such as noodles. Combine a meal here with a visit to the adjacent Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre (KLPac; p122).

**Thai-la** (Map p100; ☎ 2698 4933; Ground fl, CapSquare, Persiaran CapSquare; ☎ noon-10pm Mon-Sat) One of the more interesting dining options at the new CapSquare complex. The food is tasty, the decor has a chic charm and Zaki, the entertainingly camp owner, can talk the hind legs off a donkey.

**HAWKER STALLS**

The best time to visit Little India is during the Saturday *pasar malam* on Lg Tuanku Abdul Rahman, the alley between Jln TAR and Jln Masjid India. From mid-afternoon, this narrow lane becomes crammed with food stalls serving excellent Malaysian Indian and Chinese food.

Kampung Baru's Saturday *pasar malam* – called the **Sunday Market** (Pasar Minggu; Map pp92-3) because it runs into the early hours of Sunday morning – is also worth attending. The main action here is focused at the end of Jln Raja Alang, not far from the LRT station, where you'll find the stall **Warong Perasan** (Map p96) serving a good selection of Malay dishes.

**Ikan Bakar Berempah** (Map p96; cnr Jln Raja Muda Musa & Jln Raja Abdullah; meals RM5-10; ☎ 24hr) If you can't make it to Kampung Baru for the night market, head to this stall serving a wonderful range of barbecued fish daily.

**Lake Gardens, Brickfields & Southern Kuala Lumpur**

Brickfield's Indian community makes it a top spot for Indian cuisine.

**CHINESE**

**Siu Siu** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 016 370 8555; 15-11 Lg Syed Putra Kiri; mains R40-60; ☎ 11am-11pm Tue-Sun) On the way to the Tian How Temple, this is a deserved local favourite. Order the milk curry prawns with buns to soak up the tasty gravy or any type of fish.

**Chynna** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2264 2266; Hilton Kuala Lumpur, 3 Jln Stesen Sentral, Brickfields; meals RM100; ☎ noon-2.30pm, 6.30-10.30pm) The big hit among the Hilton's 'Studio' concept restaurants, ranged around Frank Woo's striking giant sculpture *Dancing Shadow*. Chynna offers tasty Cantonese dishes in a Shanghai-chic setting, all opulent reds and golds. A herbal doctor is on hand to balance your chi.

**EUROPEAN**

**Yogitree** (off Map pp92-3; ☎ 2282 6763; www.yogitree.com; 1st fl, Gardens Mid Valley, Jln Syed Putra; meals RM20-70; ☎ 10am-10pm) We love anywhere that serves breakfast until 6pm. This 'real food' cafe and yoga clothes boutique uses plenty of organic produce in its mix-and-match local and Western food menu.

**Dining Room** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2295 0813; Carcosa Seri Negara, Taman Tasik Perdana; meals RM200; ☎ noon-

2pm, 7-11pm) A masterclass in understated luxury and sublime French-style cuisine. You won't regret treating yourself to the set lunch here (RM126.50), while for a real celebration there's the eight-course degustation dinner (RM322).

**INDIAN**

**Annalakshmi** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2272 3799; www.annalakshmi.com.my; Temple of Fine Arts, 116 Jln Berhala, Brickfields; by donation; ☎ 11.30am-3pm, 6.30-10pm Tue-Sun) Eat as you wish, give as you feel is the mantra at this vegetarian Indian restaurant. There's a dress code, probably to deter free-loaders.

**Vishal** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2274 0502; 15 Jln Scott, Brickfields; meals RM5; ☎ 7am-10.30pm) Punters sit at two long rows of tables for the great banana-leaf meals served up at this long-running Brickfields favourite.

**Gem Restaurant** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2260 1373; www.gemrestaurant.com.my; 124 Jln Tun Sambanthan, Brickfields; meals RM10-20; ☎ lunch & dinner) One of the most consistently good Indian restaurants in Brickfields. Come for its *thali*, the chunky chicken tikka and the great range of vegetarian options, including creamy Indian-style veg.

**HAWKER STALLS**

**Kompleks Makan Tanglin** (Map pp92-3; Jln Cendarasari; meals RM10; ☎ 7am-4pm Mon-Sat) Yet another good reason for hanging out in the Lake Gardens is the chance to grab a meal at this popular hawker stall complex – Ikan Bakar Pak Din's stall is a popular one.

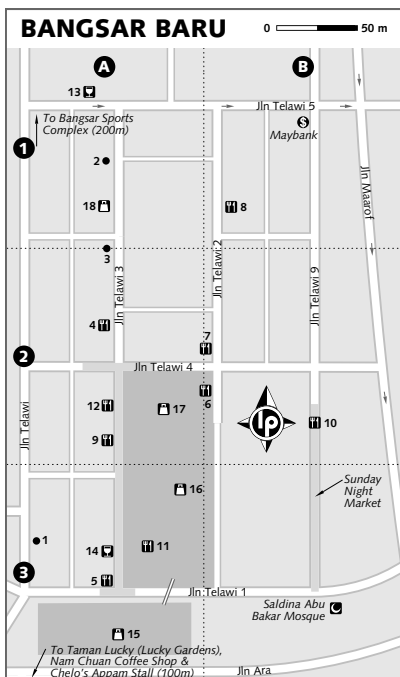
**Ikan Bakar Jalan Bellamy** (Map pp92-3; Jln Bellamy; meals RM10; ☎ 11am-11pm Mon-Sat) People drive from all over to frequent the three barbecued fish hawker stalls on the hill behind the royal palace – even the king occasionally sends his minions to get an order of grilled stingray.

**Bangsar Baru**

Haunt of expats and KL's well-to-do, Bangsar Baru also has fantastic hawker-stall options over in the area known as Taman Lucky (Lucky Gardens) and a great *pasar malam* on Sunday nights. To get there, take the LRT to Bangsar station, then either walk (10 minutes) or jump into a taxi (RM3).

**CHINESE**

**Reunion** (Map p118; ☎ 2287 3770; 2nd fl Bangsar Village II, Jln Telawi 1; meals RM80-100; ☎ noon-3pm, 6-10.30pm)



Elegantly designed contemporary Chinese restaurant that's ideal for a business dinner or an intimate date.

## EUROPEAN & FUSION

**Delicious** (Map p118; ☎ 2287 1554; www.delicious.com.my; Ground fl, Bangsar Village II, Jln Telawi 1; meals RM40-50; ☎ 11am-10.30pm Mon-Thu, 9am-10.30pm Fri-Sun) Stylish delicious cafes are popping up all over KL; this is one of the biggest branches, serving its trademark chunky sandwiches, big salads, pastas, scrumptious cakes and other desserts. The afternoon tea set (RM69 for two) is a good deal.

**Alexis Bistro** (Map p118; ☎ 2284 2880; www.alexis.com.my; 29 Jln Telawi 3; meals RM40-60; ☎ lunch & dinner) Asian favourites such as laksa mix it up with more European fare at Alexis, another Bangsar brand that's spread its wings around the city; check the website for details of branches at Ampang's Great Eastern Mall and the Gardens, Mid Valley.

**La Bodega** (Map p118; ☎ 2287 8318; www.bodega.com.my; 14 & 16 Jln Telawi 2; meals RM40-60; ☎ 8am-1am) This popular, trendy place is four venues in one: an all-day deli cafe serving good sand-

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wiches, a chilled-out tapas bar, a formal dining room, and a lively lounge bar. Good wine and authentic tapas and paella complete the Spanish mood. The new branch at Pavilion KL (Map p96; ☎ 2148 8018; Level 3, Pavilion KL, 168 Jln Bukit Bintang; open 7am to 3am) is known for its great cooked breakfast.

## INDIAN

**Sri Nirwana Maju** (Map p118; ☎ 2287 8445; 43 Jln Telawi 2; meals RM10-20; ☎ 7am-2am) There are certainly flashier Indian restaurants in Bangsa, but who cares about the decor when you can tuck into food this good and this reasonably priced? Serves it all from roti for breakfast to banana-leaf curries throughout the day.

## MALAY

**Chawan** (Map p118; ☎ 2287 5507; 69-G Jln Telawi 3; meals RM5-10; ☎ 8am-midnight) Hard to fault this chic contemporary take on a *kopitiam*. It offers mega-strength coffees from all of the country's states to wash down dishes such as beef *rendang* and a brown paper-wrapped *nasi lemak* (see p61).

**Nasi Lemak Antarabangsa** (Map p118; ☎ 2284 3366; www.nasilemakantarabangsa.com; 51 Jln Telawi 3; meal RM10; ☎ 8am-1am) A spiffed-up spin-off from the original *nasi lemak* joint that's been dishing up the rice and trimmings in Kampung Baru since 1973.

## HAWKER STALLS

Sunday night's *pasar malam*, held in the parking lot opposite the mosque on Jln Telawi 1, is an institution; you'll find all manner of tempting take-away food stalls, including ones offering *otak otak* (spicy fish paste grilled in banana leaves) and the crepe-like *apam balik*. We can recommend the stall that sells sweet-sour *asam laksa* (a version of laksa with prawn paste and tamarind-flavoured gravy).

**Devi's Corner** (Map p118; 14 Jln Telawi 2; meals RM10; ☎ 24hr) A pavement-cafe mood prevails at this food court facing the Bangsar Village II mall. The tray curries are excellent, with plenty of fish, prawns and other seafood. You can get *dosa*, biriyani and great satay here.

**Nam Chuan Coffee Shop** (off Map p118; Lorong Kiri 2; ☎ 8am-10pm) Nam Chuan Coffee Shop is the name of this food court – inside are many individually run stalls, including Christina Jong's which serves Sarawak laksa from 8am to 3pm Thursday to Tuesday. As with other food courts come at different times of the day and you'll find different operators running each of the stalls – some doing the breakfast and lunch, others just working in the evening.

**Chelo's Appam Stall** (off Map p118; Lucky Gardens Hawker Stalls, 2 Lorong Ara Kiri 3; meals RM5; ☎ 7am-10pm Mon-Sat) Sample freshly made vegan Indian delights, including the sweet *appam* (coconut-milk pancakes). Also in this hawker stall area you'll find Anwar dishing up an amazing fish-head curry.

## Self-Catering

You'll find most of what you need at the following central supermarkets; all are open 10am to 9.30pm.

**Cold Storage** (Map p96; Suria KLCC, Jln Ampang)

**Isetan** (Map p96; Lot 10, Jln Sultan Ismail)

**Mercado** (Map p96; Pavilion KL, 168 Jln Bukit Bintang)

**UO Supermarket** (Map p100; cnr Jln Sultan & Jln Tun HS Lee)

## DRINKING

You want bubble tea, iced kopi-o, a frosty beer or a flaming Lamborghini? KL's cafes, tea-houses and bars can deliver it all. The Golden Triangle is the main deal with Changkat Bukit Bintang the hottest strip; if you're into bars packed with testosterone-challenged males and lusty ladies then Jln P Ramlee delivers. The boil has gone off Asian Heritage Row (Jln Doraisamy) near the Medan Tuanku mono-

rail station, just as the possibilities for sophisticates and the indie-inclined have heated up at nearby CapSquare. Bangsar continues to hold its own for classy expat bars and cafes.

Unless otherwise noted standard opening hours are 5pm to 2am.

## Golden Triangle

### CAFES & TEAHOUSES

**The Apartment Downtown** (Map p96; ☎ 2166 2257; www.theapartment.com; 1st fl, Suria KLCC, Jln Ampang; ☎ 11am-10pm) Imagine you actually live at the KLCC at this convivial lounge-like cafe-bar space with outdoor seating overlooking the park – it's a lovely spot to revive after a hard day's shopping at the mall.

**J Co Donuts & Coffee** (Map p96; ☎ 2141 7761; www.jcodonuts.com; basement, Pavilion KL, 168 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☎ 10am-10pm) The wacky donut creations may have cheesy names (Tira Miss U or Mona Pisa anyone?), but they look so damn tasty that it's difficult to pass this fried dough and coffee operation by.

**Lecka Lecka** (Map p96; ☎ 6201 9000; www.leckalecka.com.my; 181 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☎ 10am-3am) Among the several pavement cafe-bars lining Bintang Walk, Lecka Lecka, outside Starhill Gallery, seduces with its wafting chiffon curtains, soft seats and trademark ice creams. Alternatively, puff on a hubble bubble or sip a cocktail.

**Luk Yu Tea House** (Map p96; ☎ 2782 3850; Feast fl, Starhill Gallery, 181 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☎ 10-1am) Swing by Starhill Gallery for a premium brew inside a charming traditional Chinese teahouse.

**Olé Café** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 9007; 48 Changkat Bukit Bintang; ☎ lunch & dinner) One of the few bona fide chill-out spots along a busy strip, this quiet cafe has free internet access, nice teas and coffees, and cakes.

**Sixty Nine Bistro** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 3369; 14 Jln Kampung Dollah; ☎ noon-midnight) Worth checking out for its eclectic junkshop-chic furnishings, milk and fruit shakes, and resident fortunetellers and tarot-card readers.

## BARS

**Ceylon Bar** (Map p96; ☎ 2145 7689; 20-2 Changkat Bukit Bintang) Convivial bar with cane chairs on its verandah, sofas and board games at the rear and free wi-fi.

**Luna** (Map p96; ☎ 2332 7777; Menara PanGlobal, Jln Puncak) Staff can't mix a dirty martini, but you certainly get the twinkling view of KL's skyline at this super-sophisticated rooftop bar surrounding a swimming pool. On

## GAY & LESBIAN KL

Check out [www.utopia-asia.com](http://www.utopia-asia.com) and [www.fridae.com](http://www.fridae.com) for the latest on KL's small but friendly gay scene. **Prince World KL** ([www.princeworldkl.com](http://www.princeworldkl.com)) organises big gay dance parties several times a year – they're usually held at Oblique, Garçon and **Orange Club** (Map p96; ☎ 2141 49291, Jln Kia Peng).

**Frangipani Bar** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 3001; 25 Jln Changkat Bukit Bintang; cover Fri RM30; ☎ 5pm-1am Tue-Thu & Sun, 5pm-3am Fri & Sat) Friday is the official gay night at this fab DJ bar, above the restaurant of the same name (p113). On other nights of the week you'll find a very gay-friendly crowd here too.

**Oblique** (Map p96; [www.princeworldkl.com](http://www.princeworldkl.com); Jln P Ramlee; cover RM25; ☎ 10pm-3am Sat) Non-straight club that sees a twinky crowd feverishly juggling their stuff to hard house and techno. You'll find it beneath Modestos.

**Garçon** (☎ 2381 2088; 8 Jln Yap Ah Shak; ☎ 9pm-3am Sun) For Sunday-night gay clubbers this session at the glam Maison (p122) is the place to be seen.

**Blue Boy** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 1067; 54 Jln Sultan Ismail; ☎ 8.30pm-2am) The workhorse of the KL gay scene just keeps on going. Come before 11pm if you wish to sing karaoke with the winking lady boys. Later it gets packed with rent boys and their admirers.

**Thermos** (Map p96; ☎ 3214 4968; [www.daythermos.com](http://www.daythermos.com); 40-6 Jln Sultan Ismail; cover RM28; ☎ 2-11pm) If you're just looking to hook up, try this relatively stylish and clean sauna with mini-gym and internet lounge. It's near Blue Boy on an alley running parallel to Jln Sultan Ismail.

Friday and Saturday nights there's a RM50 cover charge.

**ourpick Palate Palette** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 2148; [www.palatepalette.com](http://www.palatepalette.com); 21 Jln Mesui; ☎ noon-midnight Tue-Thu, noon-2am Fri & Sat) Gotta love a place that offers curry popcorn and a drink called Kick in the Nuts. Colourful, creative, quirky and super-cool this cafe-bar is a great place to eat (mains RM10 to RM30), drink, play board games, and check out KL's boho crowd.

**Quattro** (Map p96; ☎ 2166 6566; [www.dubquattro.com](http://www.dubquattro.com); Ave K, 156 Jln Ampang) Drift from spring, through summer, autumn and winter at this season-themed bar, lounge, restaurant and club complex. On the hour you can make a dash through an indoor rain shower – umbrellas are provided! They also have live music Tuesday to Saturday.

**SkyBar** (Map p96; ☎ 2332 9888; Level 33, Traders Hotel, KLCC; ☎ 7pm-1am, to 3am Fri & Sat) Head to the rooftop pool area of this hotel for a grand circle view across to the Petronas Towers – it's the perfect spot for sun-downer cocktails or late-night flutes of bubbly.

**Village Bar** (Map p96; ☎ 2782 3852; Feast fl, Starhill Gallery, 181 Jln Bukit Bintang; ☎ noon-1am) Like Ali Baba's Bazaar, this enticing bar is hung with myriad coloured-glass lampshades.

Also recommended are a couple of long-running expat bars:

**Finnegan's** Golden Triangle (Map p96; ☎ 2145 1930; 51 Jln Sultan Ismail); Bangsar Baru (Map p118; ☎ 2284 9024; 6 Jln Telawi 5) Identikit Irish bar with live sports coverage and a decent menu.

**Green Man** (Map p96; ☎ 2141 9924; 40 Changkat Bukit Bintang) Offering a pool table, simple food and outside seating.

## Chinatown

### CAFES & TEAHOUSES

**Ikopi** (Map p100; 1st fl, 6 Jln Panggong; ☎ noon-10pm Wed-Mon) Caffeine addicts should seek out this place where coffees from around the world are brewed in mad-scientist contraptions.

**Purple Cane Tea House** (Map p100; ☎ 2072 1349; 3rd fl, 6 Jln Panggong; ☎ 11am-8pm) Upstairs from Ikopi is this tea drinkers' heaven, while around the corner its shop (Map p100; ☎ 2031 1877; 11 Jln Sultan; open 10am to 10pm) provides a full selection of teas and tea-making implements.

### BARS

**OM** (Map p100; ☎ 2072 7700; Central Market Annexe, Jln Hang Kasturi; ☎ 10am-10pm) Standing for Old Malaya the breezy OM cafe-bar is decorated with antique painted-tin poster ads and has a bar inlaid with a great collection of cigarette packets from around the world.

**Reggae Bar** (Map p100; ☎ 2026 7690; <http://reggaebarkl.com.my>; 158 Jln Tun HS Lee; ☎ noon-2am) 'Love all, feed all' is the catchphrase of the red, yellow and green

bedecked bar, which is knee-deep in travellers and has Bob Marley on constant rotation.

## Little India

**Bar Savanh** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2697 1180; www.indochine-group.com; 62-64 Jln Doraisamy) Singapore's Indochine group sprinkles its Vietnamese magic on Asian Heritage Row; after finishing dinner at CoChine, head downstairs to this bar, which often has live music at weekends.

**Urban Attic** (Map p100; ☎ 2693 3808; www.attick.com; C7 Persiaran CapSquare, CapSquare; ☎ 5pm-3am Mon-Sat) Shaping up to be CapSquare's social hub is this partially open-air bar and live-music space. It's a fine hangout and has hosted KL's sporadic Pecha Kucha (www.pecha-kucha.org/cities/kuala-lumpur) nights – show-and-tell sessions with local creatives – in the past, too.

## Bangsar Baru & Brickfields

**Bar Upstairs** (Map p118; ☎ 2284 2881; www.alexis.com.my; 29A Jln Telawi 3, Bangsar Baru) Above Alexis Bistro is this supreme chill-out venue boasting subdued red lighting, opaque furniture and soothing sounds. See the website for details of live music performances here and at other branches.

**Social** (Map p118; ☎ 2282 2260; 57-59 Jln Telawi 3, Bangsar Baru; ☎ 10-2am) Classy sports bar offering pool tables and good food as well as the booze. There's also a branch on Changkat Bukit Bintang (see Map p96; ☎ 2142 7021; 28 Changkat Bukit Bintang).

**Zeta Bar** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2264 2264; www.kl-studio.com; Hilton Kuala Lumpur; 3 Jln Stesen Sentral, Brickfields) The classy and expensive Zeta pulls in the well-to-do and hip 30s to 40s crowd.

## ENTERTAINMENT

### Cinemas

Mainstream movies are screened at the multiplexes in the malls. Contact the cultural centres (see p94) about the art-house films they occasionally screen. Tickets are around RM12.

**Cosmo's World Theme Park Theatre** (Map p96; ☎ 2117 3046; www.timessquarekl.com/imax.html; 10th fl, Berjaya Times Sq, 1 Jln Imbi) Movies screened on a screen five storeys high.

**Golden Screen Cinemas** Berjaya Times Square (Map p96; ☎ 8312 3456; www.gsc.com.my; 3rd fl, Berjaya Times Square, 1 Jln Imbi); Mid Valley (off Map pp92-3; ☎ 8312 3456; www.gsc.com.my; Mid Valley Megamall, Mid Valley City); Pavilion KL (Map p96; ☎ 8312 3456;

Level 6, Pavilion KL, 168 Jln Bukit Bintang) Book a seat in Gold Class (RM40) for La-Z-boy-style reclining chairs and drinks service.

**Tanjung Golden Village** (Map p96; ☎ 7492 2929; www.tgv.com.my; Level 3, Suria KLCC)

### Music

The Istana Budaya (p122) sometimes also hosts concerts.

### CLASSICAL

**Dewan Filharmonik Petronas** (Map p96; ☎ 2051 7007; www.malaysianphilharmonic.com; Box Office, Tower 2, Petronas Towers, KLCC; tickets from RM10-210) Don't miss the chance to attend a concert at this gorgeous concert hall at the base of the Petronas Towers. The polished Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra plays here (usually Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday matinees, but also other times) as do other local and international ensembles. There is a dress code.

### JAZZ

**No Black Tie** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 3737; www.noblacktie.com.my; 17 Jln Mesui; cover RM20-50; ☎ 5pm-2am Tue-Sun) Small, chic, jazz and live-music venue and bar with an eclectic line-up of artists; the stage is hidden behind a heavy wood door to the rear. Once a month *Time Out* also hosts its On the Up event here, showcasing local singers and bands doing their own material.

### ROCK & POP

Also check out the bands playing at Urban Attic (left) and the Laundry out at the Curve (see p138).

**Cloth and Clef** (Map p96; ☎ 2143 3034; www.clothandclef.com; 30 Changkat Bukit Bintang) Live music and DJ bar that's trying to do something a bit different and more edgy; play DJ at their monthly 'It's My iPod' events.

**Wings** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 3309; www.wingsmusicafe.com; 16 Jln Kampung Dollah, off Jln Pudu; ☎ 6.30pm-1.30am) Relaxed cafe-bar where emerging local artists perform pop, rock and the rest, mainly in Chinese and Bahasa Malaysia.

### Clubs

Places come and go in KL's lively but fluid clubbing scene; stay up to date by reading *KLue* or *Time Out* (see p94). On weekend nights a DJ spins dance tunes at the bars at Frangipani (p113) and Twentyone Kitchen & Bar (p113).



Clubs are typically open Wednesday to Sunday and usually charge a cover (including one drink) of RM20 to RM40 Thursday to Saturday.

**Loft** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2694 2888; Unit 28-40 Asian Heritage Row, Jln Doraisamy) Together with its sister club Cynna, to which its linked by a common balcony, Loft is the most enduring of Asian Heritage Row's clubbing offerings. A catwalk allows podium queens to showcase their dance moves.

**Maison** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2381 2088; www.maison.com.my; 8 Jln Yap Ah Shak) Five shophouses have been knocked together to form a great space for this club where house music, in all its forms, rules.

**Zouk** (Map p96; ☎ 2171 1997; www.zouklub.com.my; 113 Jln Ampang) KL's top club offers spaces to suit everyone and a line-up of local and international DJs. As well as the two-level main venue, there's the more sophisticated Velvet Underground, with a dance floor that's glitter-ball heaven; Phuture for hip-hop groovers; and the cutting-edge Bar Sonic, home to the indie-dance event Koko Asia (www.kokoasia.com). Glimpse KL's gilded youth passing by from the outdoor Relish@Terrace Bar.

## Dance & Cultural Shows

**Central Market** (Map p100; ☎ 2031 0399; www.centralmarket.com.my; Jln Hang Kasturi) Hosts a regular programme of free events, including Malay dance, Indian classical dance, Chinese dance and t'ai chi performances. Check the website to see what's on.

**Malaysian Tourist Centre** (MaTiC; Map p96; ☎ 9235 4900; 109 Jln Ampang; ☎ 3pm Mon, Tue, Thu & Sat) Professionally staged traditional dance and music performances (adult/child under 12 RM5/free) are held regularly in the mini-auditorium to the rear of MaTiC. It also has a similar dance show at 8.30pm daily in the attached restaurant Saloma (☎ 2161 0122; show only RM40, buffet and show RM75).

**Seri Melayu** (Map p96; ☎ 2145 1833; www.serimelayu.com; 1 Jln Conlay) Traditional Malay music and dance performances (show only RM31.75 Malaysian buffet and show RM70) run from 8.30pm to 9.15pm. Its Malaysian buffet (open 6pm to 10.30pm) is extensive.

**Sutra Dance Theatre** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 4021 1092; www.sutradancetheatre.com; 12 Persiaran Titiwangsa 3, Titiwangsa) The home of Malaysian dance legend Ramli Ibrahim has been turned into a

showcase for Indian classical dance as well as a dance studio, gallery and cultural centre near Lake Titiwangsa. See the website for upcoming shows.

## Theatre & Comedy

**Istana Budaya** (National Theatre; Map pp92-3; ☎ 4026 5555; www.istanabudaya.gov.my; Jln Tun Razak) Big-scale drama and dance shows are staged here, as well as music performances by the National Symphony Orchestra and National Choir. There's a dress code: no shorts, and men must wear long-sleeved shirts.

**Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre** (KLPA; Map pp92-3; ☎ 4047 9000; www.klpac.com; Sentul West, Jln Strachan) Lots of interesting work is staged at this modern performing-arts complex set in the landscaped grounds of Sentul West in the north of the city.

**Time Out Comedy Thursday** (Map p96; ☎ 2166 6650; www.timeoutkl.com; Little Havana, Changkat Bukit Bintang; cover RM20; ☎ 9pm first Thu of month) It's always a packed house for this monthly stand-up gig by some of the funniest guys (and occasional girl) in KL.

## SHOPPING

KL has everything from street markets offering fake-label goods to glitzy shopping mall packed with the real deal. Clothing, camera gear, computers and electronic goods are all competitively priced. You'll also find original handicrafts from all over the country as well as interesting contemporary art.

For bookshops, see p91.

## Art Galleries

**Annexe Gallery** (Map p100; ☎ 2070 1137; www.annexe.gallery.com; Central Market Annex, Jln Hang Kasturi; ☎ 11am-7pm) Nonprofit centre for contemporary arts that does a bit more than just hang works on the wall. Film screenings, theatre and dance workshops, talks and launches are also on the agenda.

**Valentine Willie Fine Art** (Map p118; ☎ 2284 2348; www.vwfa.net; 1st fl, 17 Jln Telawi 3, Bangsar Baru; ☎ noon-8pm Mon-Fri, noon-6pm Sat) One of KL's best galleries has frequent shows and represents some of the country's top artists.

**Wei-Ling Gallery** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 2260 1106; www.wei-ling-gallery.com; 8 Jln Scott, Brickfields; ☎ noon-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat) The top two floors of this old shophouse have been imaginatively turned into a contemporary gallery to showcase local artists.

## Crafts & Souvenirs

**Central Market** (Pasar Seni; Map p100; ☎ 2031 0399; www.centralmarket.com.my; Jln Hang Kasturi; ☎ 10am-9pm) It's easy to spend an hour or more wandering around this treasure house of souvenirs, batik, kites, clothes and jewellery. Asian artifacts and antiques are also available, but you'll need to bargain hard to get good deals; try Art House Gallery Museum of Ethnic Arts in the annex for interesting pieces from Borneo and Tibet.

**Kompleks Budaya Kraf** (Map p96; ☎ 2162 7533; www.malaysiancraft.com; Jln Conlay; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 7pm Sat & Sun) Large handicrafts complex stocking a big variety of locally produced batiks, carved wooden artifacts, pewter utensils, woven baskets, furniture, glassware and ceramics. A highlight of this place is the chance to meet craftsmen and artists in the surrounding gardens. The complex also has a small museum and offers batik-making courses.

**Jendela** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 9189; www.jendela-kl.com; Explore fl, Starhill Gallery, 181 Jln Bukit Bintang) Beautiful traditional and modern batik prints used for homewares and clothing. There's also a branch at CapSquare.

**Peter Hoe Evolution** (Map p100; ☎ 2026 0711; 2 Jln Hang Lekir; ☎ 10am-7pm) Peter Hoe's original batik designs on sarongs, shirts and dresses are the main drawcard here, but you'll find many tastefully arranged Malaysian and imported Asian home goods, too. There's also a much bigger store (Peter Hoe Beyond; Map p100; ☎ 2026 9788; 2nd floor Lee Rubber Building, 145 Jln Tun HS Lee; open 10am to 7pm) with a pleasant cafe around the corner on the 2nd floor of the old Lee Rubber Building.

**Pucuk Rebung** (Map p96; ☎ 2382 0769; Level 3, Suria KLCC, Jln Ampang; ☎ 10am-10pm) This upmarket and pricey arts-and-craft store doubles as a gallery – it specialises in all kinds of Malaysian handmade goods.

**Royal Selangor Pewter Factory** (off Map pp92-3; ☎ 4145 6122; www.royalselangor.com.my; 4 Jln Usahawan Enam, Setapak Jaya; ☎ 9am-5pm) Located 8km northeast of the city centre is Malaysia's leading manufacturer of pewter. As well as traditional tankards and the like, it has commissioned modern designers to produced some very appealing gifts. For RM50 you can try your own hand at creating a pewter dish (see p108). Take the LRT to Wangsa Maju station and then a taxi (RM3). Alternatively, visit its main outlet (☎ 3182 0240) on level one of Suria KLCC.

## Fashion

Sungei Wan Plaza (p124) is a great place for teen fashions and up-and-coming designers such as **Melinda Looi** (www.melindalooi.com), and the Gardens Mall (see below) is also worth a browse too.

**Aseana** (Map p96; ☎ 2382 9988; Ground fl, Suria KLCC, Jln Ampang; ☎ 10am-10pm) Stylish and extensive selection of local fashion, plus a cafe serving good Malay food and drinks.

**IKARRTiNi** (Map p96; ☎ 2382 2833; www.ikarttini.com; level 2, Suria KLCC; ☎ 10am-10pm) Check out the separate men's and women's stores selling their own batik design print fashions on fine silk and cotton.

## Markets

The major daily produce markets are those at Chow Kit (p103) and Pudu (p104). For clothes, bags, DVDs and souvenirs check out Chinatown's Jln Petaling (p98).

The following are the major *pasar malam* (night markets):

**Bangsar Baru** (off Jln Telawi 1; ☎ Sun) See p119.

**Kampung Baru** (along Jln Raja Muda; ☎ Sat) See p117.

**Little India** (Lg TAR; ☎ Sat) See p117.

## Shopping Malls

You'll find most of what you need at these shopping malls, all open 10am to 10pm.

**Bangsar Village I & II** (Map p118; ☎ 2282 1808; Jln Telawi 1, Bangsar Baru) These connected malls form the shopping hub of Bangsar; the newer Village II complex is packed with international and local fashion shops, restaurants and cafes.

**Berjaya Times Square** (Map p96; ☎ 2117 3081; www.timesquarekl.com; 1 Jln Imbi) Mammoth mall with a huge Borders bookstore, an indoor amusement park and a multiplex cinema.

**Mid Valley Megamall** (off Map pp92-3; ☎ 2938 3333; www.midvalleycity.com; Mid Valley City, Lingkar Syed Putra) This colossal complex, next to KL Komuter Mid Valley station, is indeed mega and probably the best one-stop shopping, dining and entertainment experience in KL. In a separate building you'll find the Gardens Mall, a more luxe environment embracing designer international brands as well as a hotel and serviced apartments. On level 2, check out local designers at 2201 Fashion Avenue and KN Key Ng (www.keyng.com.my).

**Pavilion KL** (Map p96; ☎ 2118 8833; www.pavilion-kl.com; 168 Jln Bukit Bintang) Over 450 retail shops spread across seven levels in KL's latest

shopping extravaganza – it gives the Suria KLCC a run for its money with its shiny ambience and wide range of international labels.

**Starhill Gallery** (Map p96; ☎ 2716 8615; www.ytccommunity.com/starhill; 181 Jln Bukit Bintang) Break out your platinum charge card – this glitzy mall is where you'll find Louis Vuitton, Gucci and many other luxury brands, plus a great range of restaurants in the basement, and spas on the 5th floor.

**Suria KLCC** (Map p96; ☎ 2382 2828; www.suriaklcc.com.my; KLCC, Jln Ampang) This fine shopping complex at the foot of the Petronas Towers is strong on both local and international brands.

**Sungei Wang Plaza** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 6109; www.sungeiwang.com; Jln Sultan Ismail) and **BB Plaza** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 7411; Jln Bukit Bintang) are two interlinked malls in which it's easy to lose yourself for hours exploring. Sungei Wang is particularly good for youthful fashion and accessories.

**Plaza Low Yat** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 3651; 7 Jln 1/77, off Jln Bukit Bintang) and **Imbi Plaza** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 7425; Jln Imbi) are the places to head to for digital and electronic goods, including computers, cameras and mobile phones.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

### Air

KL's main airport is **Kuala Lumpur International Airport** (KLIA; ☎ 8777 8888; www.klia.com.my), 75km south of the city centre at Sepang. All of AirAsia's flights are handled by the nearby **Low Cost Carrier Terminal** (LCC-T; ☎ 8777 8888; www.lcct.com.my).

Firefly and Berjaya Air flights go from **Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport** (☎ 7845 3245; www.malaysiaairports.com.my) at Subang, around 20km west of the city centre. For transport options into town, see p126.

At KLIA's international arrival hall you'll find a useful **Tourism Malaysia office** (☎ 8776 5651; ☎ 7am-11pm), a Celcom stand selling prepaid SIM cards for your mobile phone (open 7am to 11pm), and counters for several car-rental firms.

AirAsia's tickets are purchased online (www.airasia.com); it has a small information office in **KL Sentral station** (☎ 1300 889 933; ☎ 8am-10pm). Other airlines with offices in the city: **Berjaya Air** (Map p96; ☎ 2141 0088; www.berjaya-air.com; 6th fl, Berjaya Times Square, 1 Jln Imbi)

**Cathay Pacific Airways** (Map p96; ☎ 2035 2777; www.cathaypacific.com; Suite 22, Level 1, Menara IMC, 8 Jln Sultan Ismail)

**China Airlines** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 9417; www.china-airlines.com; Amoda Bldg, 22 Jln Imbi)

**Garuda Indonesian Airlines** (Map p96; ☎ 2162 2811; www.garuda-indonesia.com; Block D, Megan Ave II, 12 Jln Yap Kwan Seng)

**Japan Airlines** (Map p96; ☎ 1800-813 366; www.jal.com; Level 20, Menara Citibank, 165 Jln Ampang)

**Lufthansa** (Map p96; ☎ 2052 3428; www.lufthansa.com; 18th fl, Kenanga International, Jln Sultan Ismail)

**Malaysia Airlines** (Map p96; ☎ 1300 883 000; www.malaysiaair.com; Bangunan MAS, Jln Sultan Ismail)

**Royal Brunei Airlines** (Map p96; www.bruneiair.com; ☎ 3230 6628; Menara UBN, 10 Jln P Ramlee)

**Singapore Airlines** (Map p100; ☎ 2698 7033; www.singaporeair.com; 10th fl, Menara Multi-Purpose, Cap-Square, 8 Jln Munshi Abdullah)

**Thai Airways International** (Map p96; ☎ 2034 6999; www.thaiair.com; 30th fl, Wisma Goldhill, 67 Jln Raja Chulan)

### Bus

KL has several bus stations, the main one being Puduraya, just east of Chinatown. From here services fan out all over Peninsular Malaysia as well as to Singapore and Thailand. The only long-distance destinations that Puduraya doesn't handle are Kuala Lipis and Jerantut (for access to Taman Negara), buses to these places leave from Pekeliling bus station; and Kota Bharu and Kuala Terengganu, buses for which leave from Putra bus station.

Other bus services to Singapore, typically taking five hours, are operated by the following:

**Aeroline** (Map p96; ☎ 6258 8800; www.aeroline.com.my) Offers at least seven services daily (double-/single-

### INTERSTATE BUS FARES FROM KUALA LUMPUR

Destination	Fare (RM)	Duration
Alor Setar	39.10	5hr
Butterworth	31.30	5hr
Cameron Highlands	30	4hr
Ipoh	117.40	2½hr
Johor Bahru	31.30	5hr
Kuantan	22	4hr
Lumut	24.50	4hr
Melaka	12.40	2hr
Mersing	29.90	5½hr
Penang	35	5hr
Singapore	39.10	5½hr
Sungai Petani	34.20	5hr
Taiping	22.70	3½hr

decker buses RM90/60) from outside the Corus Hotel, Jln Ampang, just east of KLCC.

**Nice** (Map p100; ☎ 2272 1586; www.nice-coaches.com.my) Services run three times daily from outside the Old KL Train Station on Jln Sultan Hishamuddin to Singapore (RM88). It also offers five daily services to Butterworth (RM68) and six to Johor Bahru (RM68).

**Transtar Travel** (Map p96; ☎ 2141 1771; www.transtar.com.sg) Offers luxury services to Singapore (RM99) on 16- to 31-seater buses leaving from the Pasarakyat Bus Terminal, Jln Melati, off Jln Imbi.

### KLANG BUS STATION

From the Klang bus station (Map p100), near the Pasar Seni LRT station in Chinatown, frequent buses include U18 to Shah Alam (RM2), 710 to Klang (RM3) and 51 for Pelabuhan Klang (Port Klang; RM3.80), as well as buses 66 and 75 to Petaling Jaya (RM2).

### PEKELILING BUS STATION

In the north of the city, just off Jln Tun Razak next to Titiwangsa LRT and monorail stations, is **Pekeliling bus station** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 4042 7256). There's a **left-luggage counter** (per bag per day RM3; ☎ 8am-8pm).

**Transnasional Express** (☎ 4256 8218; www.ktb.com.my) has departures to Kuala Lipis (RM14.60, four hours, six daily) and Raub (RM10.80, 2½ hours, six daily). Several companies including **Plusliner** (Map p100; ☎ 4042 1256; www.plusliner.com) run services to Kuantan (RM22, four hours), which leave at two-hourly intervals between 8am and 8pm; many go via Temerloh (RM10). Buses to Jerantut (RM15, three hours) also go via Temerloh. Buses to Genting Highlands (RM6) leave every half-hour between 6.30am and 9pm.

### PUDURAYA BUS STATION

Stay alert at Puduraya (Map p100), a clamorous bus-and-taxi station centrally located on Jln Pudu, next to the Plaza Rakyat LRT station; a few travellers have reported being robbed late at night. Close to the main entrance is an information counter. At the rear is a **left-luggage counter** (per day per bag RM2; ☎ 8am-11pm), as well as the tourist police.

Inside are dozens of bus company ticket-windows. Staff will shout out destinations, but check to be sure the departure time suits you, as they sometimes try to sell tickets for buses that aren't leaving for many hours. Buses leave from numbered platforms in the basement, and note that you'll have to look

for the name of the bus company rather than your destination.

On the main runs, services are so numerous that you can sometimes just turn up and get a seat on the next bus. However, tickets should preferably be booked at least the day before, and a few days before during peak holiday periods, especially to the Cameron Highlands and east-coast destinations.

Government-owned **Transnasional Express** (☎ 2070 3300; www.ktb.com.my) is the largest operation here, with buses to almost all major destinations. Outside the terminal, on Jln Pudu, there are at least another dozen private companies handling tickets for buses to Thailand, Singapore and some Malaysian destinations.

There are only a few daily services to the Cameron Highlands and east-coast destinations, but there are frequent departures to most other places during the day, and at night to the main towns. For the latter, try to leave as late as possible; otherwise, shortened travel times on the Lebuhraya tollway mean you'll arrive at your destination too early in the morning.

For typical adult fares and journey times from KL, see opposite.

### PUTRA BUS STATION

Though Puduraya handles buses to the east coast, there are also a number of large-company coach services leaving from the quieter and less intimidating **Putra bus station** (Map pp92-3; Jln Kuching; ☎ 4042 9530), opposite PWTC station (easily reached by taking the LRT to PWTC, or a KTM Komuter train to Putra station).

There are services to Kota Bharu (RM42.90, eight hours, 9.30am and 9.30pm), Kuantan (RM22, four hours, four daily) and Kuala Terengganu (RM39, seven hours, 10.30am and 10pm).

#### FIXED FARES FOR WHOLE TAXI

Destination	Fare
Fraser's Hill	RM280
Cameron Highlands (Tanah Rata)	RM350
Genting Highlands	RM80
Ipoh	RM280-300
Johor Bahru	RM500
Lumut	RM300
Melaka	RM300
Penang	RM600

## Car

KL is the best place to hire a car for touring the peninsula; for sample rates see p486. However, navigating the city's complex (and mostly one-way) traffic system is not for the timid.

All the major companies have offices at the airport. City offices, which are generally open 9am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 1pm Saturday, include the following companies:

**Avis** (Map p96; ☎ 2144 4487; www.avis.com.my; Angkasa Raya, Jln Ampang)

**Hertz** (Map p96; ☎ 2148 6433; www5.hertz.com; Ground fl, Kompleks Antarabangsa, Jln Sultan Ismail)

**Mayflower** (Off Map pp92-3; ☎ 6253 1888; www.mayflowercarrental.com; 18 Jln Segambut Pusat)

**Orix** (Map p96; ☎ 2142 3009; www.orixauto.com.my; Ground fl, Federal Hotel, 35 Jln Bukit Bintang)

## Taxi

Long-distance taxis – often no faster than taking a bus – depart from upstairs at Puduraya bus station (Map p100). Early in the morning the chances are reasonable of finding other passengers waiting to share on the main west-coast runs to Johor Bahru, Melaka, Ipoh and Penang. Otherwise you will usually have to wait to get a full complement of four passengers, or you could charter a whole taxi for fares that are the highest in Malaysia.

Prices should include toll charges. For fares, see p125.

## Train

Kuala Lumpur is the hub of the **KTM** (☎ 2267 1200; www.ktmb.com.my) national railway system, with all long-distance trains departing

### TRAIN FARES FROM KUALA LUMPUR

Destination	Premier	Superior	Economy
Padang Besar	-	RM40	RM22
Butterworth	-	RM30	RM17
Taiping	-	RM24	RM14
Ipoh	-	RM18	RM10
Tapah Rd	-	RM15	RM8
Seremban	RM19	RM13	RM7
Tampin	RM27	RM17	RM9
Johor Bahru	RM64	RM33	RM22
Singapore	RM68	RM34	RM23
Jerantut	-	RM25	RM15
Kuala Lipis	-	RM29	RM18
Wakaf Baharu	-	RM38	RM28
Tumpat	-	RM39	RM29

## TOUCH 'N GO

If you're going to be in KL or Malaysia for an extended period and plan to use public transport or the highways a lot it's perhaps worth taking the time to get yourself a **Touch 'n Go card** (☎ 7628 5115; www.touchngo.com.my). These electronic credit storage cards can be used on all public transport in the Klang Valley, at highway toll booths across the country and at selected parking sites. The cards, which cost RM10 and can be reloaded with values from RM20 to RM500, can be purchased at KL Sentral and the central LRT stations KLCC, Masjid Jamek and Dang Wangi.

from KL Sentral (Map pp92-3). The **KTM information office** (☎ 10am-7pm) in the main hall can advise on schedules and check seat availability. A **ticket delivery service** (☎ 2267 1200; ☎ 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Sat) can get your ticket to you for RM4.

There are daily departures for Butterworth, Wakaf Baharu (for Kota Baharu and Jerantut), Johor Bahru, Thailand and Singapore; fares are cheap, especially if you opt for a seat rather than a berth (for which there are extra charges), but journey times are slow. For further information see p488. KTM Komuter trains also link KL with the Klang Valley and Seremban (see opposite).

## GETTING AROUND

KL Sentral (Map pp92-3) is the hub of a rail-based urban network consisting of the KTM Komuter, KLIA Ekspres, KLIA Transit, LRT and Monorail systems. Unfortunately the systems – all built separately – remain largely unintegrated. Different tickets generally apply for each service, and at stations where there's an interchange between the services they're rarely conveniently connected. This said, you can happily get around much of central KL on a combination of rail and monorail services, thus avoiding the traffic jams that plague the inner-city roads.

## To/From the Airports

### KLIA

The fastest way of reaching KL from KLIA is on the **KLIA Ekspres** (☎ 2267 8000; www.kliaekspres.com; adult/child 1-way RM35/15, return RM70/30); it takes

28 minutes and departs every 15 minutes between 5am and 1am. From KL Sentral you can continue to your destination by KMT Komuter, LRT, Monorail or taxi.

The **KL Transit train** (adult/child 1-way RM35/15) also connects KLIA with KL Sentral, but stops at three other stations en route (Salak Tinggi, Putrajaya and Cyberjaya, and Bandar Tasik Selatan), taking about 35 minutes.

If flying from KL on Malaysia Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Royal Brunei or Emirates you can check your baggage in at KL Sentral before making your way to KLIA.

The cheapest option is the **Airport Coach** (☎ 87873894; www.airportcoach.com.my; 1-way/return RM10/18), which takes an hour to KL Sentral; for RM18, however, it will also take you to any central KL hotel from KLIA and pick-up for the return journey for RM25. The bus stand is clearly signposted inside the terminal.

Taxis from KLIA operate on a fixed-fare coupon system. Standard taxis cost RM67.10 (up to three people), premier taxis for four people RM93.40, and family-sized minivans seating up to eight RM180.40. The journey will take around one hour. Buy your taxi coupon before you exit the arrivals hall, to avoid the aggressive pirate taxis that hassle you to pay a few hundred ringgit for the same ride. Going to the airport by taxi, make sure that the agreed fare includes tolls; expect to pay RM65 from Chinatown or Jln Bukit Bintang.

If you're changing to a flight on AirAsia, there's a shuttle bus between KLIA and the LCC-T – it runs every 20 minutes from 6am to midnight and the fare is RM1.50. Penny-pinchers can use this bus to get to Nilai (RM3.50) to connect with the KTM Komuter train to KL Sentral (RM4.70). A taxi between the two airports costs RM33.

### LCC-T

To reach the LCC-T (Low Cost Carrier Terminal) from KL Sentral and vice versa, jump on either the **Skybus** (www.skybus.com.my; RM9) or the slightly cheaper **Aerobus** (adult/child 1-way RM8/4); services depart at least every 15 minutes from 4.30am to 12.45pm. Travelling from the LCC-T, prepaid taxis charge RM62 to Chinatown or Jln Bukit Bintang (50% more from midnight to 6am). Buy your coupon at the desk near the arrival hall exit. A taxi from the city to LCC-T will cost around RM65.

### SULTAN ABDUL AZIZ SHAH AIRPORT

The easiest way to reach the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport is to take a taxi (around RM40).

### Bus

Although there are several smaller companies, most buses in KL are provided by either **Rapid KL** (☎ 1800-388 228; www.rapidkl.com.my) or **Metrobus** (☎ 5635 3070). There's an **information booth** (Map p100; ☎ 7am-9pm) at the Jln Sultan Mohammed bus stop in Chinatown.

KL buses are the easiest to use as destinations are clearly displayed. KL buses are divided into four classes, and tickets are valid all day on the same class of bus. Bas Bandar (routes starting with B, RM2) services run around the city centre. Bas Utama (routes starting with U, RM2) buses run from the centre to the suburbs. Bas Tempatan (routes starting with T, RM1) buses run around the suburbs. Bas Ekspres (routes starting with E, RM4) are express buses to distant suburbs. You can also buy an all-day ticket covering all non-express buses (RM4) and a ticket covering all Rapid KL buses and trains (RM7).

Local buses leave from half a dozen small bus stands around the city – useful stops in Chinatown include Jln Sultan Mohamed (by Pasar Seni), Klang bus station (south of Pasar Seni), Bangkok Bank (on Lebu Pudu), Medan Pasar (on Lebu Ampang), Central Market (on Jln Hang Kasturi), Lebu Ampang and the Kota Raya department store (on Jln Cheng Lock); see Map p100.

Since KL's inexpensive taxis and reliable LRT systems are more efficient, not prone to get stuck in traffic and air-conditioned, there's little point in using buses except for trips to outlying areas, such as the Batu Caves (p131).

### KL Monorail

KL's zippy **monorail** (☎ 2273 1888; www.klmonorail.com.my; RM1.20-2.50; ☎ 6am-midnight) runs between KL Sentral in the south to Titivangsa in the north. It's a very handy service linking up many of the city's sightseeing areas and providing a cheap air-con tour as you go.

### KTM Komuter Trains

**KTM Komuter** (☎ 2267 1200; www.ktmb.com.my) train services use KL Sentral as a hub. There are two lines: Rawang to Seremban and Sentul to Pelabuhan Klang. Useful stops include Mid Valley (for the Mid Valley Megamall), Subang

Jaya (for Sunway Lagoon), Nilai (for the cheap local bus to the airports) and Pelabuhan Klang (for ferry services to Sumatra). Trains run every 15 to 20 minutes from approximately 6am to 11.45pm. Tickets start from RM1 for one stop.

### Light Rail Transit (LRT)

As well as the buses, **Rapid KL** (☎ 1800-388 228; www.rapidkl.com.my) runs the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system. There are three lines: Ampang/Sentul Timur, Sri Petaling/Sentul Timur and Kelana Jaya/Terminal Putra. However, the network is poorly integrated because the lines were constructed by different companies. As a result, you need a new ticket to change from one line to another, and you may also have to follow a series of walkways, stairs and elevators, or walk several blocks down the street.

An electronic control system checks tickets as you enter and exit via turnstiles. Single-journey fares range from RM1 to RM2.80, or you can buy an all-day pass for RM7, which also covers you for Rapid KL buses. You can buy tickets from the cashier or electronic ticket machines. Trains run every six to 10 minutes from 6am to 11.45pm. If you're going to be in KL for a while, consider investing in a monthly combined travel card (RM90 or RM125 including Rapid KL buses).

### Taxi

KL has plenty of taxis, and fares are cheap, starting at RM2 for the first kilometre, with an additional 10 sen for each 200m. From midnight to 6am there's a surcharge of 50% on the metered fare, and extra passengers (more than two) are charged 20 sen each. Luggage placed in the boot costs an extra RM1. If you book a cab, it also costs RM1 extra.

Not all taxi drivers follow the law, which says they must use their meter for all journeys. Taxi drivers lingering outside luxury hotels or in tourist hot spots such as the Lake Gardens are especially guilty of this behaviour. At some taxi ranks (ie outside BB Plaza on Jln Bukit Bintang) you'll also pay over the odds for taxis using a pre-paid coupon system. The one place where the pre-paid coupon systems does seem to work reasonably well is KL Sentral.

For reference, by meter it costs no more than RM10 to go right across the central city area, even in moderate traffic. Always ask for a receipt and check to see they haven't included spurious extra charges, such as for baggage you don't have. Be aware that taxis will often only stop at the numerous officially signposted taxi stands, and although it is possible to wave one down, some drivers are reluctant to stop.

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