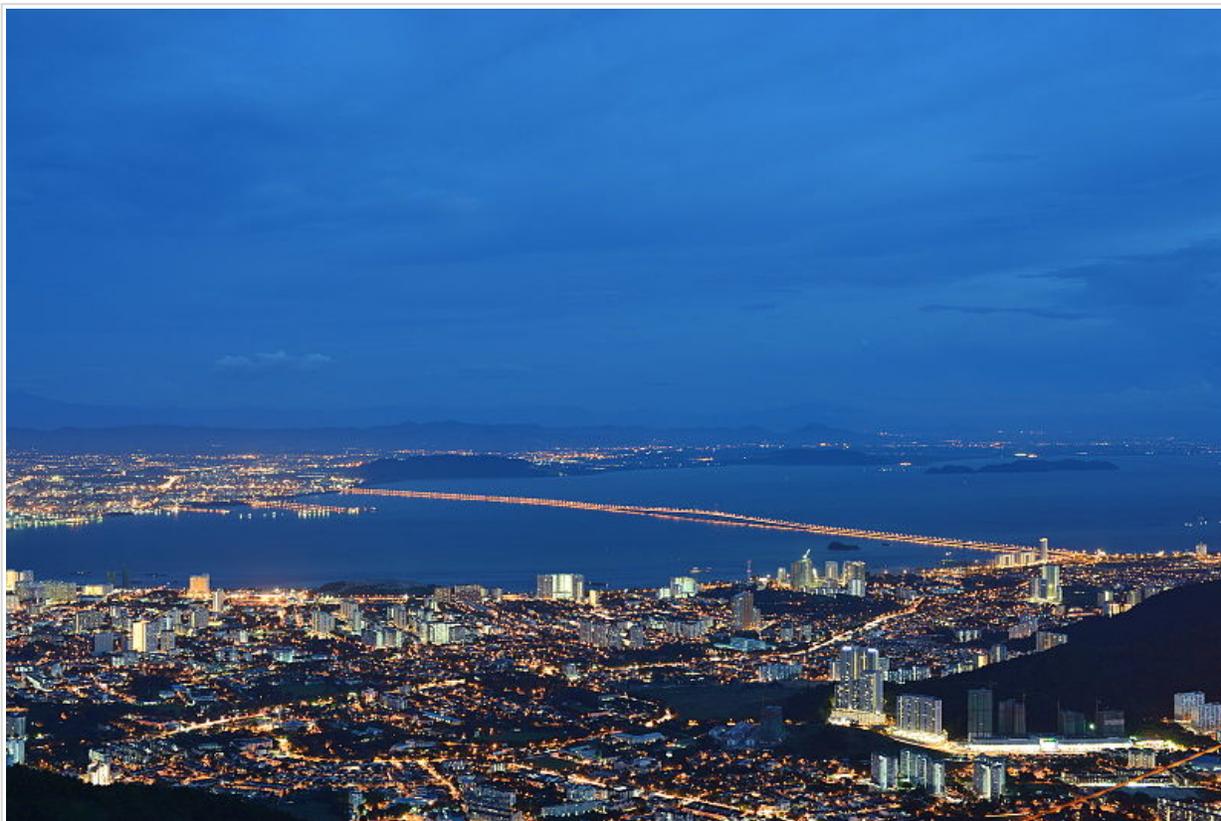


Penang Hill in Malaysia



Beautiful views from the Penang Hill during night time

Away from the muggy weather of mainland lies a nature lover's paradise – Penang Hill. The cooler climate of one of the oldest hill stations in Malaysia is legendary. The aesthetic appeal of the colonial bungalows, the lure of trekking through forest, and a scenic train ride to the top: these pleasures define Penang Hill. Once you are at the top, the view of George Town is breathtaking. For travelers who want to explore the Penang Hill to the hilt, enjoying a leisurely walk, spotting rare birds, and going off the beaten track are always high on priority.

History

The British established a colony on the Penang Hill during the latter half of the 18th century. The Governor of Penang had his residential bungalow built on the hill. They developed this area to escape the hot and humid weather of the city located down the hill – George Town. Penang Hill was not a frequently visited place till the early 20th century when the Funicular Railway service started and a rapid residential evolution took place. Soon, it came to be known as one of the world's top hill resorts.

Penang Hill Attraction & Things to do

Those who love to behold nature in its purest form and yearn to explore its hidden treasures can choose to climb up the hill by foot. The walk along the trails will introduce you to black squirrels, tropical oak trees, parasitic plants, and the carnivorous pitcher plants.

Once you reach the top, get onto a buggy and embark on a memorable journey around the Penang Hill. It would be quite a fascinating experience when you have a panoramic view of George Town, the Penang Bridge, the lush green landscape of the island and the mainland Malaysia. There are a host of fine eateries on the top, but having tea at the David Brown's Restaurant & Tea Terrace is highly recommended.

The Bellevue Aviary & Ginger Garden – This bird sanctuary-cum-garden on the hill houses all eight families of the Zingiberales plants and some of the most admirable native and exotic bird species.

Owl Museum – As the name suggests, this museum is dedicated to the various arts & crafts based on owl. This museum is the first of its kind in Southeast Asia. It has a collection of around 1,000 rare artifacts from around 20 countries across Asia, Europe, and South America.

Moreover, the hill also has an Indian temple and a mosque. There is a playground for kids and in the vicinity lies a British-era cannon weighing around 32 pounds with a target range of close to 1,000 feet. While walking down the hill, you find a tree house where you can take some rest, sip a cup of tea, and move on. The Botanical Garden is another must-visit destination.

Penang Island, the parent island of the Penang Hill, has a wide range of tourist attractions including the Buddhist Kek Lok Si Temple, Escape Adventureplay, Adventure Zone Theme Park, Penang Interactive Museum, Penang War Museum, Fort Cornwallis, Penang Khoo Kongsi, and Wat Chaiya Mangkalam.

The Island is also home to a large number of bungalows that reflect a perfect blend of British, Asian, and contemporary architecture.

Penang Hill Location

Penang Hill is located in Air Itam, 6 km from the city of George Town on Penang Island near the western coast of

Malaysia.

Penang Hill Map

How to Reach?

By Air - The Penang Hill is only 27 km from the Penang International Airport. An hour-long drive will take you to the base of the hill.

By Rail - The Penang Hill Funicular Railway route is a preferred option to reach the top of the Penang Hill.

By Road - You can opt for the jeep service, which is available from the Botanical Gardens. It just takes 20 minutes to climb up the hill. The city of George Town is also well connected to Air Itam by road.

Penang Hotel

There are a number of old bungalows, cottages, and guest houses on the hill offering great comfort at reasonable prices. The **Bellevue Hotel** is the only hilltop hotel in Penang Hill. The hotel in Penang offers a great panoramic view along with relaxed hospitality stay. The staff is also very friendly. The hotel contains around 50 rooms with amazing facilities. It also has unique collections on rare species of Birds, Flora and Fauna at the Aviary Garden. The nearby city of George Town has numerous hotels ranging from luxury to economy categories.

Address: Bukit Bendera, 11300, Penang, Malaysia.

Email: mypenbell@yahoo.com/penbell@streamyx.com

Penang Hill Restaurants

There are several eateries and restaurants on and around the Penang Hill including the famous David Brown's Restaurant & Tea Terrace. Some of the other eateries that serve both local and international delicacies include Idealite, Lazeez Restaurant, Beep Beep Q Restaurant, Home Style Restaurant, and Gusto Cafe to name a few.

Best Time to Visit Penang Hill

Although the weather on Penang Hill is predominantly pleasant all through the year, yet it is advisable that you choose any time between December and April when the place remains mostly sunny and temperatures stay moderate.

Things to Remember

Leave your hotels early and reach Air Itam before 9 am. If you turn up late, getting seats on the Penang Hill Funicular rail might get tough.

Do not forget to explore the rest of the Penang Island and the Pangkor Island nearby.

Facts about Penang Hill

The Penang Hill is around 830 meters (2,750 feet) above sea level.

The Penang Hill comprises a group of hills: Western Hill, Tiger Hill, Government Hill, Flagstaff Hill, Halliburton's Hill, and the Strawberry Hill.

The Western Hill, at around 833 meters (2,723 feet), is the highest point.

The Convalescent Bungalow is the oldest building in the region. It dates back to 1803.

Image credits: Nicolas Lannuzel

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