

Tioman Island

Like a giant sleeping dragon, the dark green ridges of Tioman Island rise up above the waters of the South China Sea. On closer inspection, it becomes clear that the dragon's dark green scales are in fact giant trees and impenetrable jungle; that the grey claws are giant granite boulders and that the dragon's horns are twin peaks with smooth, straight cliffs, surrounded with swirls of mist.

The dragon-like appearance of Tioman Island is at the root of a legend surrounding its origin: A dragon princess from China was flying to her prince in Singapore and stopped to rest in these calm, warm waters. Enamoured by the beauty of the area, and the waves lapping at her sides, she discontinued her journey and took the form of an island.

The natural beauty of the island is its biggest attraction. Lush tropical jungle covers about 12,000 hectares of the island and countless mountain streams and waterfalls sustain the many protected species of mammals and birds. The waters around the island are filled with corals of all shapes and colours and home to a vast diversity of sea creatures, including two species of marine turtle. There are a few excellent beaches on Tioman, and these curves of golden sand are usually tucked away at the edges of villages or fronting one of the many resorts.

Tioman has options for every kind of holiday-maker: families with small children, honeymooners, scuba divers, backpackers, adventurers and even those looking for a slice of exclusivity and luxury. Most places to stay are clustered around the villages that are dotted along Tioman's coastline while there are a few small resorts that are built around private beach coves.

Tioman is the largest in a volcanic group of islands off the

east coast of peninsular Malaysia. Getting there is simple as there is both a ferry service from Mersing on the mainland and an airport on the island itself.

Tioman is a beautiful, popular and affordable holiday destination!