Beautiful beaches of Malaysia

Khairul Ashraf Kammed takes a look at 10 beaches featured in 101 Best Beaches.Com Asia

TOURISM Malaysia has helped select 15 beaches from 10 States to feature in 101 Best Beaches.Com Asia, a new book by renowned Australian conservationist Brad Farmer and photographer-research assistant, Jaka Adamic. The book is expected to be Asia’s version of the 101 Best Australian Beaches, which is the first authoritative guide on beaches in the world. It is also supported by Tourism Australia.

Here are 10 beaches featured in the book.

1. DESARU BEACH IN JOHOR
   Located about 100km from Johor Baru, Desaru is very popular for its clean beaches, excellent golf courses and unique attractions.
   The beauty of its natural forest with views of the South China Sea also make it an exciting destination for tourists from near and far.
   The beaches are clean, lined with casuarina trees and stretch 25km.
   Visitors can enjoy fun-filled activities such as fishing, boating, swimming, and hiking among others.
   There are numerous hotels, resorts and chalets in the area, making accommodation easy and convenient.

2. PULAU PERHENTIAN, TERENGGANU
   Situated 21km off the coast of Terengganu, it consists of the islands of Pulau Perhentian Besar and Pulau Perhentian Kecil.
   Pulau Perhentian, which means "stopover island", boasts unspoilt jungles, windswept palms, powdery white beaches and sapphire blue waters. It is a sanctuary for fishermen, migratory birds and holiday-makers.

3. PANTAI SANTUBONG, SARAWAK
   Santubong, located about 32km north of Kuching, is synonymous with fine resorts and superb natural attractions. These range from wildlife tours to cultural performances.
   Santubong Peninsula is also home to Sarawak’s finest beach stays and the famous Cultural Village. Among the beaches of interest in Santubong Peninsula are Permai Beach, Santubong Beach, Damai Beach and Pantai Panjang or Long Beach.

4. TELUK KEMANG IN PORT DICKSON, NEGRI SEMBILAN
   Pantai Teluk Kemang is one of the popular weekend retreats for city dwellers in Port Dickson. Port Dickson is said to have been named after a British officer, Sir John Frederick Dickson, in 1889. Others say the place was named after another British officer who supervised the British ports handling ore in Lukut, a district of Port Dickson at the time.
   Pantai Teluk Kemang has ample amenities and good infrastructure as well as various types of accommodation for visitors.
BEING the centre of Langkawi’s tourism infrastructure, Pantai Cenang’s wide and long beach is the most popular beach on the island. It is a lively place at night with various bars and restaurants. Despite being the most popular beach on the island with its dense infrastructure, some spots along the beach are still tranquil. All kinds of facilities and services are available along Jalan Pantai Cenang, which runs parallel to the beach. Accommodation can be found on both sides of the road. On the beach side, you can find resorts and bungalows with beach views while on the other side on the road, you can find more budget-friendly accommodation at lower prices.

**5 CENANG IN PULAU LANGKAWI, KEDAH**

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**7 PULAU REDANG, TERENGGANU**

LOCATED 45km off the coast of Kuala Terengganu, Pulau Redang is the largest of a group of nine protected islands dotting the South China Sea. The island offers crystal clear waters and numerous dive sites for enthusiasts. Sheltered within the Pulau Redang Marine Park, the waters here are rich in marine life. The waters around Pulau Redang also contain two historic shipwrecks: The H.M.S. Prince of Wales and H.M.S. Repulse, which sank here at the start of World War II, setting the stage for the Japanese occupation of Malaya. This paradise island is perfect for snorkelling, swimming, scuba diving, jungle trekking, boating and canoeing. No fishing is allowed within a 3.3km radius of the island as Pulau Redang is gazetted as a marine park.

**8 BATU FERRINGHI, PENANG**

THE most popular beach in Penang, Batu Ferringhi is situated along the coastal road northwest of George Town and lined with international-standard resorts. Soak in the sun or unwind on the beach while you enjoy a host of aquatic thrills, from wind-surfing to canoeing. For a spine-tingling adventure, try parasailing and enjoy the view of the beach from the sky. As the sun sets, Batu Ferringhi comes alive with a carnival-like atmosphere; the open-air bazaar sells almost everything, from ornate curios to enticing souvenir items. Watch local artisans demonstrate the intricate art of craft-making and batik painting. Dubbed the Ferringhi Walk, the bazaar offers shoppers an interesting shopping experience.

**9 PULAU PANGKOR, PERAK**

PANGKOR, with its charming mix of fishing settlements and resorts, is a fascinating and convenient holiday destination. Visitors get the chance to live near fishermen and observe their lifestyle as well as enjoy the fine beaches and resort amenities. Pangkor’s two popular beach areas of Pasir Bogak and Teluk Nipah offer activities such as scuba diving, snorkelling, wind surfing and fishing. While Pasir Bogak is quite developed, Teluk Nipah still retains its kampung or village atmosphere. Teluk Ketapang or Turtle Bay still receives turtles on their egg-laying pilgrimages. Some of the resorts on the island have excellent golf courses.

**10 TANJUNG ARU, SABAH**

LOCATED at the end of Jalan Tunku Abdul Rahman and about 6km from Kota Kinabalu, this place is close to the hearts of the locals, and just one visit to the beach will tell you why. Taking its name from the casuarina or aru trees that fringe the fine sands, this is where one might get a ringside seat to one of the greatest sunset views anywhere on Earth, as the crimson sun dips slowly into the horizon, leaving the skies a brilliant red.

The Tanjung Aru beach is also home to Shangri-la’s Tanjung Aru Resort, the Kinabalu Golf Club and the Kinabalu Yacht Club.