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According to Reuters, Kota Kinabalu in the state of Sabah, Malaysia, should be “a traveller's first stop in Borneo.” Kota Kinabalu, also known as KK for short, is a popular launching destination for experiencing Borneo, but it too has a lot to offer, including islands, rainforests, rich culture, and fresh seafood. Reuters plans 48-hour trip to Kota Kinabalu, which includes exciting activities from scrumptious seafood feasts to learning tribal dances at the Monsopiad cultural village.

- Tanjung Aru beach: Located only four miles south of Kota Kinabalu, Tanjung Aru beach is a local favorite for viewing a spectacular sunset and tasting fresh seafood. Late-night food stalls serving local food and drinks also make Tanjung Aru beach a great place to experience.
- Monsopiad cultural village: The village is a historical site built to commemorate the legendary Kadazan and headhunter warrior Monsopiad. Visitors are invited to experience the life of Kadazandusun tribes with rice-wine making, tribal dances, cooking classes, and more.
- Gaya Street (Sunday Market): Located in the Kota Kinabalu Central Business District for over a hundred years, Gaya Street welcomes locals and tourists every Sunday morning from 6:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to shop for a wide array of items, from fruits and flowers to antiques and crafts.
- Tunku Abdul Rahman National Park: The marine park is comprised of five small islands, Pulau Gaya, Pulau Sapi, Pulau Manukan, Pulau Mamutik, and Pulau Sulug, each with colorful coral reefs and white sandy beaches. The reefs lie in shallow water with little current, making it an ideal location of novice divers and underwater photographers.
- Lok Kawi Wildlife Park: The park is the home to many of Sabah’s native species, such as Orangutans, Borneo Pygmy elephants, Proboscis monkeys and Malayan tigers.

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