

Penang Hill

Penang Hill is one of the oldest colonial hill station established by the British during their time in Malaysia. Explored in the late 18th century, a horse trail was cut by the Waterfall Gardens (present day Penang Botanic Gardens) to the summit of the hilly spine of Penang, allowing the British to escape from the chaos of George Town to the cooler climate on the hill.

Penang Hill comprises several hills including Strawberry Hill, Halliburton's Hill, Flagstaff Hill, Government Hill, Tiger Hill, and Western Hill. The highest point of this range is at Western Hill, with an elevation of 833m (2,723ft) above sea level. The range also serves as the largest water catchment area on the island, and a number of tributaries to major rivers in Penang.

In the early days, mode of transport to the hill was via horses, or a system called 'doolies', where masters were carried up the hill on special sedan chairs. To further explore the potential of the hill, systems of bridle paths were cut by Indian penal servitude prisoners for the establishment of more bungalows on the hill.

The Penang Hill Funicular Railway was the newest mode of transport established for access to the summit. The first railway was constructed in 1901 and completed in 1905 but was rendered useless, due to technical faults. A second railway was commissioned in 1909, and works for the second line started in 1914. On 1st January 1924, the 2,007m long funicular railway was officially opened by then Governor of Straits Settlement, Sir L.N.Guillemard. The last upgrade was in 1977, before a complete overhaul of the system in 2010.

Must do:

- Enjoy the view of the northern coast from Crag Hotel, or

simply sit back and enjoy the lighting up of George Town at dusk.

- Explore the forests of Penang Hill, and discover interesting plants such as tropical oak trees and also the interesting carnivorous pitcher plant.
- Keep your eyes and ears peeled to the calls of various fauna that can be discovered on the hill. If you are lucky, you may be able to spot the Giant Black Squirrel feeding from the canopy, the beautiful Dusky Leaf Monkeys playing or the Greater Racket tailed Drongo singing melodiously on the hill.
- With the oldest building dated to 1803 (Convalescent Bungalow), Penang Hill is a good repository of bungalows featuring a fusion of architecture from British colonial to Asian and modern architecture.