



Travel Stories by Amaru & Suzanne



Kuala Lumpur and Melaka

by Amaru & Suzanne, May 17th 2006

The flight to Kuala Lumpur went without a problem, it took us around 50min. Once we landed we got our luggage quickly and caught the shuttle bus in to the city. On the bus they were showing a movie (it takes around 60-90min from the airport to the city), MI3, what a coincidence, we just saw that movie about a week ago at the cinemas in Penang. Obviously a pirated copy, which we could definately tell when the guy recording the movie accidently dropped the camera....weird.

Anyways, we made it to KL Sentral and were immediatly attacked by taxi drivers, "you need taxi, where u go?". We asked for the price to Chinatown and it was a bit much, but we were both tired after a long day of travel so we just said yes and jumped in the cab (later we found out that from KL Sentral station to Chinatown it's only one stop on the subway....suckers!!).

The hotel we had read about in our guidebook was not really what we were expecting and we ended up walking to another one down the street. This hotel was a bit more pricy but we figured that when staying in a big city it's nice to have a pleasant room to come home to after a long day in the heat and exhaust fumes of the city. Our room had aircon, ensuite, tv and even a small fridge where we could keep our water cool.....not bad!



Chinatown by night

This is what we arrived to...



Signs

Easy to find out way around

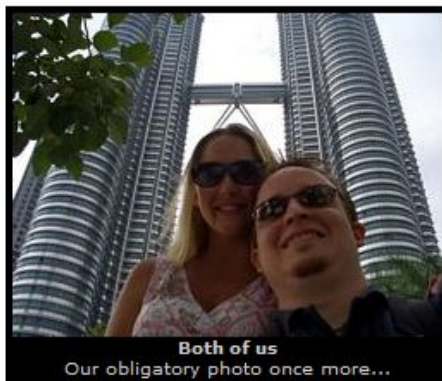
The first night after we checked in we walked along chinatown market and were once again attacked by all the sellers on the street..."do u want watches, DVD's, Wallets, T-shirts etc...". We found a nice hawker stall and had a simple dinner (very cheap as well) and went back to the room early.

We later on just relaxed on the bed watching tv and trying to find any programs at all in english when we saw the best ad so far for shampoo. The ad went a little like this: A man brings his girlfriend/wife to his parents, she is a muslim so she wears a headscarf, something happends and the girl looks sad, later on she discovers a good shampoo and we almost get to see her hair when she is washing it. Afterwards she comes out wearing a new headscarf and her hair apparently feels a lot better, the boyfriend/husband looks at her in

awe.....amazing how you can advertise a shampoo commercial on a muslim woman.

The next morning we decided to start our sightseeing of Kuala Lumpur by checking out it's most famous landmark, the Petronas Towers. We took the subway over to KLCC (a huge shopping centre) and were wondering where exactly the towers were. So we stepped outside and looked up.....ahhh, there they are, just above us, well, let's try to get up there.

Entry to the skybridge in the Petronas is free, but they only issue limited amounts of tickets per day, which is on a first arrived first served basis. When we got there at 10am the tickets were all allocated, this being on a Sunday, and mothers day on top of that. So we thought we get it the next day but when we looked at the schedule we saw that the skybridge was closed on Mondays (why do so many museum and other tourist attractions close on Mondays!?!). So here and then we decided that tomorrow we would do a small excursion to the city of Melaka, about two hours south of KL, more about that later on....



Well, since we couldn't get up to the Petronas Tower we decided to go to the KL Tower instead, this one isn't free but you get to stay up there as long as you want, they give you a guided tour on video headset and the tower is almost twice the height of the Petronas Skybridge.

After enjoying the views for a while, spotting our hotel and taking a few photos of the Petronas Towers we left and made our way over to the area called "Golden Triangle". This is a business district but also houses some of the big shopping centres of the city. We strolled around for a while, not really shopping, just having a look and after having some food at another Hawker Stall we made our way over to Chinatown again. The walk back took us around 90min and we got to see a bit of the real city along the way. We even discovered where one of the main bus stations were.

Later on that night we made our way over to the Petronas Towers again to have a look at them at night and get some nice evening shots of them. On the way over we passed a fence with lots of trees behind it and here we saw lots of monkeys climbing on the fence, walking and running on our side, not what we expected to see in a big city like KL but on the other hand, the city has lots of big jungle areas in the middle of the city.

Before we reached the towers we also had a look at the Tourist centre where we picked up a good map of the city and asked where we could buy bus tickets to Melaka. They were selling tickets right next door so we went over there and there was no one there.....after waiting for about 30min a lady shows up and starts to help the first couple. She seems to have lots of problems with the computer and must ask for help from another guy. In the middle of this one guy steps in and just goes straight for the lady and pays her for a ticket.....waiting in line was obviously a thing he hadn't heard of. Here I started to get a bit annoyed and when it turns up that they don't have any change for him I just got up and told Suz that we were leaving, I had enough by then and Suz wanted to leave as well.





The towers were really stunning at night, we just sat for a while in the park watching them and just relaxing. We had done lots of walking this day...and there was still more to come. Both of us had a craving for some Indian food, and we thought that Little India would be the best place to find one. But first we needed to get tickets to Melaka. So we went off to the bus station we had passed earlier that day, got the tickets and then we wanted to eat. We thought that the best way to find an Indian restaurant in Little India was to ask an Indian taxidriver. We found one and said that we wanted to go to Little India, the price was quite expensive (these drivers don't like to turn on the meter, you have to negotiate the deal first). We told him that we wanted to find a good Indian restaurant and he told us to walk across the street, turn right at the corner and after 20m there was a good restaurant.

Said and done, we found the place and ordered the traditional banana leaf special, you use a banana leaf as your plate and they put rice, curries and pickles on it, they also bring out lots of naan bread and popadoms. Whenever you start to run out of anything they are right there to fill it up again....I was in heaven and we haven't eaten that much in a long time. The food was really really good and it was quite cheap as well considering how much we got. We rolled on home to our hotel room after the meal.

The next morning I woke up with a serious case of the sniffles...I had a runny nose and kept on sneezing every 5 seconds..... but we had our tickets so we went down to the bus station and caught the bus to Melaka.



Once there (it only took around 2 hours) we followed the walking tour of our guidebook which took us to the most interesting places in Chinatown and around. We saw the famous Church left by the Dutch and then improved by the Britts, we saw a windmill right in the middle of town....weird, and we also saw a few trishaws which were very decorative. During this day we made a few stops here and there for food and drinks, and we kept an eye open for any Pharmacy...which we couldn't find (needed something for my cold).



While we were walking in Chinatown we came across a shoemaker who makes from original pattern shoes for bound feet once used by the Chinese. The shoes were really tiny, Suz put her small feet next to them and it made her feet look gigantic. Neither one of us could understand the purpose of this tradition.

Later on after climbing a hill to a Church Ruin we decided to cut the day short and head back to KL, it was very hot, we were both tired and my cold was being annoying... So we caught a cab to the bus station and the driver gave us a guided tour on our way there.....quite nice!

Another 2 hours later and we were entering KL again when we spotted the tolls just before entering the city.....we had seen them before but hadn't gotten around to take a photo of it. Basically there were lots of

signs saying "Say no to Porn, Press Alt F4". We found it to be hilarious and also that it was such an odd place to put it.

Well, the next day I was fine again, no sneezing or runny nose (weird) and we managed to make it to the Skybridge in the Petronas Towers (early enough to get tickets this time, even though we had to wait in line for about 30min). So up we went, had a bit of a look, took some photos and then we had to come down, you can't stay up for as long as you want..... good thing it's free otherwise we would have been a bit annoyed.

The rest of the day we spent walking around the colonial area of the city, seeing the cricket ground, the court house, a weird islamic building, the awesome trainstation and the national mosque (which was off limits for tourists anyways). We were by this time exhausted so we went back to the hotel room to relax for a while under the a/c and tv. Later on we decided to catch a movie, we had done enough walking for a day. We got tickets for the movie "Poseidon" and it wasn't all that bad. After making it back to Chinatown we had a simple meal and went back to our hotel room.



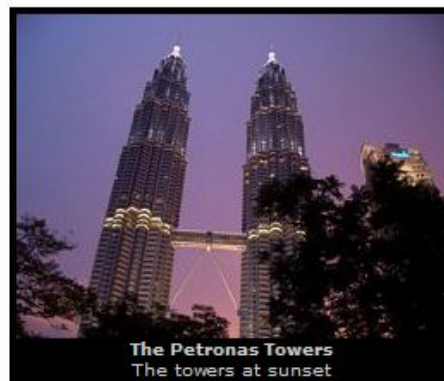


The next day we had a long sleep in, had breakfast, packed, checked out and spent a good few hours in front of the computers writing our travelblogs (the things we do for you guys....hehe). Either way it was a good choice for us since we didn't want to be all sweaty and nasty before boarding an 11 hour flight to Vienna.

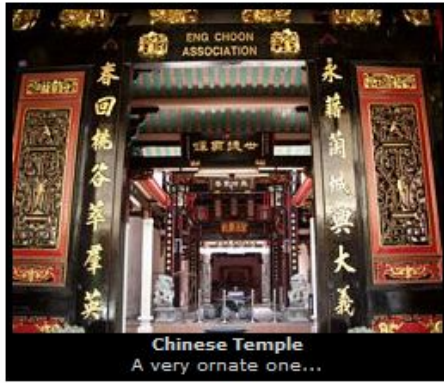
Around 9pm we got our bags and took the train to the airport to board our flight.....

Kuala Lumpur was pretty much what we had expected it to be, a very busy Asian city like Singapore or to some extent Bangkok, but still very different. We both enjoyed ourselves but the city doesn't give you the same "I will be back" feeling like for example Bangkok does. And Melaka.....well, it's a very small town with a big influence of Portuguese, Dutch and British colonials. It was pretty and quite nice, but since it's so small you run out of options pretty soon.

Anyways.....goodbye to Asia for now, it's been a good 5 weeks but we are glad to be rid of the squat toilets! And now.... bring on Europe!!







Chinese Temple
A very ornate one...



Shop for bound feet shoes
From the old chinese custom



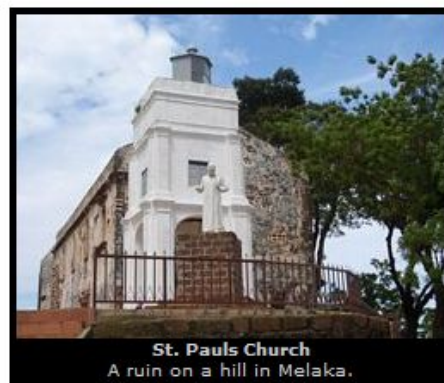
Bound Feet shoes
They are really tiny...



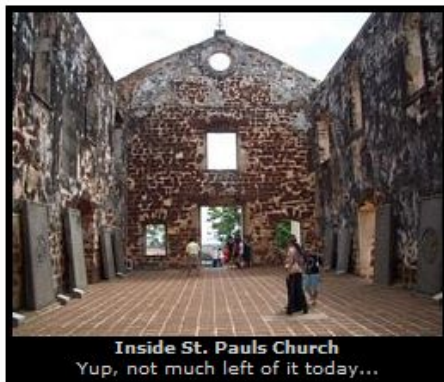
And I thought Suz's feet were small...
...not compared to these shoes though.



How can you walk in these?
We were both amazed!



St. Pauls Church
A ruin on a hill in Melaka.



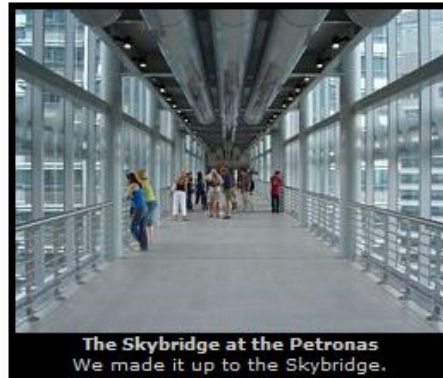
Inside St. Pauls Church
Yup, not much left of it today...



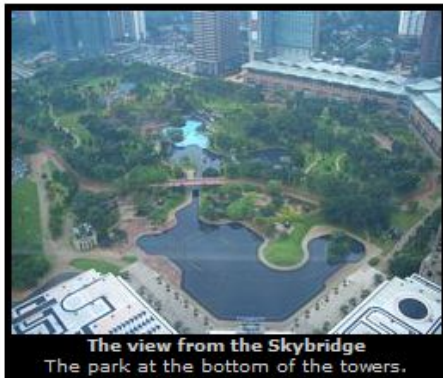
Strange....
....to see this sign at a toll booth near KL



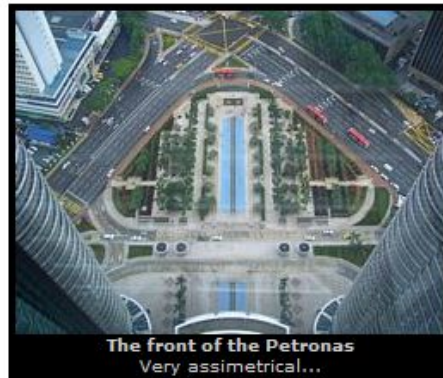
Coming into KL, not hard to see which city we are coming into!



The Skybridge at the Petronas
We made it up to the Skybridge.



The view from the Skybridge
The park at the bottom of the towers.



The front of the Petronas
Very assymetrical...



The two of us on the Skybridge
No selfpotrait this time =))



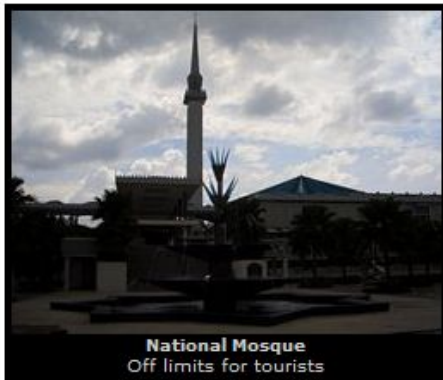
We found a cricket ground
They will be hitting cars...



KL Court House
A beautiful building in the colonial district.



A very Islamic looking building
Can't see windows because of it's design.



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