

A young Swedish family heads off to the island of Langkawi off Malaysia's northwest coast to indulge themselves and to discover a family-friendly resort that welcomes young children. Their journey starts on Malaysia Airlines during the Swedish winter and ends in the delightful beachfront resort of Tanjung Rhu where baby Maya is taken care of while parents Charlotta and Matt indulge in a luxurious Ayurvedic massage, enjoy some fine dining and spend many restful hours by the pool. At the Tanjung Rhu Resort they experienced service with soul and came away with some of it in their hearts.

Most families travelling with small kids have some reservations about going overseas away from the comfort zone and support facilities of home. We were the same until we stepped onto our direct Stockholm to Kuala Lumpur flight on Malaysia Airlines. The thought of 11 hours on a plane with our five-month old baby Maya was not one which we were looking forward to.

Within minutes we were seated with a baby bassinet in front of us, the crew helped us get settled in, we had baby supplies delivered and the crew seemed really pleased to welcome us onboard. Their faces literally glowed with excitement and they started playing with Maya to entertain her. This was our first introduction to Malaysian hospitality. We soon discovered this means service with a smile and we continued to find this everywhere we went in Malaysia.

It seems like the whole country has the welcome mat out for families. We enjoyed meals while restaurant staff safely took care of Maya and even had an indulgent massage while the resort staff looked after Maya.

Wanting to escape the harsh northern winter, we chose Langkawi as our destination and Tanjung Rhu as our resort getaway. A little bit of internet research on our part confirmed that both island and hotel were peaceful and quiet - perfect for our family holiday. What we also liked was that there was a sense of Malaysia in the architecture and that we would be staying in something that was not a mainstream international resort that looked like any other resort.

The flight connection between Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi took only 50 minutes, so it was possible to quickly relax and unwind. When we arrived and saw the lush gardens and the Andaman Sea from the lobby it was like stepping into a tourist brochure. It was like a dream come true. Our room was three times bigger than our apartment back home and it was wonderful to have space and sea views at the same time.

Within hours we really thought we were living in another world and despite it being hot outside we were able to unwind very quickly, especially Maya. The pool was fantastic and the beach was also good except in the middle of the day when it was a little too hot. When we first stepped into the warm shallow waters off the resort we knew we were really on holidays. This was what it was all about.

Our spa was like nothing we'd ever experienced before as it was a traditional eastern treatment that involved a consultation with the resort's resident Ayurvedic doctor who advised on the appropriate therapy. Two masseurs worked in harmony with each other and the scents from the oils were just heavenly.

During our spa treatment Maya started to cry but within seconds, five staff members soon took care of her and I slipped back into my semi-conscious state of ecstasy. The heavenly massage oils they used literally left us both glowing all day long. We felt like slippery seals in a sea of fragrant oils.

The food and drinks served in the resort were delicious especially the fresh tropical fruit juices, many of which were new to us. We booked an all-inclusive package which meant virtually everything from the room to meals and even the mini-bar, was covered.

This was great as there were no hidden costs and it meant we could have another serving of that fabulous chocolate timbale and coconut ice cream! Over a beachside candle-lit dinner one night we concluded that it's easy to be happy on a paradise island like Langkawi. There's no way we could have experienced anything back home in Sweden like the luxury we enjoyed in Langkawi. Everyone should go to Langkawi to relax and to rejuvenate even if they have children or a baby.

All three of us felt incredibly positive after our holiday - maybe it was the sun, the healthy food, the luxurious spa, the natural environment, or maybe it was a combination of all. Yes, it was all but the most important ingredient was the warmth of the people we met and who looked after us. They made us all laugh and laughter is infectious. None of it was staged; it all appeared to come from the heart, like these people really meant it. We concluded that Malaysia has to be one of the best places in the world to travel with a baby.

Langkawi was fantastic as it enabled us to really relax and the only complaint that we had about our holiday was that we did not stay on Langkawi long enough.

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Langkawi Indulgence

