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Holiday haven by Pedu Lake

Stephen Ng

THE man-made Pedu Lake in Kedah offers rest for the soul and plenty of fun-packed activities for the adventurous.

And holiday-makers to the Desa Utara Pedu Lake Resort can find it all there.

With a cool breeze blowing, relaxing music playing softly in the background, friendly people, and the beauty of Mother Nature all around, any visitor would be charmed.

Styled after the traditional Malay kampung or village concept, the resort has 106 luxuriously appointed deluxe rooms and suites that looked more like traditional Malay attap houses.

Some come for the water sports, jungle-trekking or fishing. Others, like me, were there to simply enjoy the beauty of nature.

A first-time visitor, Sally Lau of Penang, said her youngest son Adriel, 4, enjoyed the experience so much that he refused to leave at the end of their stay.

"We had to book in advance for our next holiday here," she said. The family brought along mountain bikes and dinghy.

Pedu Lake Resort is unique as it offers a taste of kampung lifestyle with the modern facilities expected of a three-star resort, said Lau, who said the family had been holidaying abroad for a number of years.

She was also fascinated with the resort's conservation programme, especially the preservation of a pokok gelam right in the middle of the Malinja Coffee House.

Nassaruddin Sani of Asian Adventure (M) Sdn Bhd, which has been organising four-wheel drive events since 1991, visits the resort every two or three months. "I love it," he says. "It's not overbuilt and has kept a big part of the environment."

There's also an Adventure Camp at the resort which has 16 chalets, two toilets, a surau, a kitchen and a dining area. The camp can house 80 guests.

Used for motivational camps sessions and physical training by companies for their staff, the camp costs RM1,000 a night.

"Here, the law of the jungle rules. To survive, one has to remain competitive," said Rahim Saad, a former army engineer who is the resort's assistant security chief.

Trees like meranti, merbau, cengal, nering, buloh, teja, merdang, kemudu and benang gatal are easily spotted while trekking.

The resort, which covers 160 hectares, was officially launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Aug 11, 1995.

Pedu Lake was formerly a valley before a dam was built; at some spots, the lake is 100 metres deep.

Flanking the resort are lush tropical forests, rich with flora and fauna. Tourists can fish in the lake or do a spot of jungle trekking.

For water sports lovers, there are jetskis, canoes, crusier boats, jetboats and fishing boats for rental while bird-watching is another popular pasttime. Otters and kingfishers are quite common while iguanas and monitor lizards can be seen with a bit of luck; the locals would be more than willing to tell the visitor where.

For more information, contact Desa Utara Pedu Lake Resort's Kuala Lumpur sales office at Tel: 03-7161325/7166426 (Julia/Cherie/Naga), while the resort can be contacted at 04-7328888 (Roslan/Ismail).

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