Malaysia Thailand trip â?? the beginning

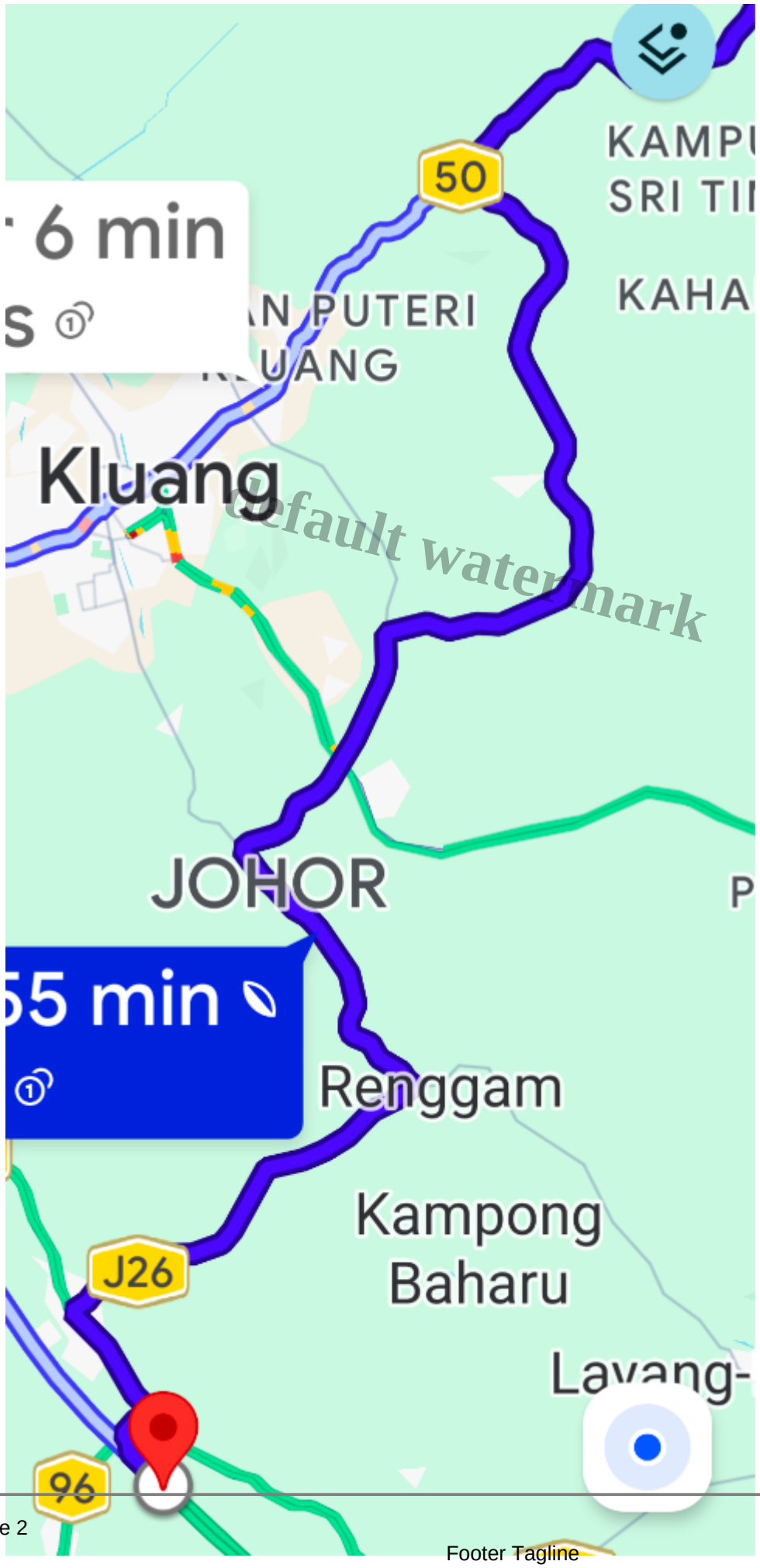
Description

Itâ??s Monday morning and Iâ??m deciding whether to go on a trip to Malaysia and Thailand. I havenâ??t been feeling well for a couple of weeks and have been delaying and delaying going ahead. But today Iâ??m feeling not too bad but canâ??t decideâ?¦ Finally at close to 10 am I decide to go and get my arse in gear. After another hour Iâ??m finally on my way. First dayâ??s goal is Kuantan, a ride of 450 km.

I get through Singapore and Malaysian immigration as usual. There are never any problems with this border crossing and if you time it right, no queues.

I ride the north-south highway until the exit for Renggam and ride small roads until I hit road 50 towards Mersing. I normally go to the Kluang exit but want to try the smaller roads to avoid Kluang. And it turns out to be a great choice! The â??smallâ?• roads are fantastic with nice surface and many sections with sweeping turns. I feel pretty pleased with myself for trying something new.

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6 min
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96

When I hit the Mersing road itâ??s a beautiful ride, as usual! I get there around 2pm, fill the tank and stomach and get going on the 200kms left to Kuantan. I feel very tired but manage to get to the Swiss-Belhotel without incidents. Iâ??m really tired as I check in, they have a room and quotes me a price which seems OK. I unpack, have a shower and buy a cooling beverage in the hotel convenience store which I indulge close to the beach in a lovely sunset and cooling breeze. Life is fantastic! After dinner of fish and chips and another cooling beverage I retire early.

The following morning I have breakfast in the hotel. Itâ??s an impressive spread of dishes, but not being a big breakfast person, itâ??s kind of waisted on me. I have a few cups of coffee, some sausages and two pancakes.

While eating I look at the price for the hotel on booking.com and find itâ??s 100rm (usd 25) cheaper than what I paid. I complain at the check-in desk but they just smile and says thatâ??s the hotel policy.

I hadnâ??t decided whether to stay and recover for another night after yesterdayâ??s 7 hour ride, and me not being 100 percent, but their response gets to me, and I decide to go Kuala Terengganu, a ride of around 250 kms.

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Kuala Terengganu

So I pack my stuff and decide to take the much slower coast road towards the north. I start on this but after an hour of very slow going and no view of the ocean, I realize I made the wrong choice and after many wrong turns I find the highway. Itâ??s fast but extremely boring even though the surrounding landscape of jungly, rolling hills is quite nice. I stop at a rest stop half way along and have a frozen mango smoothie â?? very tasty! I then stop at the Shell station and after filling the tank I find they have nice coffee and rolls so that becomes my lunch for the day.

After a further hour I check in to the Arena boutique hotel in Kuala Terengganu. I often wonder what boutique means? Small or special in some way? Beats me, I canâ??t find that itâ??s special in any way.

I walk around town and find a restaurant in China town to sit down and quench my thirst. I sit there for quite a while starting on this blog.

Gerek

I did not sleep well at all but get up before seven to hit the road early while itâ??s still cool. Itâ??s a 300 km ride along a normal non expressway road pushing through towns and villages. About half way I stop for petrol and hope to find something for breakfast. But the place advertising coffee and cake donâ??t serve anything so I get a cold can of latte and some chocolate brownies.



Coffee place that didnâ??t sell coffee!

I hop back on the bike, pass exits for Jeli and get to the granit plug â??Gunung Rengâ?•. I stop and struggle to walk up the steps inside. After this effort I feel hungry and find a place for lunch of nasi-lemak ayam. Freshly cooked and very nice!



The road after lunch is beautiful! I start at around an elevation of around 80 meters above sea level, and through twists and turns end up at more than a 1000 meters. Itâ??s a beautiful stretch of road and I really enjoy it. At the peak there is a rest place with great views of the hilly landscape towards Thailand, today itâ??s a bit hazy so there must be some burning to clear the land somewhere nearby.

While there I meet 3 guys on a motorcycle trip from JB and we chat about the riding and the cameras weâ??re using to record our adventures.


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Picture towards the north and Thailand.

After our chat I get going on the downhill road towards Gerik. Itâ??s, again, a beautiful stretch of road with turn after turn. Going downhill I must be a bit more careful, itâ??s much more challenging to slow down but my brakes are pretty ok, so no real problem. I catch several log trucks, carrying many enormous tree trunks, going very slowly and I can smell the brakes working overtime to slow the equipage down! On the very twisty road itâ??s not so easy to get past, but with the acceleration and

strong brakes of a motorcycle, itâ??s a lot easier than with a car, and I make a quick process of getting past.

Finally I get to Gerik and find the hotel I booked. It turns out Iâ??d have to park the bike in the street, so I tell the receptionist I donâ??t want to do that and decides to go to the Cottage Inn hotell where I stayed before. Itâ??s more expensive and further away from the center of town but worth it with secure parking.

Gerik is a bit of a dump but I decide to stay two nights to recover from the last three days of riding. There are no restaurents so I find a roadside stall in town and buy a burger which is, surprisingly, quite tasty. ð?•?

SONGKHLA

After a 3 toast breakfast I set off on the road towards the Thailand Betong border crossing. Itâ??s a beautiful morning with crisp air and cool temperature. The landscape is quite hilly giving a nice undulating and twisty road. There are hardly any cars on the road so the 55 kms go by very quickly.

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As I get close to the border there are several stores selling road insurance for Thailand and I stop at one of the shops and get the necessary papers that I must show when I go through immigration and customs. Iâ??m also told that phone roaming does not work in the districts I first will be passing through so I get a sim card as well. Very reasonable at S$8 for a week and unlimited data.

After getting through the malaysia exit control I ride a few 100 meters to the Thailand immigration and park behind a group of Singapore bikers. They had ridden through the night from Singapore and are having a rest before getting to Betong where theyâ??ll spend the day.



Singapore bikers resting after all night riding.

Many bikers from Singapore ride through the night to Thailand, itâ??s cool, not much traffic and no speed checks, theyâ??ll go at tremendous speed and reach the border early morning. However, riding in the dark is much more dangerous, there are often slow going trucks with faint rear lights making it very treacherous.

Anyway, I digressâ?¦ Immigration with passport stamp is very quick and Iâ??m given a 2 month stay. This is surprising, normally you only get a 2 week stay when entering through a land border crossing. The motorcycle is temporarily imported and I get a 1 month stay. All good so far! The whole process took less than half an hour, very quick!



The Thai border crossing.

After all that I hit road 410 going north towards Yala. If the morning road was greatâ?¦ The this road is incredible! Turn after turn as the road snakes its way through the very hilly landscape.

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YALA
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4325

Road 410 from Betong towards Yala.

Itâ??s very challenging but very satisfying riding but in the heat I get quite exhausted and stop for a rest.




Beautiful nature along road 410.

I drench my t-shirt with water and carry on and with the wind evaporating the water I feel much better. It takes me more than an hour to get to a town where I stop at a Amazon coffee place to recover and lower my heart rate and blood pressure ð???

After the coffee stop the road gets straighter and after passing through Yala it turns into dual carriageway which makes for fast passage to my hotel in Songkhla.

As I finally get a draught beer at the hotel bar, I think about the day and how amazing it was. It will be difficult to beat!

Continue with the rest of the trip!

Category

1. Uncategorized

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