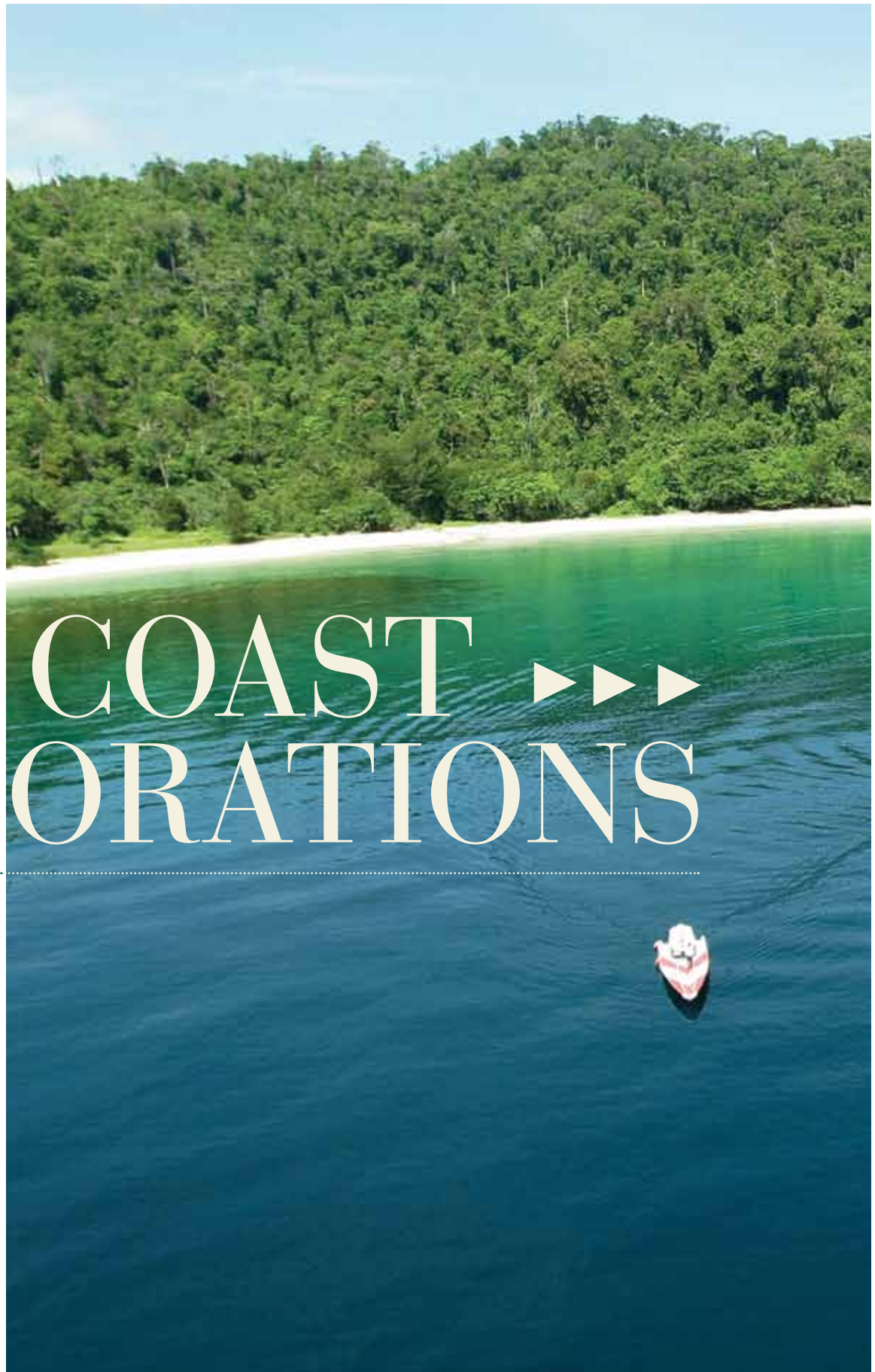


# EAST COAST EXPLORATIONS

Yachting destinations off the beaten path of Malaysia's eastern coast and Borneo may be considered new cruising grounds by many superyacht captains, but these destinations are definitely fast becoming favorites for superyachts due to the region's unique natural beauty and adventure-tapped itineraries.





Yanneke Too – taken in Borneo. The 36m S/y Yanneke Too is a beautifully designed luxury superyacht launched in 1995. Charles Dwyer oversaw her early design stages with the owner and has been her captain ever since.



Borneo Sabah sunset

**T**he west coast of Peninsula Malaysia is relatively well travelled and documented by cruising superyachts, but the east coast - Sarawak and Sabah, Borneo - offer an all together more adventurous prospect. These largely unexplored cruising grounds include some of the most spectacular and beautiful waters in South East Asia, with islands and mainland attractions that rival best in the world. The east coast of Malaysia fringes the South China Sea, offering crystal seas and pristine white sand beaches framing dozens of picturesque islands.

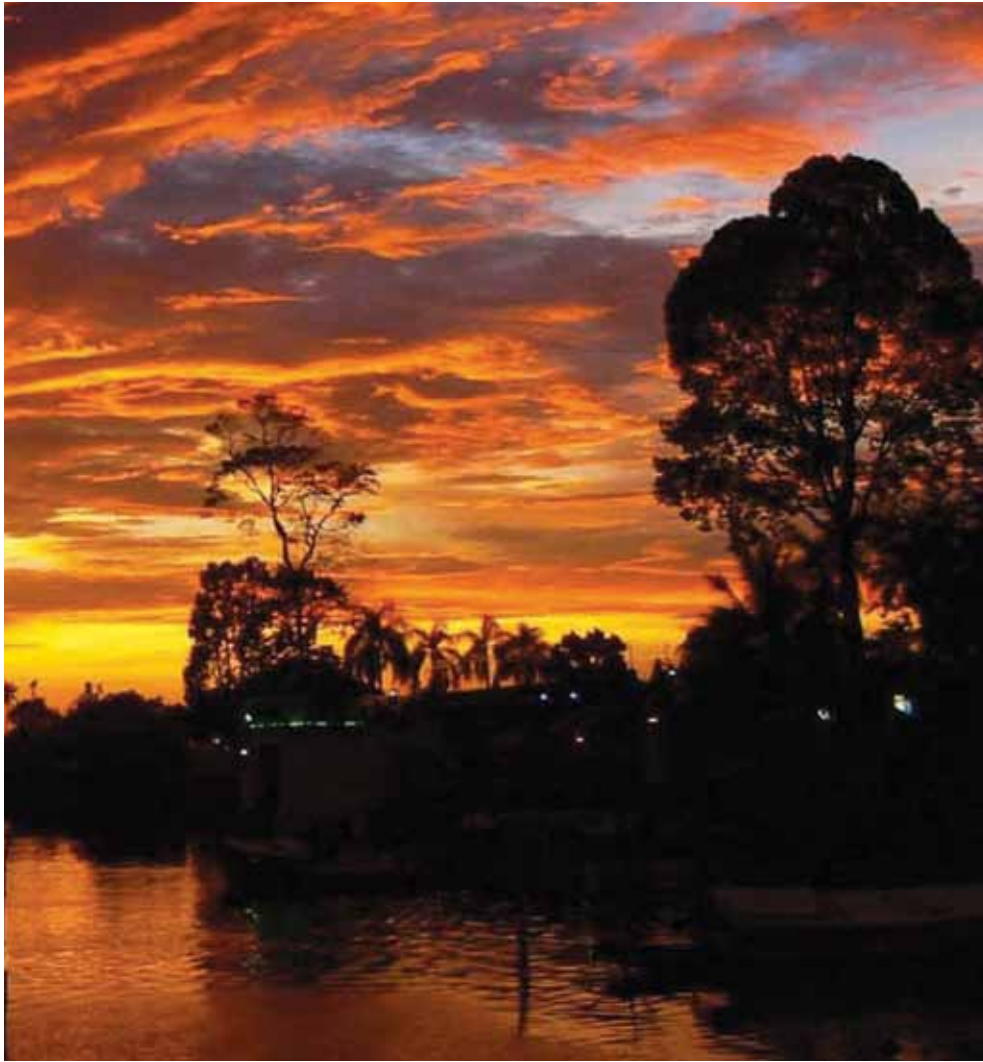
Cruising grounds in three countries are easily reached in a relatively small area: Indonesia to the south, Borneo - with Brunei in the centre and the Malaysian states of Sarawak and Sabah to the north. Amongst these destinations, journeying to Borneo with a focus on Sabah is highly recommended as a supremely picturesque and hassle free itinerary. The surrounding waters boast some of the best dive sites on the planet and include Layang Layang situated at the southern end of the Spratly island chain, and 180 miles North West of

Kota Kinabalu, there's Sipidan, Kapalai and Lankayan on the east coast, and Banggi and Balambangan on the north coast. All of these islands (and many more) offer the serious and amateur diver alike a huge array of underwater attractions.

#### **Borneo's treasures**

Borneo is one of the most diverse cruising playgrounds in the world and allows visitors to combine azure waters, tropical islands, and mainland coastal bays with an extraordinarily diverse selection of mainland beauty. Towering above Borneo is the highest mountain in South East Asia - Mount Kinabalu, and beneath it, virgin rainforest conservation areas unfold with waterfalls, canyons, exotic wildlife, flora and fauna and a myriad of adventure and eco-tourism activities on offer, all accessible as a day or overnight excursion ashore.

Checking in at the capital city of Sabah, Kota Kinabalu (affectionately known as, 'KK'), you'll find many anchorages close to the city along with good facilities at the main marinas, which include one of the region's



MORE THAN 3,000 SPECIES OF FISH AND HUNDREDS OF CORAL SPECIES HAVE BEEN CLASSIFIED IN THIS RICHEST OF ECOSYSTEMS AND THE DIVERSITY AND ABUNDANCE OF MARINE LIFE FOUND AT SIPADAN EARNS IT ITS REPUTATION OF BEING 'ONE OF THE TEN BEST DIVE LOCATIONS IN THE WORLD'



Diving in Borneo

best at Suter Harbour, the only fully equipped marina in Sabah, strategically situated between the city centre and the airport. KK is an ideal hub to explore the interior of Sabah, where visitors have the option to view and/or climb Mt. Kinabalu and also visit some of the many natural inland wonders. The Borneo rainforest is 130 million years old making it the oldest in the world and 70 million years the senior of the Amazon. There are about 15,000 species of plants and trees, 221 species of terrestrial mammals and 420 species of resident birds. Some of these species include the severely endangered Sumatran Rhinoceros, Asian Pigmy Elephant and the Bornean Clouded Leopard, along with the Orangutan and Proboscis monkey. A 35 minute flight from KK takes you to the Sepilok Orang Utan Rehabilitation Centre to meet orphaned orangutans up-close. Alternatively, you can visit Sukau along the Kinabatangan River, an area rich in wildlife that includes jungle elephants and the only place on earth for the above mentioned proboscis monkeys. It's also possible to make any of these trips in

a day via helicopter, and passengers can always opt to stay in KK to visit some of the natural land wonders while their vessel is in passage.

#### Island legends

Several rivers along Malaysia's east coast empty into the China Sea, but the mouths of these rivers cannot be navigated due to silting up. Sailors of old who wanted to re-supply and fill their water casks had to turn to islands like Tioman, making this island very popular with early Chinese traders. Tioman Island, with eight main villages (the largest and most populous being Kampung Tekek in the north) is a densely forested island, sparsely inhabited and surrounded by numerous coral reefs. It's a popular scuba diving spot whose gorgeous beaches were depicted in the movie, South Pacific, as 'Bali Hai'. Apart from its diverse marine life, the inland rainforest area on Tioman is a strictly enforced nature reserve with several protected species of mammals on the island from a total of 45 species of mammals and 138 species

SY EOS in Borneo



Wheelbarrow full of Orangutans at Sepilok Orang Utan Sanctuary

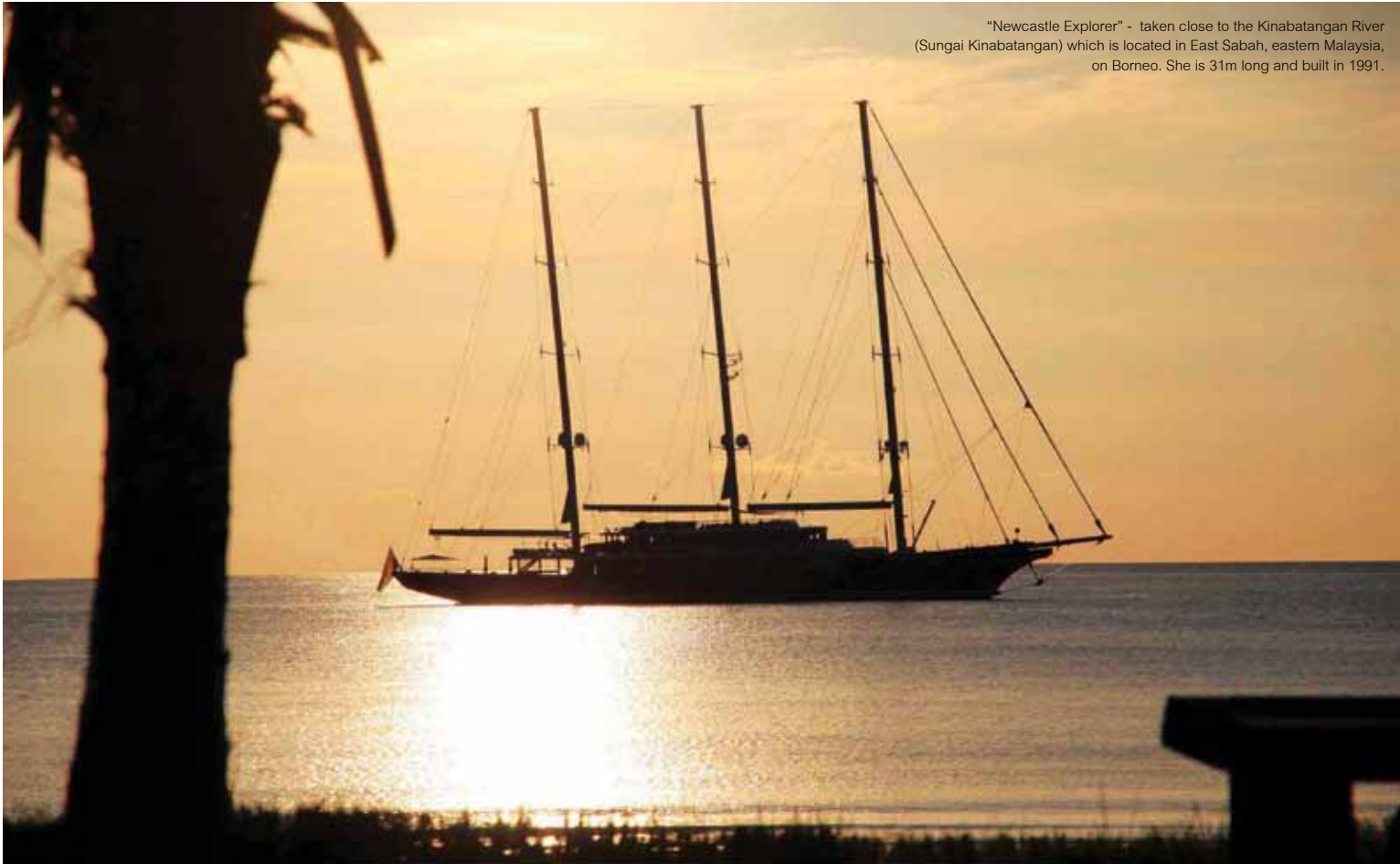
of birds, including the majestic Frigate bird. Species endemic to its shores might be glimpsed, like the 'Tioman Walking Catfish' and, possibly, the opportunity of seeing baby sea turtles being released to the sea by the 'Sea Turtle and Sustainable Living Year-Round Volunteer Program' on Tioman Island.

#### Diving Eutopia

The internationally famous island of Sipadan lies five degrees north of the equator in the Sulawesi Sea (Celebes Sea) and is thickly forested and surrounded by sandy beaches. The oceanic island was formed by living corals growing on top of an extinct undersea volcano rising 600m from the seabed. The geographic position of Sipadan puts it in the centre of the richest marine habitat in the world, the heart of the Indo-Pacific basin. More than 3,000 species of fish and hundreds of coral species have been classified in this richest of ecosystems and the diversity and abundance of marine life found at Sipadan earns it its reputation of being 'one of the ten

best dive locations in the world'. History was made recently in Sipadan, when Asia Pacific Superyachts Borneo GM, Alvin Teh, received permission from the local authorities, for M/Y Double Haven's custom build CAT tender to visit Sipadan Island. This was the first time any private, foreign flagged superyacht had been granted special diving permits for the protected area.

The east coast areas of Malaysia are definitely enjoying increased interest from superyachts from around the world. Big name vessels that have visited South East Asian waters include M.Y. Sunchaser, M.Y. Lady Kenara, S.Y. Naos, S.Y. Vivid, S.Y. Queen Of Andaman, M.Y. Sinbad, S.Y. Obsession, M.Y. Karima and M.Y. Andiamo. "The region is making huge strides in its workforce as well as expanding its facilities for major refit work and should certainly be considered if you are cruising the region," says Captain Nick Coombes, Asia Pacific Superyachts Malaysia MD. "There is so much for superyachts in adventure, beauty and discovery amongst islands in Malaysia and Borneo." ■



"Newcastle Explorer" - taken close to the Kinabatangan River (Sungai Kinabatangan) which is located in East Sabah, eastern Malaysia, on Borneo. She is 31m long and built in 1991.

#### TRAVEL TIPS

Located 800km off the eastern coast of peninsular mainland, the Malaysian territory of Borneo island occupying the northern third, wrapping around Brunei on the northwest coast and bordering the Indonesia part of the island on the south. Water borders: South China Sea.

#### Passport and Visa Information

Citizens of US, UK, and EU countries may enter Malaysia without a visa for a period of 3 months. For updates and visa requirement information for other countries, visit the Ministry of Foreign Affairs site ([www.kln.gov.my](http://www.kln.gov.my))

#### Currency

Malaysian Ringgit (MYR)  
 USD1:MYR3  
 EUR1:MYR4.3  
 GBP1:MYR4.9  
 (for exchange rate updates check on [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com))

#### Official Language(s)

Malay

#### Climate:

Warm and humid year-round, with the heaviest monsoon season from October to February.

#### Quick Facts:

State Capitals: Kuching (Sarawak state), Kota Kinabalu (Sabah state)  
 Country / Area Calling Code(s): +60 / (0)82 - (0)89 depending on city  
 Electricity: 230/240V, 50 Hz  
 Type(s) of plug / socket: mainly C, G

#### Getting There

##### Airport

Kota Kinabalu International Airport (BKI) in Sabah state is a major air hub serving East Malaysia. Depending on your point of origin, may include a connection in Kuala Lumpur.

#### Approximate (Scheduled Flight) Travel Times

Los Angeles: 19hr+ depending on connecting layover  
 New York: 20hr+ depending on connecting layover  
 London: 15hr+ depending on connecting layover  
 Moscow: 14hr+ depending on connecting layover  
 Shanghai: 7hr+ depending on connecting layover  
 Sydney: 13hr+ depending on connecting layover

#### Superyacht Contacts

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**Information courtesy of Linda Cartlidge and Simon Farmer. Photos courtesy of Asia Pacific Superyachts**