

## Making the Journey



As you prepare to fly to Penang, here is some advice that may help you in making many of your decisions.

### **Booking Your Flight**

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The director's administrative assistant will book your flight. Flights from North America usually arrive in Singapore late evening and your connecting flight to Penang will leave in the morning. The Singapore Changi Airport has two transit hotels where you can book a room to sleep, shower and change into warm weather clothes. (Be sure to pack a change of clothes and toiletries in your carry-on bag if you choose to do this.) Ask the administrative assistant if she can book a room in one of the transit hotels or you can go to the Singapore Changi Airport website and click on the transit option and make your own reservations (<http://www.changiairport.com.sg/changi/index.jsp>). Be sure to bring a copy or printout of your hotel reservation with you.

Once you're living in Penang, you will find it easier to book your flights to your home country. The school works with several travel agencies that provide very personalized service and competitive prices. The director's administrative assistant is also available to help make your travel arrangements.

### **Arrival Date**

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The school arranges flights so that all staff arrive as near the same date as possible. The reason we do this is so that we can have host families arranged to greet you at the airport and help you set up your residence. The arrival date will be a few days before New Staff Orientation. During orientation you will have opportunity to learn more about the school and the unique aspects of living in Penang, have many of your questions answered, bond with the new group, and have shopping trips planned for you.

If you wish to arrive before the new staff arrival date, please be in communication with the director and your principal. Realize that the month of July is busy with the English as a Second Language camp and many staff are on home leave or engaged in numerous other activities. There will be fewer people to help you get around and get your home set up. There are, however, advantages to coming earlier and getting settled in. You'll need to decide what is best for your family.

### **Paperwork and Documents**

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There are a number of documents the school needs from you in order to prepare for your Malaysian work visa. If you have not already sent these documents to the school office, please have them in an easily-accessible location in your luggage or hand luggage. It will save frustration and delays for both you and the school. For every staff member you will need the following:

- copy of your college and graduate school transcripts
- copy of your college and graduate school diplomas

- copy of your birth certificate
- if married, copy of your marriage license
- passport size photos (if you have them, if not you may have them taken here)
- if you have children, children's school transcripts and their health records
- record of health physical (if you've had one recently, if not you may have one done here inexpensively)
- receipts of expenses incurred in your travel here (airline tickets and transit hotel and other school-mandated expenses you paid yourself)

### **Malaysian Visa**

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Due to requirements of documentation, the school is not able to acquire your work visa until you are in country. Therefore, when you travel here for the first time you will be entering as a visitor to the school. Some airlines have restrictions regarding travel that require you to have either a visa or a return airline ticket. The school will send you a letter that explains the fact that Dalat International School assumes responsibility for the acquisition of your work visa. However, you may encounter an airline that may still not allow you to fly to Malaysia without an exit flight. If you do, consider some of these options.

- If the airline requires you to have return flights, purchase open-ended return tickets even if the cost is marginally higher.
- If you're unable to purchase open-ended return tickets, purchase an inexpensive ticket from Penang to Singapore (around US\$ 100). That will suffice in getting you out of the country and satisfy their concern about your lack of a visa.

If the airline allows you to enter as a visitor on a one-way ticket, you will not have problems at the immigration office here in Penang. Just let them know you are going to Dalat School.

### **Establishing Residency**

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Malaysia requires that you establish in-country residency every year you work here. The requirement is that you stay in country for either of two sets of predetermined time periods (July 1 - December 31 or January 1 - June 30). During either one of those time periods you may not be out of country for more than two weeks. If you plan to return to your home country (at your own expense) during the summer vacation after your first year, you need to realize you won't be able to leave Penang before July 1. If you do, you will have to pay a high tax fine.

### **Immigration**

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When arriving in Penang, the immigration process is simple. Let the immigration officer know that you will be going to Dalat School. They know us well and are very helpful. Customs may also be quite simple. If you are asked to go through the customs check, let the customs officer know you're going to be working at Dalat School. If you have any problems, take these phone numbers with you.

Raj (office) - 012-475-7712

Shama (director's administrative assistant) – 012-431-1105  
Steven Koo (business comptroller) – 012-492-5506  
Amy or Catherine (receptionists in the school office) – 899-2105

### **Arriving to the School**

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We will arrange for a host family to greet you at the airport. However, if an unforeseen problem occurs and no one is there to meet you, wait about half an hour and phone the school (899-2105). (The airport is *very* small so you'll easily find your way around!) Someone will direct you to the taxi office in the airport on the right-hand side just after you exit from customs and immigration. Tell them you are going to Dalat School in Tanjung Bunga and you can purchase a taxi voucher for about RM 47-50. (If you need Malaysian Ringgit, there is a money exchange booth opposite the taxi stand.) Once outside the airport you will see the row of taxis. Present them your voucher and give them this address:

Dalat International School  
Tanjung Bunga  
between Copthorne Hotel and Paradise Sandy Bay Hotel

Depending on traffic, the ride will be about 40 minutes to an hour. The airport is on the southern end of the island and the school is on the northwest. You'll have to drive through the main city of Georgetown.

### **Finally**

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We have all been through the nerve-wracking, stress-provoking process of traveling here for the first time. Although we try to provide you with as much information as we can, everyone's experience is a little different. As you correspond with the school, don't be timid in asking questions. Know as much as you can before you embark on that first plane. There is a good possibility that someone else on your flights is also coming to Dalat (especially the last leg to Penang). We will try to inform you of such fellow passengers so that you can already get acquainted on the flight. The Malaysian people are very kind and helpful so don't be afraid to ask questions along the way. Please remember that there are a number of people praying for you on this end. *We already love and care for you and are anxious to meet you!*