

The Malaysian round of the championship takes place at the Sepang International Circuit near Kuala Lumpur. It's the first time of the year cars compete on a purpose-built F1 track and the perfect place to find out who's hot and who's not.

It has the cheapest tickets on the calendar and is competitively priced against other grands prix in the region. Accommodation, transport and food costs are relatively low compared to most western countries. KL is also the hub for AirAsia, a leading low cost carrier in the Asia-Pacific region.

Unlike the semi-street circuit of Melbourne, it is possible to see as much as half of the circuit from your seat, and the view from most grandstands is very good. The track features several fast sweeping bends which give the cars a noticeable rhythm that is a pleasure to drive or to watch.

<index.php/circuit-guides/formula-1/malaysia-kuala-lumpur>
K1 Grandstand - PHOTO : FREDERIC LE FLOC'H / DPPI for Renault Sport F1

As far as the support races are concerned, the GP2 Series no longer features on the program, however, the schedule once again includes the Porsche Carrera Cup Asia. There will also be a concert after the race, headlined this year by Calvin Harris.

KL is developing at such an impressive pace that it is probably worth of a yearly visit. The atmosphere during the weekend is festive and charming thanks to its diverse mix of Malay, Chinese and Indian cultures. The city is also making a name for itself as a major shopping destination and has a huge selection of cuisines to choose from. If this is your first time in KL, a trip to KLCC (Kuala Lumpur City Centre) to see the grandiose Petronas Twin Towers is almost compulsory.

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CONTENTS
[1 // Location and accommodation](#)
[2 // Money matters](#)
[3 // Ticket prices](#)
[4 // Which grandstand to choose](#)
[5 // Tips and recommendations](#)
[6 // How spectators rate the event](#)
[7 // GrandPrixAdvisor fixes](#)
[8 // Useful links to prepare your Malaysian trip](#)

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1 // LOCATION AND ACCOMMODATION

The SIC is located in Sepang, approximately 50 km from KL and situated across the road from the International Airport (KLIA) and Low Cost Carrier Terminal (LCCT).

The track is easily reached from the main city; so don't miss out on the weekend party atmosphere by staying closer to the circuit. It takes about an hour to reach the circuit from KL Sentral using the KLIA Ekspres train and shuttle service. Alternatively, there is a Skybus coach service from KL Sentral, KLCC or LCCT. Taxis can also be a cost effective solution when traveling as a group of three or more.

The journey back to KL can be frustrating on Saturday and Sunday. It takes about three hours worth of queuing and traffic jams to go back to the city centre once the race finishes with the KLIA Ekspres and associated shuttle buses (and up to seven hours with the Skybus service). If waiting this long doesn't sound like you, there are a couple of hotels at the KLIA terminal and a Tune Hotel at the LCCT terminal if don't mind missing out on the F1 weekend city vibe. See the [8 // Useful](#)

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links to prepare your Malaysian trip">useful links section for more details. Using a taxi, it is possible to stay near Bangi and Putrajaya, where most Formula 1 team personnel and the media tend to reside for the week.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">KL hotels can be a bit of hit and miss, especially those rated three stars or below. Stay in the KLCC/Bukit Bintang area for the major shopping malls and to soak up the nightlife in trendy bars and clubs (Luna Bar, Sky Bar, Zouk), or stay close to Sentral for easy transportation to the track. For peace of mind, book a four and five star hotel. They only cost a fraction of what they'd normally charge in western countries. If this is still outside your budget, use Booking.com to select your hotel. Their reviews are reliable as they can only be submitted by verified guests after check out.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">
Main Grandstand North - Image:MERCEDES AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team</p> <p style="text-align: justify;"></p>

<h4>2 // MONEY MATTERS</h4>

<p style="text-align: justify;">The most expensive part of the trip is probably going to be the airfare if you do not have access to a low cost carrier route to KL. For this reason, booking flights as early as possible is recommended if you're planning to extend your stay in the region. Tickets for the grand prix usually go on sale in late August or early September, however, keep your options open as the World Motor Sport Council only ratifies the F1 calendar in December. Expect it to be scheduled one or two weeks after the Australian GP.</p> <p style="text-align:

justify;">Return airfares to Kuala Lumpur start from:
 Melbourne A\$400
 Singapore S\$110
 London 700
 Frankfurt 600
 New York \$1200</p>

<p style="text-align: justify;">KLIA Ekspres train service: RM123 / \$50 / 30 / 40 for a three day pass between KL Sentral and the circuit</p> <p

style="text-align: justify;">Skybus coach service: RM30 / \$10 / 7 / 8 for a return trip from KL Sentral, KLCC or LCCT to the circuit</p> <p style="text-align:

justify;">Taxi: RM300 / \$100 / 70 / 80 for a return trip from KL to the circuit</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Four night accommodation

from:\$300 / 200 / 250for a four star double/twin room.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Food and drinks (4 days): \$130 / 80 / 100. Local meals start from under \$5 / 3 / 4 per person. Expect to pay a bit more at the track, although it's nowhere near as expensive as other grands prix.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Internet

access: Roaming is generally expensive. Malaysian prepaid data plans are quite cheap. DiGi's starter pack cost RM10.80 (\$4 / 3 / 3) and mobile internet is free after spending RM8/day on data (less than \$3 / 2 / 3). We found DiGi offered a reliable 3G service on most platforms as opposed toTuneTalkwhich only provides 3G and 3.5G to Blackberry users.Maxis does not offer prepaid plans but gave their customers free WiFi at the grand prix in 2013.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;"></p> <h4>3 // TICKET PRICES</h4> <p style="text-align: justify;">A 50% discount applies on most tickets until 31 December. Whilst there is no general admission (it is not possible to go round the track), the hillstands are as close as it gets tickets for these are the cheapest on the F1 calendar.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: justify;">We are glad to report that prices for

Turquoise, Garnet, Citrine, Tower and F grandstands have been lowered so as to encourage more spectators to come to the grand prix and transport some of the city atmosphere to the circuit. Most lower tier grandstands used to be fairly empty on both Saturday and Sunday, however, MotoGP attendance figures for the Sepang race and the fact that the neighbouring F1 Singapore GP is a regular sellout show there is appetite for premier motorsport in the region.

The prices are inclusive of all fees if collected at the track. The exchange rates are based on the highest rate since the last Malaysia GP and rounded up to the nearest \$10 / £10 / €10.

Which grandstand to choose

The weather for the Malaysia Grand Prix is variable, hot and humid. Fortunately, all grandstand seats are under cover and so is the C2 hillstand. TV screens are located opposite most of the grandstands as well as the C2 hillstand. Their number, however, is limited and they can be far away from where you'll be watching. There is track commentary provided in dual Malay and English but it is quite hard to follow the action with this alone. The ability to see a TV screen definitely adds to the experience.

The excitement of the start and finish of the race can be experienced from the K1, F and Main Grandstands, but not all blocks and sections are equal.

K1 is placed at Turn 1 and Turn 2. Book a seat in blocks A-D to enjoy a full view of the main straight for the start/finish line and pit exit. The TV screen installed at Turn 2 is a bit too far away from the spectators to be seen comfortably. Merchandise and catering options are limited. Be prepared for long queues at the stalls on Sunday.

The **F** grandstand is located at the other end of the pit straight. It is quite far from the starting grid, which is only visible from blocks A-H. The view includes the last corner, pit entry, main straight, the fast flowing Turns 5 and 6 as well as Turns 7 and 8. There is also a TV screen just opposite the grandstand. Not many merchandise and catering stalls there either.

The **Main Grandstand** offers a different experience depending on where you are sitting. The upper tier platforms allow to observe the cars without obstruction from the catch fence, resulting in a greater viewing pleasure and clearer pictures if photography is your thing. The Main Grandstand is also the place where most of the catering options and merchandise can be found.

<images/2013-F1-Malaysia-Sepang-Circuit-map.png>

Image: Sepang International Circuit Sdn Bhd.

Below is a list of features for each section of the Main Grandstand, in the format UPPER / Lower tier were applicable.

DIAMOND / Crystal

- Located across from the leading team pit garages (Red Bull, Mercedes, Ferrari, Lotus and McLaren).
- View of the main straight for the start/finish line, grid preparations and podium for the end of race celebrations.
- Two TV screens opposite on the pit building.

EMERALD / Jade

- Faces the midfield team garages such as Force India, Sauber or Williams.
- View of the pit straight but it's a bit far from either Turn 1 or the podium to enjoy anything other than the sound of the cars at full speed and the pit action.
- Shares one of the TV screen with Diamond and Crystal blocks.

SAPPHIRE / Turquoise

- Situated across from the pit garages of the Marussia and Caterham teams as well as the pit exit.
- View of the action from the start/finish line all the way to

4 / 7

Bangi, Putrajaya, etc) on the Sunday night and avoid the stress of making it back to the airport on time after the race. Even if the traffic situation has slightly improved in 2013, we would still allow for a departure time that is at least four hours after a two-hour race cut-off e.g. a flight taking off at 10 pm or later for a 4 pm race start. It takes up two hours to reach the KLIA airport. Hotel rates are far from outrageous, so finish the weekend on good note.

For the best price, book a hotel room up to 12 months in advance for the last weekend of March and the first of April next year, then cancel one of them once the official Formula 1 calendar is published in December.

The 30°C heat and 85% humidity can be a little unpleasant. Wear light clothing and preferably shorts unlike the local custom of preferring trousers. Regardless of your ticket type, take a hat and sunscreen. Some of the bottom rows of the K1 and F grandstands might not be totally covered from the sun for the duration of the event and there is little shade in the rest areas behind the Main Grandstand.

The weather can be a little erratic, so bring an umbrella too. Ponchos will be uncomfortable considering the heat and humidity. If you hold a ticket for one of the hillstands, you may want to bring something to sit on (e.g. a plastic bag) in case it rains.

Food and drinks aren't allowed at the track. They are however reasonably priced compared to other grands prix and bottled water is fairly cheap (around RM5 / \$1.5 / £1 / €1.2). The Main Grandstand has more food outlets and stalls than the K1 and F grandstands or any of the hillstands, where catering options are limited.

The cleanliness of the facilities vary from one part of the circuit to another. It's best to bring your own hand sanitiser as there may not always soap to wash your hands.

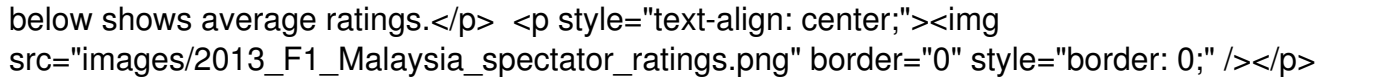
The event commentary is provided in dual Malay and English. Even with lower noise levels than in the past, a set of canalphones will block the excessive noise from the cars, so bring an FM radio and tune in to 90.8 FM rather than relying on the track public announcement system to follow the action.

Taxi drivers can get a bit lost with the temporary signage in place for the F1 weekend. Make sure you have a map so that you know where the closest drop off point is for your grandstand. Not many people like long walks in the heat and humidity.

On Friday, or if you have a ticket for the Topaz section, an good spot for shooting videos is halfway between Turn 8 and the hairpin at Turn 9. As cars disappear towards Turn 10, you can carry on panning towards the beginning of the back straight (Turn 14) all the way down Turn 15 (last corner) so as to grab the next car coming from Turn 8. Bring a monopod to stabilise your camera or camcorder. Cars can be much further away than usual considering how much you can see of the track from there and you'll probably need to zoom in quite a bit.

How spectators rate the event

Twelve spectators who attended the F1 Malaysia GP between 2011 and 2013 submitted a review of their experience. The table below shows average ratings.



GrandPrixAdvisor fixes

Whilst we applaud the organisers for reducing the time to reach the KLIA Ekspres train to just one hour, there is still room to regulate the traffic more efficiently out of the circuit. A dedicated bus lane to the airport would move more people more quickly out of the circuit and parking on the kerb should be prohibited.

Increase the number of staff so as to

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organise bus queues less chaotically at the end of the race. Organise Skybus queues to LCCT by flight departure times i.e. planes taking off before 8 pm, those flying between 8 pm and 9 pm, those flying between 9 pm and 10 pm, etc. Not that we recommend anyone flying back before 10 pm anyway.

Install more TV screens around the track. Three screens for the Main Grandstand North and only one for the Main Grandstand South aren't enough. Those spectators sitting in Ruby and Tower are too far away to see what is on the screen to be advertised as. The screen for K1 should be moved from Turn 2 to Turn 1 to be closer to the grandstand, or its size increased so that spectators can follow the action.

Provide track commentary over three channels. Keep the dual English/Malay one through the PA system and offer a dedicated frequency in English and another one in Malay.

Increase the quality and number of food and drink stalls at the K1 and F grandstands as well as the hillstands. Serving cold burgers and hotdogs doesn't do this event any justice.

 Tower Grandstand and Hillstands C3 and C2 in the background - Image: <http://formula1.ferrari.com/> Ferrari S.p.A

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8 // USEFUL LINKS TO PREPARE YOUR MALAYSIAN TRIP

◆ [sepangcircuit.com](http://www.sepangcircuit.com/) - ticket sales (MYR) and event information

[bookF1.com](http://www.bookf1.com/f1-malaysia/tickets.htm?afid=706) - our ticket sales (GBP) partner

www.myrapid.com.my - public transport information and tickets

[Booking.com](http://www.booking.com/?aid=361287) - our reliable hotel reservation partner

[samasamahotels.com](http://www.samasamahotels.com/) - KLIA hotel

sepang.concordehotelsresorts.com Sepang hotel accessible via free shuttle from KLIA

[tunehotels.com/our-hotels/klia-lcct-airport](http://www.tunehotels.com/our-hotels/klia-lcct-airport) - LCCT hotel

digi.com.my - 3G mobile/cell phone service

[tunetalk.com/my](http://www.tunetalk.com/my/) - 3G and 3.5G mobile/cell phone service for Blackberry users

[formula1.com](http://www.formula1.com/default.html) - general information and schedule

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Finally, we would like to acknowledge the contribution of the following spectators who submitted a review of their Formula 1 grand prix experience on Malaysia since 2011:

◆ [@heyk](https://twitter.com/heyk) (Lower Main Grandstand North - Jade)

[@MARTINrussellHO](https://twitter.com/MARTINrussellHo) (Friday free entry - Main Grandstand North, Main Grandstand South, Tower, K1)

[@AnaColinaF1](https://twitter.com/AnaColinaF1) (Lower Main Grandstand North)

◆ Lisa M. (Lower Main Grandstand South - Citrine)

◆ A handful of anonymous reviewers (Diamond, K1, Jade and Friday free entry)

◆ The author has attended this grand prix on 2011 at the Ruby section

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of the Main Grandstand North.

Have you been to the Malaysia Grand Prix? ♦ Help us improve this guide by leaving your impression of the Sepang International Circuit in the '[Write a Review](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/grandprixadvisor "Write a Review")' section of this website.

[!\[\]\(feabb98897b440bc8695a03336a6e2df_img.jpg\)A banner for BookF1, a motorsport retailer, with dimensions 589x73 pixels.](http://www.bookf1.com/f1-malaysia/tickets.htm?afid=706)

[!\[\]\(c7f935293d8062fa748ed86b74d28761_img.jpg\)A banner for GPTicketShop, a motorsport ticket retailer, with dimensions 589x76 pixels.](http://www.gpticketshop.com/en/f1/f1-malaysia/tickets.html?id=1137t)

If you would like to add further information or correct any of the above article, please leave your comments below.