RURAL HOMESTAY TO ENHANCE TOURIST EXPERIENCE

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I Promise To Be As Brief As Possible
No Matter How Long It Takes
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- Definition
- Profile of homestay programme in Malaysia
- The homestay experience
- Success Factors
- Challenges
‘Where tourists stay with the host’s family and experience the everyday way of life of the family in both a direct and indirect manner’ (MOCAT, 1995)
NO. OF HOMESTAY PROVIDERS

- 286 in 1997
- 321 in 321
- 776 in 2002
- 948 in 2004
- 1089 in 2005
- 1563 in 2007
MOCAT/MOTOUR
SELECTION CRITERIA

- Easy access from main road
- Adequate facilities—separate bedroom and proper toilet
- No criminal record
- Not suffering from communicable diseases
- Security
- High standard of hygiene
Ministry of Agriculture identified homestay as catalyst for rural development

MOCAT set up special unit to oversee homestay programme in 1993

Minister launched National Homestay Programme at Kg. Desa Murni in 1995
SUCCESSFUL HOMESTAYS

- Kg. Desa Murni, Pahang
- Kg. Banghuris, Selangor
- Kg. Paya Semambu (Relau), Kedah
- Kg. Pelegong, Negeri Sembilan
- Kg. Sarang Buaya, Johor
- Kg. Sungai Sireh, Selangor
- Kg. Serkat (Tanjung Piai) Johor
- Kg. Wan Tok Rendung, P. Langkawi
- Kg. Telaga Air, Sarawak
- Misompuru Homestay, Sabah
THE HOMESTAY EXPERIENCE

- Similar to farmstays in Germany
- Rural setting
- Pastoral and idyllic
- Peace and tranquillity
- Nature
- Traditional way of life
- Comfort
- Hygiene
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourist Experience</th>
<th>( N = 550 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>n</em></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to speak and communicate in English language</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience Islamic life style</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making new friends</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience rural setting</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn and understand different cultures</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to speak and communicate in Malay</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience local cuisine</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange opinion with local community/host family</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A different way of life from Japan</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly shopping environment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get to know and mix with villagers/adopted family</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (n)</strong></td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MOST MEMORABLE ASPECTS

- Lots of delicious food and fruits
- Using fingers to eat/enjoy meal
- Friendly and honest hosts
- Large gardens and houses
- Learning a bit of Malay
- Going through photo album
- Going to the night market
- Playing with children
- Visit to kerepek factories
- Learning traditional games such as *lompat tali, congkak*,
- Wearing traditional clothes – wedding costumes, etc
MOST UNPLEASANT ASPECTS

- Little time for interaction with host family.
- Communication problem.
- Short time period and no free time.
- Smelly toilets and bad hygiene.
- The hot weather.
- A lot of flies.
- Having to wear uniform.
- Irregular meal time.
- Little time to walk about alone.
- Could not practise English.
received first batch of japanese youths in 1988

- tourist arrivals > 40,000
- 95% of guests from japanese youths market segment
- 80% repeat visitors
CHANNELS

- Japan International Cooperation Agency
- Japan Overseas Cooperation Association
- Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers
- Municipal Board of Education, Osaka
- Fukuoka Malaysia Association
- Nagoya Malaysia Friendship Association
- Akifuchu Senior High School Hiroshima
- Minani Oguni Wood Working Club
- Federation of World Youth Association, Nagasaki
- Federation of World Youth Association, Osaka
- Federation of World Youth Association, Okayama
- Japanese Embassy
## PROGRAMME

Typical 3 Day/2 Night Package At Desa Murni Homestay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1   | • Welcoming ceremony  
     | • Get to know session between hosts and guests |
| 2   | • Visit to local school, farms, orchards, SMIs  
     | • Cultural performance  
     | • Farewell ceremony |
| 3   | • Tree planting ceremony  
     | • Departure |
## PROGRAMME

**Typical 7 Day/6 Night Package At Desa Murni Homestay**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | • Welcoming ceremony  
• Get to know session between hosts and guests |
| 2    | • Visit to local school, farms, orchards, SMIs                          |
|      | • Cultural performance                                                   |
| 3    | • Excursion to Tioman Island/Taman Negara/Lake Chini                      |
| 4    | • Free activity                                                          |
| 5    | • Day trip to Kuala Lumpur                                               |
| 6    | • Free activity/special programme as per request                         |
|      | • Tree planting ceremony                                                 |
|      | • departure                                                              |
MAJOR SOURCE OF INCOME

- Homestay provider gets RM 60/night/person (USD 16)
- Optional activities
- Mock wedding ceremonies charge between RM 1000 - RM 5000 (USD 265 to USD 1320)
SUCCESS FACTOR 1

Strong Leadership and Good Organisation
SUCCESS FACTOR 2

Innovative Packaging
SUCCESS FACTOR 3

Targeted Marketing and Promotion
SUCCESS FACTOR 4

Expanding Target Market
SUCCESS FACTOR 5

Critical Role of Women and Youths

08/03/2005
SUCCESS FACTOR 6

Increasing Income Through ‘Optional’ Activities
SUCCESS FACTOR 7

Psychological Empowerment
Important
SUCCESS FACTOR 8

Revitalisation of Cultural Practices
SUCCESS FACTOR 9

Success Attracts Funding
SUCCESS FACTOR 10

Collaboration Between Agencies
Industry and Locals
CHALLENGES

The Need to Diversify Target Markets

- less dependent on Japanese youths
- domestic youths
- Westerners
- Singaporeans
The Need to Cater for Needs of Western Tourists

- upgrade guest room (air-cond.)
- improve bathroom
- stand-alone accommodation
A Less Regimented Itinerary

- more time for bonding with foster family
- reduce communal activities
- balance possible?
CHALLENGES (cont.)

Attractive Base to Visit Surrounding Attractions

- national parks
- cultural sites
- transform home visit to homestay
Equitable Distribution of Income

- long term
- better financial remuneration
- tour guides
- cultural performers
Preserving Novelty and Authenticity

- commodification
- sameness
- staleness
- blandness
CONCLUSION

- Homestay programme at crossroads
- Successful as a catalyst for rural empowerment
- Needs to upgrade and reinvent
Smile when they arrive...
Cry as they leave...