



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is the map coordinates of Muda Lake Jetty and Earth Lodge?

Its N 6° 7.263', E 100° 51.619' for the Jetty and

N 6° 6.920', E 100° 57.810' for Earth Lodge

How long does it take to get to the Muda Lake Jetty?

The approximate distance from four places and the approximate travel time (without stops) to the Muda lake Jetty as follows:

Kuala Perlis / Kangar, Perlis	120km	2 hours
Kuala Kedah / Alor Star, Kedah	75km	1 ½ hours
George Town / Butterworth, Penang	150km	2 hours
Kuala Lumpur	450km	5 hours

If you are driving, use Waze or Google Maps and type in “Lake Muda Jetty”. These apps will get you there!

If I drive, can I park my car at the jetty and is it safe?

You can park anywhere appropriate around the jetty area. Just make sure you don't block others or hinder traffic flow. Yes, it is relatively safe. Having said that, please make sure all valuables are kept away from prying eyes. Earth Lodge cannot be responsible for any losses.

Can you arrange for transfer?

Yes, we can! Just let us know and we'll arrange it for you. You can also contact our trusted transfer provider Mr Edward Gan at +6017 736 7817 directly to book a transfer or just simply to enquire. All you need to do is to get to Penang (George Town / Butterworth) or Alor Star / Kuala Kedah. Pick up time from Penang is usually about 9.30am.

How can I pay?

We accept payment by wire transfer, direct deposit, credit/debit/charge cards or via internet banking. Our bank details and payment methods are on another document called "Standard Requirement" and also on our invoice.

Can I get a refund if I cancel the trip at the last minute?

You can only get a full refund provided the cancellation is made more than 45 days before your arrival. Otherwise some sort of cancellation fee will be in force. Please see our latest Payment and Booking Terms & Condition on our website earthlodgemalaysia.com/terms&conditions.

Why don't you give full refunds and why are you strict with bookings?

Unlike a normal hotel or even other lodges, we only take small numbers of guests at any one time. Usually between 2-8 pax only at any one time. This is a self-imposed carrying capacity to ensure our activities are not impacting on the rich wildlife and biodiversity around the area. Also, because of our remote location, we cannot accept walk-in's. So, when guests book to stay at Earth Lodge and then cancels, that deprives others who had wanted those dates but didn't get it, a chance to stay at Earth Lodge. Additionally, Earth Lodge lose potential income as most times bookings are made months ahead. We hope you can appreciate our predicament.

How long is the boat ride?

It usually takes about an hour to cover the approximately 14km to get to Earth Lodge. You'll be going across Muda Lake and up the Muda River. If the lake and river water level happen to be low, travel time by boat can take up to 2 hours. But such long journeys are rare nowadays. Be prepared to get off the boat to push if the situation arises. As always in these situations, try to have fun! We recommend you wear footwear you don't mind getting wet and/or muddy or better still, not wear any footwear during the boat journey. Always wear the life vest provided.

What kind of boat will we be traveling in for the transfer to Earth Lodge?

We use our two 19 footer aluminum boats and for larger groups we hire the local villager's wooden sampan (small boat) to ferry guests. We also support local communities in other ways. The boats do not have any cover to protect you from the weather so please dress and pack appropriately and apply some protection against the sun's UV rays. Ensure your luggage are weather proof (plastic cover). A wide brim hat and sun block lotion is helpful. We will provide a tarp to cover luggage in case it rains.

How much luggage can I carry?

Because of the limited space available on the boats, try to limit your luggage to about a 45 liter bags (or smaller) depending on how many days you are staying. Let us know in advance if you have extra luggage particularly if they are bulky (multiple cameras, large lenses or a broadcast video camera). We can plan to accommodate these items sometime with extra charges applied. You can ask your departing hotel if you can store your extra luggage with them if you plan to return there after your stay with Earth Lodge. Alternatively, you can keep your extra luggage in our storeroom at the Muda Lake Jetty. However, we recommend you keep items of no value here. If keeping stuff in your car, ensure your luggage is stored in the car's trunk / boot and away from prying eyes. Again, only items of no value.

What should I pack?

You really need 3 sets of clothes while you are at Earth Lodge. A set for the forest, a set for around the lodge and the river cruise and a set for sleeping. Apart from that, don't forget to bring towels, toiletries and personal grooming and items (Earth Lodge doesn't provide these) and shoes for walking / hiking. See the document "Standard Requirements" for a more comprehensive list of things to bring.

Are there a lot of mosquitoes?

There is usually not a lot of mosquitoes. Occasionally, there's also the sandflies to contend with. However, sometimes there are more than usual so, it is a good idea to be prepared and bring along insect repellent (one made from natural ingredient is highly encouraged). We do not allow normal household insect spray to be brought to Earth Lodge. These sprays contain too many harmful chemicals. We also do not allow any insect or mosquito repellent that emits harmful smoke or vapors.

Do you provide mosquito nets?

Yes, all our Standard Rooms have mosquito nets. However, mosquito nets are not provided in our dorms. Having said that, we usually do not have a big mosquito problem in the rooms and dorms. However, you are free to bring your own personal mosquito net if you would like to if you are staying in the Dorms. If you do decide to bring your own, please ask our staff to help you set it up.

Is it necessary to protect myself against Malaria, Dengue or other tropical viruses?

We always feel that it is better to be safe than sorry. So yes, do take your anti-Malaria pills if prescribed by your doctor. Apart from the small possibility of contracting Malaria in the jungle, Dengue is also prevalent in urban areas of Malaysia. Please check with your regular health practitioner on requirements for travelers to Malaysia and South East Asia.

Should I bring a sleeping bag?

Earth Lodge will provide camp beds, sleeping bags and air pillows in dorms. You are welcome to bring your own sleeping gear if you prefer. All beddings will be provided in our standard rooms.

Should I bring cash?

There is no need to bring lots of cash to Earth Lodge. Just bring a few hundred Ringgit in case you want to buy a t-shirt or pay for drinks. Otherwise, our package includes nearly everything you may need.

What is your policy on Tipping?

We have no problem with our staff or people working with us be given tips in appreciation for their hard work. We recommend tips be between RM20-50 per staff.

What footwear should I bring?

It would be good to have two pairs of footwear when visiting Ulu Muda. A pair of flip-flops for use around the lodge (some guests just go barefooted around the lodge!) and a proper hiking boots or shoes for hiking into the jungle. The latter should be well padded, covered and with laces. If you prefer not to invest in expensive bulky hiking boots/shoes, cross-trainers or runners are also good. Stay away from court shoes made for Tennis, Basketball, Squash, etc. They don't provide good grip.

NOTE: We DO NOT allow any footwear with studs PARTICULARLY inside caves.

What else should I bring?

As Earth Lodge is located in a remote area, each guest is strongly advised to bring along the following items:

Covered shoes with good grip (no studs please), torch/flash lights with spare batteries, insect repellent, sun block, refillable water bottle (single use water bottles strictly not allowed), day pack, cap/hat, poncho/rain coat, swimming gear, sandals/flip-flops, bath towel and other toiletries/personal grooming items. The latter two we do not provide. Camera and binoculars should have water proof covers. A dry bag would be very useful to keep valuable documents and sensitive equipment dry. Also, please do not forget to bring any prescription medication you may need.

How far is the nearest hospital or other medical facilities?

The nearest hospital or medical facility are at Kuala Nerang or Sik. Both are about a 30 minute drive from the Muda Lake Jetty. We recommend you bring any medication you may need. We only have a basic First Aid Kit just in case.

What type of toilet facilities are provided?

Toilets are of the flushable sitting type and are attached to all rooms and dorms (en suite). As mentioned before, we do not provide any toiletries like soaps and shampoos nor do we provide towels. So please bring your own toiletries and towels. We do provide facial tissues and toilet rolls.

Is there electrical supply?

Being located smack in the middle of the rainforest, we are totally off grid. We have limited electrical supply via small generators which we will run from about 7pm till 12 midnight. However, this supply may be irregular due to the difficulty of getting it fixed if there is a breakdown. Nevertheless, it always pays to be prepared by bringing along a torch/flash light for everyone in your party and a good power bank just in case. Make sure you bring spare batteries too. We will provide lamps if necessary.

Are the rooms air conditioned / have water heater?

No, we don't have both. The rainforest can be surprisingly cool at night and is usually very comfortable to sleep. This is especially so during the dry season between December and March when we have cooler than usual weather. We do have fans in all rooms and dorms. However, our generator is usually shut at midnight. Air conditioning units also uses a lot of energy which we don't have. Finally, it would also be very difficult to maintain air conditioning units way out here in the rainforest. For the same reasons, we do not have water heaters too. Cold showers help us saves water as a quick shower is usually the only option!

Isn't using a diesel / petrol generator against your policy of minimizing your environmental foot print?

Yes, it would be. However, we are working to install renewable sources of energy namely solar, hydro and perhaps supplementing it with a small emergency generator. These things take time and of course, money. The current very large diesel generator came preinstalled by the owner (the State government) when we took over the facility. We don't use it at all. We usually use much smaller generators as they tend to be more efficient.

How about piped water supply?

Like electricity, we are lucky to have piped water supply. However, this supply is not suitable for drinking as we obtain the raw water by gravity feed from a nearby creek Charok Pekaka. It is not filtered nor processed in any way. Feel free to use it to brush your teeth and don't worry if you happen to swallow a little. Otherwise, use it for bathing and cleaning. Still, when water is lower, bathing in the river is still popular among guests!

Is drinking water provided?

Yes, we provide drinking water. The water supplied through taps around Earth Lodge is unfiltered and untreated river water and is not meant for drinking. RO (Reverse Osmosis) drinking water is available at The Makan Place – the dining area. As a policy, we do not allow throw-away or single-use plastic mineral or drinking bottles. Please bring reusable/refillable bottles.

Can I bring my own food and drinks?

Although we provide meals, snacks and drinks, feel free to bring your own food, snacks or drinks if you like. We do want you to feel at home!

I'm vegetarian. Can you cater for me?

Yes, we can. We serve Halal food and would try to cater for any other dietary requirements if requested. However, please inform us of your requirements at least 2 weeks before your arrival or when you make booking via the Booking Form. That will help us prepare.

Do you serve alcoholic beverages?

Yes, but only beers in 320ml cans for RM15 per can. You are free to bring your own though.

Can I recharge batteries of my mobile phone, camera, computer, etc?

Yes, you can charge your batteries while at Earth Lodge when we have the generator on between 7:00pm and midnight. As mentioned before, we have an irregular supply of electricity. As always, please ensure you bring enough batteries or a good power bank for your electronic equipment just in case.

If I need to leave Earth Lodge in a hurry, are there boats available?

Boats are always available at Earth Lodge to ferry you out if needed. We do not charge for this service.

How do I get to Lake Muda Jetty by public transport and how much does it cost?

Public buses services are irregular although they are cheap. Sg Petani is the starting point for these buses. However, public buses do not reach the jetty. Instead they will only go up to Sik while buses from Alor Star will go up to Kuala Nerang. From here you can try getting a taxi to go to Gubir which is about 3km from the Lake Muda Jetty. Taxis are also available from Butterworth, Sg Petani and Alor Star but, they are expensive and taxi drivers from there may not know how to get to the Lake Muda Jetty (most times because they may have never heard of it!). Best you contact us and we will help arrange a van or car transfers for you.

Are there leeches on the trails and in the jungle?

Like most forests in the tropics, leeches are to be expected. They do not really pose any health dangers apart from the annoyance of continuous dripping blood after they had their fill which you won't even feel. Their bite causes our blood to not coagulate thus the continuous dripping. Bring a pair of leech socks if you have one or ask us if you can borrow a pair. We might consider lending you a pair!

Are there any means of communication at Earth Lodge?

Because we are totally off grid, there is no land line, mobile signal or internet access at Earth Lodge. We like to think that this is one of the nice side benefits of being smack in the middle of a remote rainforest! Let our staff know if there is an urgent need to communicate with the outside and we will try to help. If someone needs to contact you while you are at Earth Lodge, they may contact +6019 480 8926 (text would be preferable). Only very urgent matters will be entertained.

Does Earth Lodge have a First Aid Kit?

Yes, we do have a basic First Aid Kit. However, we recommend you bring some basic medicine of your own personal needs. If you are under any sort of prescription medication or have any health problems, please inform us when you make bookings. Again, please ensure you have the specific medication for your condition. Remember we are located smack in the middle of the rainforest and medical care is about 2 hours away. Please take this seriously.

What is your policy on children?

We do not allow children under 13 years old to visit Earth Lodge for safety and liability reasons. Apart from insurance issues, Earth Lodge is located in a remote area without reliable communication and access. Thus, all our programs, activities and facilities were designed to cater to adults and older children. We do not have activities or facilities for younger children.

Can we bring our pet?

Sorry, we cannot allow pets or any domesticated animals. We regard Ulu Muda as a conservation area thus, it is highly inappropriate to introduce non-native animals even for short periods.

Would fishing be allowed?

We do not encourage nor promote fishing among our guests. The aquatic life in Ulu Muda has been over exploited over the years. Because of this and the fact that little is known of Ulu Muda's aquatic life, we discourage fishing in any form. Even catch and release. We are working with researchers to learn more about the current status of Ulu Muda's aquatic life and how it should be sustainably managed. We hope you support and understand our concerns. However, we would not stop guests from fishing.

How should I dress when at Ulu Muda?

It would be easier to tell you what not to wear avoid wearing bright conspicuous colors if you want to maximize your chances of seeing wildlife. Best to wear clothes in khaki and other earth tones. Some people prefer long trousers and long sleeves shirt or t-shirt while others shorts and short sleeve t-shirt. It's a personal preference. Light and breathable clothes are best while heavy materials like jeans or wool are unsuitable.

What is your policy on music and Karaoke?

Most of our guest travel all the way to be in the rainforest to listen to the natural music (sounds) of the rainforest. We therefore do not allow any sound making device that delivers sound via speakers. You are welcome to listen to your music or video/movie through your personal head or ear phones. It goes without saying that Karaoke is strictly not allowed and so would singing out loud!

Can I get a discount if I don't want to do any of the activities and just relax at the lodge?

Sorry, no. All our packages include the activities which are complimentary. All activities are optional and at no charge. We are happy to organize activities for you as we ourselves enjoy it too!

Is Ulu Muda a Protected Area?

Although Ulu Muda is a Forest Reserve under the National Forestry Act and is accorded with some manner of protection, most conservationists do not consider it as a protected area as defined by the International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN). However, Earth Lodge together with our conservation partners is actively engaging with the Kedah State Government and the Malaysian Federal Government to have the area gazette as a protected area under an appropriate legislation. We are pleased to announce that the state has gazette a 24,000ha portion of the area as the Ulu Muda State Park. Although, the whole 164,000ha Ulu Muda landscape should be included, this we feel is a good start indeed!

Why is Ulu Muda Important for Conservation?

Ulu Muda has been recognized for a long time as an important area for mega fauna or large mammals. Elephants, Tapirs, Rhinoceros, Tigers, Leopards and Gaur are among the large mammals known to call Ulu Muda home.

In addition, the Greater Ulu Muda Forest Landscape is an important catchment area for three dams that supply water to help irrigate Malaysia's largest and most important rice growing area. It is appropriately known as Malaysia's Rice Bowl. This area supplies nearly 50% of Malaysia's rice production.

Lastly, it is among the few areas of lowland forest still found in Peninsular Malaysia (most have been cleared for agriculture). It is among the least known and least studied forest landscape. Due to this, much more needs to be done to learn about the area's biodiversity.

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