

## PLACES

### Rivers and waterfalls

City folks have always loved to *mandi sungai* (a dip in the river) and go to *air terjun* (waterfalls). If you have kids, and want to spend quality time with your family, bring them to these locations for a wonderful day of happy memories. Rest assured; everyone will love it.

Klang Valley residents have long frequented Hulu Langat and Ulu Yam for their nature fix. If you live in Gombak or near the city centre, Ulu Yam is just a 30-minute drive away. The river is clean and sometimes even cold. An excellent thing to do when you go is to have a barbecue. Depending on where you stop, you might be charged a minimal fee for the preservation of the bathing/camping site. But it is worth it. How often do you get to lie around in the semi-shade, half drenched in the sun's rays and half covered by the trees' shadow, with a stream gushing by your side? If you find the place too crowded, drive just a bit further to Sungai Chilling, Kuala Kubu Baru.

If you live in Ampang, Cheras, Kajang, or Semenyih, the nearest rivers would be in Hulu



Langat, a 30-minute drive away. Rivers and waterfalls are aplenty here. Popular destinations include waterfalls at Sungai Gabai and Sungai Congkak. The waters are quite shallow; suitable if you have small kids. If you are game for a bit of adventure; head on over to Sungai Pangsun for a one-day whitewater rafting experience.

Sungai Tekala, near Semenyih, is also a good spot for its stunning scenery. A much more obscure river, Sungai Batangsi, isn't as beautiful, but at least there aren't as many people frequenting the place. Sungai Batangsi is just 2.5 km from the Semenyih State Road. You'll need to ask around for directions to the place, as the signboards are few and faded. There is also a waterfall in Bentong, 45 minutes from KL, called Air Terjun Chamang.



## HEALTH

### Controlling cholesterol levels

People should be very concerned about their cholesterol levels. High cholesterol levels are directly linked with heart problems. Build up of cholesterol in the blood will lead to clogged arteries and ultimately heart attacks or strokes.

There are actually two main types of cholesterol: LDL (low density lipoprotein) and HDL (high density lipoprotein). LDL is the "bad" one because this is the main carrier of cholesterol in the blood. HDL is often referred to as "good" cholesterol, because it carries less cholesterol in the blood and carries cholesterol away from the arteries and out to the liver where it is expelled.

Unfortunately, lots of popular Malaysian food have very high fat levels. *Nasi Lemak*, *Roti Canai* and *Char Koey Teow*, for example,

all contain lots of fat. Probably because of our eating styles and growing affluence, heart disease is increasingly seen in much younger people these days.

The best way to stay healthy then is to stick to a healthy food diet. Look up food pyramid on the Internet and follow the recommendations. Eat lots of fresh vegetables and fruits as these contain no cholesterol. Eat less red meat like mutton and beef and instead eat chicken and fish. Many fatty fish types like tuna, salmon and mackerel contain omega-3 fatty acids that have been proven to lower levels of fat in the body. Eating grains like oats and soy products are another excellent way to keep cholesterol levels low. In short, more vegetables, fruits, fish and grains and less oily dishes, milk products, meat and eggs.

Exercise also helps keep cholesterol levels low. Research have shown that people who engage in at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day have higher levels of good cholesterol. Even moderate forms of physical activity such as walking or household chores are shown to be beneficial.

Smoking lowers good cholesterol levels. Stop smoking or exposing yourself to secondhand smoke to keep your good cholesterol levels up.

Lastly, keep yourself in the know, and regularly too. A simple blood test is all that is needed to know your cholesterol levels. Take it and get your doctor to tell you what your levels mean, and make sure you take his advice.

## FOOD

### Kuih-muih

*Kuihs* are always taken for granted. Nobody bothers to really remember their names. But then again, there are more than 80 different kinds of kuihs—some of which are exclusive to certain states, and cannot be found at your ordinary stall by the roadside in Kuala Lumpur. It is a pity few KLites have tasted or even heard of delicacies like Kelantan's, *Kuih Lompat Tikam*; Terengganu's *Che Abas*



• *Kuih Cakar Ayam*

*Demang* or Perlis's *Kuih Cakar Ayam*.

Not many also know that there are two different families of *kuih*, namely Nyonya *kuih* and Malay *kuih*. The Nyonyas absorbed Malay culture and over time, they've created their own specialties, like *Kuih Moci*, *Kuih Pie Tee* and *Kuih Taba*.

Here's where some of the best kuihs can be found:

Delicious *Kuih Talam* can be found at the pasar malam in Taman Tun and the Bayu Timur restaurant at Jalan SS24/8, Taman Megah. The kuihs at Pinang Masak, Bukit Tunku are also very scrumptious, reportedly. Along Jalan Alor, there's a man who sells kuih from a tray. Try and see if you can spot him in all the bustle of activity. His wares are simply delicious.

Lucky Garden, Bangsar, is also home to lots of reputable Nyonya kuih vendors. There's a man called Lee Yeok Choi who's been selling homemade Nyonya *kuih* since the seventies. If you like *Kuih Ketayap* or *Kuih Dadar*, the Aroma Nyonya Kueh stall at Chun Heong coffee shop in Lucky Garden offers mouth-watering ones. Another stall outside Nam Chuan coffee shop, 2-4 Lorong Ara Kiri,



• *Kuih Ketayap*

also sells a variety of kuihs every Sunday afternoon.

But in a pinch, you can always be sure of getting decent *kuihs* at any *pasar malam* in Malaysia.

Note: If you are from outside Malaysia, learn more by looking up *kuih*, *nyonya*, *Peranakan* and *pasar malam* on Wikipedia.

## PRODUCTIVITY

### Delete those email folders!

Are you bogged down by your emails? Have you tried being systematic by creating folders that cover items such as topics, projects, groups, senders and so on but still find yourself falling behind?

The answer to your problems could be found by doing the opposite: have a lot less email folders - as little as two or three.

The two folder email system has been touted as being brilliantly simple and effective. Instead of spending time organizing incoming emails neatly into folders (that are usually left unattended), the system focuses on actually getting the really important emails attended to and productively.

To get started on this system, just create two folders on your email system: Action Required and File.

When email arrives in the Inbox, any emails that require less than two minutes work should be acted on immediately. At the same time, everything that is not worth keeping should be deleted immediately.

#### Action Required

Emails that require more than two minutes work will go into the Action Required folder. These are emails that you will need to spend time on. Examples could be requests for detailed reports or an email that requires you to fill in a long form. These emails automatically become your To-Do list.

You will then need to ensure that you are regularly looking into and taking action on each of these emails. With enough and proper

attention, your Action Required folder will not grow into an unmanageable tangle of emails.

#### File

All other emails go into the File folder. Emails that you might want to refer to at some point in time as well as everything else you did not delete will go in here. This is also where you put in completed items from your To-Do folder.

It may look a bit frightening, putting everything in just one folder but there's really nothing to worry about. A good search application like Google Desktop can easily find anything you want at any time.

The above folders are all you will ever need to manage your emails, no kidding.

