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Belgian writer launches his fourth book on Malaysia

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IT IS normal to see foreign tourists instantaneously falling in love with our country because of its charms, but for a Belgian writer, his own endeavours to promote Malaysia is second to none.

Since 1979, Walter Francois has visited Malaysia 59 times and his love for this country continues to be reflected in his publications. In his fourth and latest coffee-table book "Malaysia, Walter's Second Home", he has adopted the 1Malaysia theme and transmitted it through the photographs that he captured. Typical of Francois' adventures in Malaysia, he picked a different route by going to the places tourist guides do not normally take.



Special gift: Francois presenting his new book "Malaysia, Walter's Second Home" to Dr Mahathir. Looking on is Syed Yusof.

"It is a combination of visual documentation of some of the best shots taken off the beaten track and some tourist shots," wrote Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak in his message in the book.

"Walter Frangois has managed to combine the eight values of 1Malaysia: perseverance, acceptance, education, integrity, meritocracy, humility, loyalty and culture of excellence, which can be found in snippets in his attempt to combine diversity of Malaysia," added Najib.

Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who launched the book recently, said that Francois was a true friend of Malaysia.

"The self-funded writer's continuous love and endeavour to promote Malaysia brought him on a trip all around the country in capturing the beauty of Malaysia and its people," he said.

The former prime minister unveiled and signed the book and was later presented with a copy of the book of some 256 pages and 224 astonishing photographs covering 13 states and three federal territories of Malaysia.

The book launch at the Concorde Hotel Kuala Lumpur was hosted by the Belgian ambassador Dr Frank Van De Craen and Concorde Hotel Kuala Lumpur director Tan Sri Syed Yusof Tun Syed Nasir. Priced at RM190, the book is currently available at all Malaysian bookstores and online via www.walterfrancois.com