

Hasanti's Fabulous Kuala Lumpur Shopping Guide

Malaysia is a premier shopping destination in South East Asia and has been a well-kept secret for a long time. Markets, bazaars and shopping centres throughout the country offer a staggering variety of clothes, cosmetics, shoes, handbags, electrical and audio-visual items, optical and household goods.

Duty free items such as watches, cameras, pens, cosmetics, perfumes, cigarettes, liquor, and electrical goods are the cheapest in the world due to duty free items being very competitively priced. Malaysia has duty free shops in the international airports of Kuala Lumpur and Penang as well as in the city centres of Langkawi and Labuan.

Sophisticated shopping centres have been designed to offer shoppers all the conveniences of banks, auto teller machines, foreign exchange outlets, restaurants and food halls, supermarkets and hundreds of shops offering tremendous variety.

For market shopping there are roadside stalls, bazaars and night markets in towns throughout the country. Night markets or *pasar malam*, are a popular evening attraction and offer a colourful and bustling experience not to be missed. Markets are a bargain shopper's paradise as this is where you can hone your bargaining skills as all stall holders enthusiastically barter for a good price. Markets are a cash economy, so take plenty to last the trip as there may not be any auto teller machines or banks nearby.

Malaysia currently has an exchange rate with the Australian dollar of almost 3 to 1, which makes shopping there incredibly cheap. In addition to this, once a year, Malaysia plays host to the *Mega Sale* – for several weeks each year, usually around July/August, all shops around Malaysia offer fantastic reductions and bargains on their already amazing prices. This carnival is not to be missed and is widely promoted around the country.

Kuala Lumpur is the commercial hub of Malaysia with a myriad of shopping complexes and malls located around the city as well as wonderful curio and antique shops located in the old part of the city. If you are here to shop, Kuala Lumpur has something for everyone. No-one will go home disappointed *or* empty handed. Everything you buy in Kuala Lumpur is the real item, *not* genuine fakes. However, that said, counterfeits are available and can be found at Petaling Street in China Town.

Note that unlike in Australia, the majority of shops don't exchange or refund items unless pressed to do so. Sometimes shop assistants will also tell you they don't understand English to avoid discussing the issue altogether. So be careful when you make a selection, especially clothing.

Let's go shopping!!!!!!

Sungei Wang Plaza
Jalan Sultan Ismail

Open 7 days 11am-10pm
LRT Station Location (Monorail)

This shopping complex is across the road from the Grand Plaza Parkroyal Hotel and is the location of a Monorail station. It is a great place to begin your shopping adventure in Kuala Lumpur as it has just about everything you could want to buy. There are over 5 floors of shopping and it is **always** busy, especially on the weekends. If you need money there are plenty of auto teller machines as well as money changers. Be patient with the crowds and mindful of your handbag/wallet. It is also advisable **NOT** to use your credit card here as there have been cases of credit card fraud originating from this shopping centre. There are plenty of ATM machines and money changers instead.

There are hundreds of shoe stores here and if you have small feet, you will be in shoe heaven. Sizes go down to a 4!!! And some of the shops also have handbags to match. There is also a Department store here called **Parkson Grand** – like David Jones, and is good for children's clothes. Stores for ladies clothing includes **G2000, Giordano, U2, SEED**, and a **British India** factory outlet. Other shops include a variety of men's clothing stores, camera/optical stores, shoe shops, mobile phone kiosks, hardware store- for padlocks etc, leisure wear, sports wear, teen fashion shops, hair salons, tattoo parlour, luggage and bag shops, jewellers, hair accessories, costume jewellery, coloured contact lenses, evening bags, wigs and hair extensions, CD's, DVD's, electronics and **Watsons** – like a chemist/ Priceline. There is also a supermarket located on the lower ground floor – good for bottled water, juices, dairy items, snacks, pre-packaged food, fresh fruit and veges and toiletries. There are food outlets here on the lower ground floor level which includes a **Deli France, McDonald's, KFC** and a **Coffee Bean** coffee shop among others smaller vendors.

Be prepared to walk quite a bit as this shopping complex is a mass of corridors jam-packed with shops and small barrows/kiosks in the walkways selling everything from mobile phones and accessories to t-shirts, key rings, bags and wallets and it is easy to lose your bearings. A good tip is to take note of the shop name and number located on the corner above the top of the store in case you need to re-locate it later for more purchases. Odds are that you will NOT find it again otherwise. This number gives the floor level and shop number for easy reference.

For great optical buys you may wish to visit **A Look** at the Berjaya Time Square. They will give you a great deal on all your optical needs. They will test your eyes for you or they can fill your prescription from Australia. They also have the best prices on coloured Fresh Look contact lenses – 3 pairs for RM 120, that's half price to other shops.

Due to piracy laws, DVD's are no longer available in Malaysia, however some operators still sell them underground. Be careful if you are approached as they will ask for money up front and may lead you down dark corridors to a secluded place where they store the DVD's – not very safe for you.

BB Plaza *Open 7 days 11am-7pm*
Bukit Bintang

Located on Jalan Bukit Bintang and adjoins Sungei Wang Plaza. This shopping complex also has a department store called **Metro Jaya**. This store has great shoes, accessories, cosmetics, handbags, clothing, toys, and home wares. The idea of this shopping complex is the same as Sungei Wang as it flows from one to the other- the only difference is the colour of the tiles- Sungei Wang is dusty pink and BB Plaza is a pale creamy green. The stores are just as vast in variety and packed together. The complex houses clothing, shoes, handbags etc and a large **Guardian Chemist**. Other stores within the complex sell books, computers, electrical goods, cameras and hardware.

Metro Jaya has some great sales and is a good place to buy men's clothing including underwear and women's corporate clothes. Please be careful of sizing as most sizes are very small for Western bodies.

BB Plaza is also extremely busy most of the time and even late into the night until closing time, so again, be mindful of your handbag/wallet. Be prepared to spend some time wandering around the corridors as the shops are like those at Sungei Wang- very crowded with lots of barrows/kiosks along the walkways selling equally the same things.

If you have the time, it is a good idea to spend a day wandering the corridors of both Sungei Wang and BB Plaza, taking note of shops you would like to visit later. This way you see as much as possible as well as

comparing prices offered. It will also avoid you finding a shop later that sells items you have purchased but at a much lower price, as happened to me. I bought 4 pairs of coloured contact lenses for RM 240, only to find an optical shop on the lower level selling 4 pairs for RM 120!!! Half the price I had paid. Needless to say, no refund was entertained.

Berjaya Times Square *Open 7 days 11am – 7pm*
Jalan Imbi

Walking distance and around the corner from **Sungei Wang Plaza**. This shopping complex is modern and enormous and also houses Malaysia's first and only **IMAX Theatre** on the 10th floor as well as a theme park on the 5th floor called **Cosmo's World Theme Park**. This indoor amusement park has the longest indoor rollercoaster in South East Asia- always a big hit with families. Entry fee is RM 25 for Adult, RM 15 for Child/Senior, for which they give you a paper bracelet allowing access to the park for the day, so you can come and go as you please. There are plenty of rides to suit all who visit. The park is open daily from 10am – 10pm and the ticket booth closes at 9pm. There is also a small food court within the premises of the theme park as well as auto teller machines right at the entrance to the park.

This is a popular shopping centre and can be crowded, especially on weekends. The children can play while you shop- however, it's **NOT** advisable to leave them unsupervised. Definitely worth looking around for great bargains as well as exclusive shopping. Two great shoe shops here, one called **Vamp** which has beautiful shoes, sandals, sneakers and slippers- bought some beautiful evening shoes here. The other is on the lower ground floor called **Esarli** and has to be the biggest shoe shop in KL with a huge selection of ladies shoes and is located in the lower ground floor of Berjaya Times Square. Esarli also has a smaller shop at Sungei Wang- smaller range but still worth a look. There is also a **Debenhams** department store and a **Borders** book shop here. **Starbucks Coffee** shop is located at the front of the shopping centre.

The food court here is also promoted as the biggest food court in Malaysia. It is extremely clean, modern and spacious with a huge array of food, drink and dessert outlets to choose from. One outlet we ate at had 31 dishes to choose from- more than half of which were vegetable dishes. There is plenty of room to sit and enjoy your meal or you can take away for later. Prices are also very reasonable with a meal costing on average RM 7. If you buy a drink and ask for no ice, it will cost you RM 2.25 extra because the cup contains more drink.

If you want to catch a taxi from here you will need to purchase a taxi voucher from the counter outside the building on your left as you leave the front foyer. Hand the taxi driver his copy of the voucher and tell him where you wish to be taken. As you have already paid the fare with the voucher.

Imbi Plaza *Open 7 days 11am-10pm*
Next to Sungei Wang Plaza

This shopping centre is a maze of corridors but is the place for computers, computer peripherals and related items. It is best to shop around all the shops and compare prices before you part with your money. There are bargains to be had here but you do need to be patient and explore the maze to seek out the best shops and bargains. Many items are not original products, such as accessories for the **Apple iPod** can be bought quite cheap here but they are not original.

Most vendors here are dealers and do not have the ability to deal with problems after you have bought the product if it doesn't work. They will direct you to a service centre for after sales service, so be careful when purchasing big ticket items like PC's, laptops/notebooks, plasma TV's and stereo hi-fi's etc. Ask for a business card of the sales person who attends to you for quick reference later.

Most of the vendors/sales people are young computer/electronics whiz-kids, so you need to brush up on your requirements before you speak to them. It is a very busy place and they are always on the look out for the next

interested customer. If you are not looking like you are ready to buy or are confused about things they may well overlook you to speak to the customer next to you.

Make sure you check out any warranties that may apply and also the correct voltage of any electronic or electrical items. Malaysia uses 220 volts.

Low Yat Plaza *Open 7 days 11am – 10pm*
Next to Sungei Wang

Another computer/electronic/computer peripherals shopping complex. The difference here is that you will be dealing with authorised agents as well as some dealers. Even so, the policy is to be aware as most will realise you are from overseas. Always check your purchases when you get back to your hotel to ensure it operates correctly and contact them immediately if otherwise. Most agents will fix any problems as they want to ensure customer satisfaction as this will mean less unfavourable feedback to the manufacturer.

If you are planning on purchasing a large ticket item, be prepared to spend significant time at both the above places, especially if it is a PC or laptop/notebook.

Other shops here include one part of the 2nd floor which has a perfumery, clothing, shoes, accessories, bags etc. You will also find a large range of computer games, camera/video equipment, TV's and associated items.

Lot 10 *Open 7 days 11am – 10pm*
Across the road from Sungei Wang Plaza *LRT Station Location (Monorail)*

This is a green building and is linked to Sungei Wang Plaza by a covered pedestrian walkway.

It is the location of a **LRT Station**. The Department store here is called **Isetan**. This store has a good larger sizes section for both ladies and gents. The shopping centre as a whole is pricier than Sungei Wang as it offers mid range to exclusive items such as clothing, cosmetics, shoes, handbags, accessories, sports gear and household items. The upper floor is devoted to exclusive designer clothing. Some of the shops located here include **British India**, **G2000**, **Esprit** and **Guess**. There is a **Body Shop** here and the prices are cheaper than in Australia. Their body butter is especially very cheap. Well worth a look. A supermarket is also located in the lower ground floor of this complex as well as a food court. The food court is a little old but the food is good and very reasonable.

A covered pedestrian walk bridge from the second floor of **Isetan** connects Lot 10 to Sungei Wang so you don't need to cross on the road- great during the late afternoon downpour of rain.

KL Plaza *Open 7 days 11am-10pm*
Next to Lot 10 *Bukit Bintang*

This shopping complex has a factory outlet store that shouldn't be missed for great bargains. It has a lot of larger sizes and is mostly last season's stock. Make sure you try on the items for size before you purchase as most stores don't like returning or exchanging goods once purchased. These are not genuine fakes and names you will find here include **Abercrombie & Fitch**, **Burberry**, **Nautica**, **Ralph Lauren**, **Tommy Hilfiger**, **Gap**, **French Connection** and **Guess** to name a few. Good place for men's clothing but check the sizes carefully.

Pavilion Kuala Lumpur *Open 7 days 11am – 10pm* *Bukit Bintang Circle*

Has only just opened and is Kuala Lumpur's newest shopping complex located in Bukit Bintang. The complex is home to some of the world's most luxurious brands and the precinct is dedicated to being nothing less than a haven to Kuala Lumpur's discerning clientele.

The complex has 7 floors of shopping, restaurants, services, leisure and entertainment with major department stores Parkson and Tangs major retailer anchors at the complex.

The complex boasts almost 300 stores including such brand labels as **Aigner**, **Bally**, **Burberry Prosum**, **Chopard**, **Hermes**, **Gucci**, **Juicy Couture**, **Jean-Paul Gaultier**, **Mikimoto**, **Salvatore Ferragamo**, **Tiffany & Co**, **Rolex**, **Versace** and **Hugo Boss** to name a few.

Restaurants and cafes form a large part of the complex with over 70 food & beverage outlets including Starbucks, Coffee Bean, KFC, Baskin & Robbins, Nando's, Pizza Hut as well as many others offering local flavours.

Suria KLCC *Open 7 days 11am-10pm*
(Next to Petronas Towers)

A modern, multi level shopping centre offering floors of specialty shops, all the department stores, fashion houses, jewellers and duty free shops. The names you will see here are mostly designers; however it is worth a look. **Marks & Spencers** are also located here. There is a very good book store located on the upper level. Shopping here is not cheap but worth a look around if you have the time. The new Aquarium is located in this complex and offers a wonderful aside from the shopping. There is also a food court offering great food at reasonable prices. Visit Madam Kwan's on Level 4 for a fabulous Malaysian meal and friendly atmosphere.

Starhill Gallery *Jalan Bukit Bintang* *11am - 9pm*

Starhill Gallery has been transformed into Kuala Lumpur's shopping icon, delivering "A Gallery of Rich Experiences": Feast, Indulge, Adorn, Explore, Pamper, Relish and Muse. The city's ultimate statement of taste and style in food, fashion, living, beauty & art.

This shopping centre offers the ultimate luxury items that most can only wish to own. It is a beautifully constructed shopping complex which has been designed by international architects with a richly adorned interior offering an exclusive haven for shoppers and observers alike.

Some of the brands you will see here are Anne Klein, Valentino, Omega, Kenzo, Fendi, Louis Vuitton, Lanvin, Chopard, Givenchy, DKNY, Christian Dior, Gucci, Lacoste, Timberland, and Jim Thompson to name a few.

The complex has 6 floors plus a lower ground floor, each of which has been christened with a unique experience: Indulge – a floor of designer apparel and accessories, Adorn – a floor of designer watches, perfumes, apparel and accessories, Explore – a floor of casual wear, luggage, home accessories and more, Pamper – an urban oasis dedicated to health, beauty and relaxation, Relish – restaurants, Muse – fine art and galleries and Feast – a village of concept restaurants offering a multitude of tastes and experiences in a unique themed atmosphere.

Mid Valley Mega Mall *Open 7 days 11am-10pm*
Federal Highway between Kuala Lumpur and Petaling Jaya

This shopping complex is one of Asia's largest retail, food and entertainment centres. Five floors of shopping with the largest **Metro Jaya** fashion chain store in Malaysia. Other stores offer clothing, accessories, electrical appliances, gifts, souvenirs, lifestyle and IT products. Some of the brand names you will find here include Esprit, Guess, Elle, L'Occitane, Jurlique, The Body Shop, MNG, Levis, Giordano, Timberland, SEED, Hush Puppies, Top Shop, Miss Selfridge and lots more. It also houses the largest fitness centre in South East Asia, the largest book store in Malaysia and has a 38-lane bowling alley. It also boasts Asia's Largest **Cineplex Golden Screen Cinema**. The complex also has a large variety of international fast food chains as well as local restaurants. There are also homewares stores, hair salons and beauty centres located on the upper levels.

You will need a taxi to get out here but it should only cost you RM 10 from KL city. There are 2 food courts here as well as a **Pet's Paradise**, **Feng Shui World** and **Toys "R" Us** store. The lower ground floor has money changers and auto teller machines as well as fast food outlets like **McDonald's**, **KFC**, **Burger King**, bakeries, food stalls and other outlets and a super market.

To get back to the city, purchase a taxi voucher from the ticket counter at the front of the building on the right, outside the Mall.

Sunway Lagoon Shopping Mall *Open 7 days* *11am – 10pm*
Sunway Lagoon Resort Complex, Petaling Jaya

Sunway Lagoon has recently opened a 500 plus retail outlet shopping mall within its Sunway Lagoon Resort complex in Petaling Jaya. The complex is modern and vast with a large array of retail outlets including G2000, Esprit, Sketchers, Jurlique, L'Occitane, Miss Selfridge, The Body Shop, Nautica and more

The centre also houses an indoor ice skating rink as well as a Cineplex and numerous cafes, restaurants and fast food outlets.

Sogo Kuala Lumpur *Open 7 days* *11am-10pm*
CNR, Jalan Dang Wangi & Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman

This is one of the largest department stores in South East Asia with 8 floors of shopping offering a range of exclusive products as well as everything from fresh produce, pastries and cakes to a variety of imported food and household items. There is also an amusement arcade offering rides and games. Ideal for families with children as this will give the kids a break from all that shopping.

The Campbell Complex and Pertama Complex *Open 7 days 11am-late*
Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman

Good places for leather and contains specialist camping and outdoor adventure gear shops. Also good for shoes, handbags, watches, jewellery and souvenirs.

China Town / Petaling Street *Open 7pm-late*
Most stalls open after 5pm

Petaling Street is the hub of Kuala Lumpur's bustling China Town and shops here offer a variety of textiles, clothing, shoes, handbags and much more at bargain prices. The area is also known for its jewellery shops with a variety of fine jewellery crafted from gold and set with gemstones. Nepalese traders offer exotic ethnic jewellery, wall hangings, ornaments, curios and teapots from India and Myanmar.

Makeshift and mobile stalls jam the streets with offerings of dried foodstuffs herbs, flowers, fruits and herbal remedies. This is the place to really give your bargaining skills a good work out.

This is where you will find genuine fake heaven. All the brands are here: just remember they are counterfeits. Brands you will find here include Louis Vuitton, Burberry, Dior, Fendi, Gucci, and Prada and Guess just to name a few.

The thing to remember when shopping in Chinatown is NEVER pay what they ask for an item. It is mandatory to bargain and reduce the price by at least 70%. You will be amazed at how low the traders will go if you turn away and start to walk off. They will call out to you and reduce the price to a ridiculously low price just to get the sale. Try it, it works.

The big tip here is to use the bathroom at the hotel *before* you venture out in to China Town as the public conveniences here leave a lot to be desired. It is also advisable to take a bottle of water with you, as it can get quite hot walking around the market stalls. Also, don't forget to take cash.

The market area can be very crowded from 5pm onwards but many of the stalls are open for trading during the day from about 11.30am and the bonus is that it isn't too crowded. Many bargains can be found here during the day due to the small number of visitors such as shoes and handbags, watches and clothing – all copies but all great quality and value. This unusually busy street becomes a shopping carnival at night with stalls presenting a

range of products from ethnic goods, clothing and cosmetics to watches and leather goods. It is really at night that Petaling Street really comes to life and should be experienced.

Central Market (Pasar Budaya)

Open 7 days 11am – late

Jalan Benteng

A favourite spot to watch craft making, painting and to buy local souvenirs. This former wet market has been transformed into a modern, air conditioned shopping bazaar with 2 floors of shopping and a wide variety of local crafts and souvenirs. It is also well known for its food outlets where the best of local cuisine is served. The shops are small and crammed with all manner of handicrafts and ethnic items like pashminas, batik cloth, jewellery, woodwork carvings, silver, table ware, handmade kites, glassware, t-shirts and musical instruments.

Across the Central Market is “Goldsmith’s Row” offering a myriad of jewellery shops, where gold, diamonds, jade and other precious gems are offered at reasonable prices.

Other major handicraft and souvenir outlets are the *Komplekx Budaya Kraf* at Jalan Conlay, the *Infokraf Centre* at Jalan Sultan Hishamuddin and the *Batik Malaysia Berhad* outlets in the city centre. These establishments offer exquisite silverware, pewter, woodcarvings and batik or brocade. The *Royal Selangor* factory at Setapak offers a wide range of pewter ware such as mugs, goblets, cutlery, ash trays and figurines.

Jalan Masjid India

Open 7 days 11am – late

“Masjid India” is perhaps the unofficial Indian quarter of Kuala Lumpur and is where you can find all things Indian- from saris, textiles and authentic Indian kohl and bhindi to colourful glass bangles, Indian jewellery and accessories. You will find plenty of shops offering DVDs and CDs of the latest “Bollywood” movies and music. There are also many Indian restaurants and eating places that serve authentic, mainly vegetarian cuisine. It is a bustling, noisy and oftentimes smelly environment, especially on a hot day. Take your time to wander the streets and bazaars for wonderful Indian items. Good shops for saris are **Hanifa’s** and **Madras Stores**.

Cakes and Pastries

There are 2 really wonderful cake and pastry shops in the Bukit Bintang area. One is called **Secret Recipe** and is located on street level at **Lot 10 Shopping Plaza** and the other is called **The Australian Confectionery Company** and is located at 74 Jalan Imbi, around the corner from Bukit Bintang. Their phone number is 603 2142 1759. They have a wonderfully extensive array of cakes and their chocolate mascarpone cake is a melt in the mouth experience. It is a little bit of a walk away from Jalan Bukit Bintang but well worth it if you are in search of a cake for a special occasion.

There is also another cake shop/bakery located in Berjaya Times Square called Bread History which also has a good range to choose from.