

A Publication of
 **AFFIN BANK**

ASCEND



Salam Lebaran

*A Time for Reflection
and Joyful Celebration*

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Salam Lebaran



2022

The Year That We Truly Celebrate Raya and Being Together Again

With the announcement of the borders reopening earlier this year and our country's transition to an endemic phase being confirmed, Malaysians are anticipating this year's Raya celebrations with the hope of reuniting with each other and reigniting that Aidilfitri spirit once again.

On that note, in this issue, AFFIN explores what Raya will look like for three individuals, while also providing you with plenty of inspiration for your Syawal; why not spend the weekend at our featured hotel, Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur? Or go for a test drive in the All-New Toyota Corolla Cross Hybrid Electric, a car that will surely make your trip to balik kampung a truly comfortable experience. If you're looking to indulge your loved ones this Raya, look no further than our Treats feature. For those of us spending the festive period in the city, we have a line-up of activities for you to try, such as new places to dine, unique villages around the Peninsula to travel to, or a tour of some of our amazing local art galleries.

As with every special occasion in Malaysia, Raya is a time for reflection and joyful celebration, and after two long years of being cautious and staying apart, we hope you will be able to draw closer with those who matter the most to you this year.

Salam Aidilfitri from all of us at AFFIN BANK.

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ASCEND

Oh, To The Kampung You Should Go!

The experience of balik kampung is one that all Malaysians share during different times of the year. Nothing beats the feeling of packing a bag, getting in the car or on a flight and traveling across the country to reunite with old friends and your family members. However, there's also many people in the Klang Valley that don't have a kampung to go home to, so what should they do instead? We'd recommend a jaunt to one of these unique new villages on the list that will be sure to satisfy your longing to experience the joy of returning to the simple life.

New Villages specifically are known as kampung baru in Malay; they are settlements that were established during the Malayan Emergency between 1948 and 1950. People living in surrounding areas were relocated to them by the government of the day to control their communication with the guerrilla army and cut off their supply. At present, Malaysia has 452 traditional New Villages, and they're all great places to visit if you are craving a rural retreat.



JOHOR

Bekok, Labis

Soak in the charm of a small community at Bekok, which is nestled near the entrance to a national park, making it also the perfect spot for nature lovers. Bekok also has an interesting art scene and ancient landmarks that are not to be missed. Key highlights of this kampung include the Bekok waterfalls, Bekok festival, street murals, and the nearby Hakka Cultural Centre.

SELANGOR

Pulau Ketam, Port Klang

Klangites will have heard of Pulau Ketam which is just a short ferry ride from Port Klang. Built entirely on an island, the village has picturesque houses on stilts and a bevy of seafood dining options, as well as historical monuments and a bustling market. It's a peaceful place, with no traffic and natural mangroves surrounding the settlement. Ready to try some crab that the island is famous for? Check out Pin Heong Seafood Restaurant.



KEDAH

Kampung Bagan Samak, Bandar Baru

Kampung Bagan Samak sits at the border between Kedah and Penang, and is best known for its seafood, but has other attractions and unique activities to witness, including the breeding of arowana, an extremely valuable freshwater fish.



TOUCHING THE HEARTS OF MALAYSIANS WITH 'KEMBALI'

AFFIN Group's Iklan for Raya 2022



In the spirit of Aidilfitri, AFFIN Group's Raya advertisement for Raya 2022, *Kembali* is aimed to make Malaysians laugh and cry at the same time. The story follows two colleagues who make a surprising trip back home for the festive season, and while the film starts off in a quirky and light-hearted manner, their voyage soon takes an unexpected turn. As the story develops, viewers will be able to discern the message behind the narrative, which is simple and yet powerful and heartwarming.

AFFIN's President and Group Chief Executive Officer YBhg. Datuk Wan Razly Wan Abdullah Wan Ali explained the idea behind the making of the advertisement: "AFFIN wanted to make a Raya film that will touch the hearts of our viewers. Our tagline is '**Always About You**', and we felt that this film fits perfectly with what AFFIN stands for as a brand."

The title of the film, *Kembali* carries a dual meaning, referring not only to revisiting your roots, but also repaying the kind souls who took care of you before you found your way in life.

The film's director was Shulz Ng from Buzzwork Films, and it was her first short film for Aidilfitri. Her vision was to create a Raya film that was fun and quirky, yet deep and meaningful at the same time. The tale brings a new perspective to what love, family, and giving back is all about.



You can check out the full AFFIN Iklan Raya 2022: *Kembali* here:

<https://youtu.be/Cm-7ny8mWnk>



A Return To Raya in 2022

My Way of Celebrating

2022 is set to be a joyous year for many Malaysian Muslims as the state borders are open and we make our way home to our loved ones. In this article, we speak to three happy customers about how they will be celebrating the festive season and what they're looking forward to most.



Alya Fahada

Question 1

For the past few years, my family's house has been the place for Raya gathering. My extended families will come in the morning and go for Raya prayer together at the nearest mosque.

Question 2

I always make sure that my family and I are always wearing masks and brings their own sanitizer. I often remind my parents to sanitize and keep their distance until today, even though it is already endemic.

Question 3

I am most excited for the open houses and meeting my family and friends which I have not met in a long time. Seeing everyone posting their colourful and pretty Raya outfits on their social media makes me feel so happy. And of course, getting Duit Raya.

Question 4

During Raya my must haves are leman, rendang, nasi impit and kuah kacang. But the food that has been missing is honestly Lontong Melaka Style. My late great grandmother used to cook lontong for us every time we go to her house, and no one has ever come near my expectations for lontong like hers. Other than that, would be kuih raya. My family has this traditional kuih which only my aunty bake. It's called kokokrunch and it's the most on demand kuih for my cousins and I, especially when we were kids.

Question 5

Last minute shopping is always my go to. Bought some school stuff for my niece and nephews and giving my parents duit raya for the first time since I just started working this year, Alhamdulillah.

The 5 Questions

1 Will you be returning to your kampung this year to celebrate Raya? If so, how do you plan to get there?

2 How are you ensuring you and your family are safe during Raya celebrations this year?

3 What activity are you and your family looking forward to the most for Raya?

4 What food are you most looking forward to enjoying this Raya that may have been missing from your table in the past two years?

5 Have you joined the Raya rush to buy goodies and are you giving your loved ones gifts this year after spending so much time apart?



Zulaily Mushrab

Question 1

Of course, we've planned to balik kampung trip on Monday, and we'll need to plan our travel timer to avoid the massive traffic jam. This year we will gather at my parents-in-law's house and after that we will go to my parents' house and continue visiting other relatives. We've planned our balik kampung trip for Monday, and we'll need to plan our travel time because we'll be driving back and need to avoid the massive traffic jam.

Question 2

Although we are in the endemic phase of COVID 19, we try to avoid confined spaces, crowded spaces, and closed conversations, all of which should be avoided during this festival season. Oh, and we will wear masks and strictly adhere to the government's SOP.

Question 3

We've missed being a family and eating together, so our siblings have decided to eat together on the first day. As a result, this Raya, we're focusing on spending time together as a family.

Question 4

Of course, Lemang and Rendang. Raya would be nothing without these two.

Question 5

No, I had pre-ordered and bought cookies to bring back for my loved ones, and of course, I had purchased some gifts for both my parents and parents-in-law.



Mohd Zuhaimi

Question 1

Yes, by car.

Question 2

To drive carefully and safely and to follow the standard SOPs that KKM has announced.

Question 3

To get together with family members who were previously unable to return to Malaysia due to the pandemic.

Question 4

Ketupat and Rendang

Question 5

Because of COVID, I chose not to join the Raya rush. Instead, I just bought the necessities for my family. I believe the most important thing this Raya is to congregate with loved ones.



*A Vibrant and Fun
Quick Getaway*

STRIPES HOTEL KUALA LUMPUR

Nestled in the heart of “old town” Kuala Lumpur, Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur offers guests luxurious accommodation and a unique dining experience in the city centre. Its exact location is on Jalan Kamunting, a street steeped with history, having been a neighbourhood that was established during the tin mining boom in the mid-19th century. Subsequently, a devastating fire and flood took place, and the British colonial administration of the time replaced the wood and thatch buildings with brick and tiles, creating the distinctive shophouse architecture that you can still see on this street today.

For the purposes of this review, we stayed at Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur during the Ramadhan period and still found plenty to do and see on Jalan Kamunting; the rooms at Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur were very comfortable and modern, while also incorporating a touch of old-world charm through pictures in the rooms of Kuala Lumpur in decades past.



ACCOMMODATION: A ROOM FOR EVERYONE

Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur has 184 bespoke guest rooms and suites, with interiors that infuse a unique blend of contemporary design and urban chic and reflects the character and history of the neighbourhood. Each room comes with custom furnishings, free Wi-Fi, HD TV, and an espresso coffee machine, as well as all the overnight essentials you may require during your stay.

There are four types of rooms available to guests:

- **Deluxe**

Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur's Deluxe rooms have a modern flair and refreshing design; each room is fitted with state-of-the-art tech for your convenience. The neighbourhood's heritage is on full display with black and white photography of 1940s-50s Jalan Kamunting adorning the walls.

- **Executive Deluxe**

These rooms have custom fixtures and furnishings which come in a neutral palette, thus relaxing the mind and providing a sense of calm in the midst of the city's hustle and bustle. Offering a bit more space than the Deluxe rooms, a stay in the Executive Deluxe room is perfect for both business travellers and pleasure seekers.

- **Studio**

Providing plenty of space and design that has the modern day traveller in mind, the layout of this room consists of a palette of warm tones and an artful balance of form and function; it is the ideal spot to rest your head at the end of the day.

- **Executive Studio**

Topping the list are the executive studio rooms, which are suited for longer stays. With a serene atmosphere and a spacious interior, you'll feel like you're shutting out the day's hustle when you've closed the door. The bathroom features a full shower as well as a bathtub, and provides plenty of room for all of your daily and nightly routines. If you're seeking a calm and collected place to work, this room is perfect, as it boasts plenty of seating and a long desk that can accommodate a whole suite of tech equipment. The king-sized bed offers a wide berth that ensures a restful sleep till the next morning.



DINING: RUSTIC CHARM AND RELAXING VIBES

Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur's in-house restaurant is Brasserie 25, which features an interior of red-brick arcade, mid-century copper sputnik chandeliers and dark wood floors. Guests can enjoy breakfast, lunch and dinner here and are spoilt for choice from an ever-changing seasonal menu and unique dishes prepared by Guest Chefs.

Ever conscious of the current COVID-19 restrictions, Brasserie 25 allows guests to choose from a selection of Asian and Western cuisine for sahur and breakfast, while also providing them with plastic gloves and mask holders for the duration of their meal. A dish of particular note is the restaurant nasi lemak, served with the usual fixings of anchovies, peanuts, cucumber and delicious homemade sambal.

For post-Raya visits to Brasserie 25, we'd recommend spending a weekend afternoon indulging in salads, bruschetta, artisanal sandwiches and a main course from the restaurant for RM60++ per person. Their brunch menu is available every Saturday and Sunday from 11.30 am to 2.30 pm.

If you're more of a night owl, try the restaurant's barbeque menu; it features items such as Beef Brisket, Chicken with Sumac spices, and Farmer's Sausages, as well as roasted vegetables, steak fries, and a variety of dips. For dessert, make sure to order their freshly made waffles that come with an assortment of toppings. Brasserie 25 offers their barbeque menu every Friday and Saturday from 6 pm to 10 pm, with prices starting from RM120++ for two people.

HOTEL STRIPES KUALA LUMPUR: A DOORWAY INTO THE KUALA LUMPUR OF YEARS PAST AND THE YEARS AHEAD

Stepping outside the hotel leads guests right into the heart of old KL. This part of town features The Row, which was once known as The Asian Heritage Row, was previously a hub for KL's nightlife and party scene in the early 2000's. Today, the twenty-two 1940s shophouses on Jalan Doraisamy have been converted into an enclave of innovative and independent offices, cafes, bars, shops, and an event space.

A visit to Yut Kee, one of KL's busiest coffee shops since 1928, is highly recommended if you're seeking Hainanese-Western dishes and local coffee. The neighbourhood also has a thriving art community with plenty of independent art galleries and pop-up multifunctional art spaces dotting the streets around Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur.

Overall, it was a pleasant if short stay for us at Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur, and we'd love to go back again! If your weekend plans include spending a couple of days exploring this historical part of town and enjoying the sights and sounds, look no further than Hotel Stripes Kuala Lumpur for a pleasurable and comfortable weekend staycation.

For more information about the hotel or their offers, please visit their official website:

<https://www.stripeskl.com/>

Instagram icon @hotelstripeskl

A Celebration of Dining

What's better than exploring how far your tastebuds will go in the month after Ramadan ends? In this article, we take a look at three unique restaurants in the Klang Valley that are the perfect spots for get-togethers, intimate evenings, or even just a post-festive season indulgence session.



FOR THOSE POST-RAYA JAPANESE CRAVINGS –

Kaito

Located in Glo Damansara, Kaito serves up halal Japanese fusion dishes; the restaurant embraces an “Innovation Through Tradition” concept for their food, which means you can expect sophisticated delicacies that are a mix of traditional Japanese cuisine topped with a modern twist. Kaito’s head chef has 20 years of culinary experience under his belt, and the restaurant insists on using only the freshest seafood, which is flown in from Japan twice a week. If you’re looking to explore a different side to Japanese food, Kaito is the place to go.

MUST-TRY DISHES

Botan Crustaceans

– A combination of shrimp broth which is braised for nearly five hours with botan ebi (shrimp), ikura (salmon roe), sour cream, and brioche.

Salmon Tataki

– A torched salmon roll with spiced salmon, ikura, cucumber, avocado, and scallion.

Golden FDI

– This sushi roll is wrapped in edible gold leaf and features a mix of toro (fine meat cut from a specific type of tuna), and thick and creamy uni. It is topped by caviar, ohba (Japanese basil), yuzu, and karasumi.

Kaito Glo Damansara

Address: LG.09, Level LG, Glo Damansara, 699, Jalan Damansara, 60000 Kuala Lumpur
Opening Hours: 11:30am - 3pm, 5pm - 10:30pm (Mon – Sun)
Contact: 03-2385 7275

 [kaitorestaurant.my](https://www.kaitorestaurant.my)



FOR THAT INSTAGRAM-WORTHY HANGOUT THAT CHAMPIONS LOCAL CUISINE -

Dusun OpenHouse

A brand-spanking new addition to Bangsar Shopping Centre's admittedly delightful roundup of restaurants, Dusun by OpenHouse has just had its soft launch and is located within a modern interior that is filled with rattan and bamboo furniture which is sure to spark vacay vibes. The restaurant's dishes incorporate rare jungle ingredients and are cooked using traditional kampung cooking techniques and a mangrove wood fire, which creates new notes on flavour composition.

MUST-TRY DISHES

Dusun is currently serving a preview menu and is closed from 3 - 5:30 pm to reset for dinner during their soft launch phase.

Dusun Village Salad

– Featuring assorted fresh cut potted salad leaves, pomelo, grapefruit, balsamic date vinegar, and croutons with local herbs

Leaf-Wrapped Panggang Seafood

– A choice of fresh king grouper, siakap, or squid that is grilled on mangrove ember and adorned with dusun's signature asam pedas buah perah paste, micro ulams, dusun sambals, and jeruk

Asap-pi

– An oven-baked pizza that has smoked beef, beef salami, cherry tomatoes, onion, feta, mozzarella, peppers, and peanut sauce

Dusun OpenHouse

Address: G9A Bangsar Shopping Centre,

Jalan Maarof, 59000 Kuala Lumpur

Opening Hours: 11 am to 10 pm (Mon – Sun)

<https://www.dusun.asia/>





FOR AN AUTHENTIC INDIAN DINING EXPERIENCE –

GEM Restaurant

Recognised for maintaining traditional Indian signature elements in their cooking while also adding a modern Western to the dishes they serve, GEM Restaurant in Klang offers genuine Northern and Southern Indian cuisine in an interior that will transport you right into the heart of India. Prepare yourself for a smorgasbord of Indian delights that are sure to fit any occasion with family or friends.



MUST-TRY DISHES

Biryani Rice

– Fragrant traditionally-cooked Biryani served with chicken, mutton, fish, or vegetarian curry

Butter Prawns

– Highly recommended as a dish to accompany your rice or thali set meal, their prawns are fried till crispy and topped with Indian spices to create an aroma like no other.

Tangiri Kebab

– Large chicken drumsticks infused with exquisite flavours and smokiness from the tandoor.

GEM Restaurant (Klang Outlet)

Address: No. 73, Jalan Mohagani 5, Bandar Botanic, 41200 Klang

Opening Hours: 11 am – 11 pm (Mon – Sun)

Contact: 03 – 33191738

 [gem_restaurant_klang](https://www.instagram.com/gem_restaurant_klang)



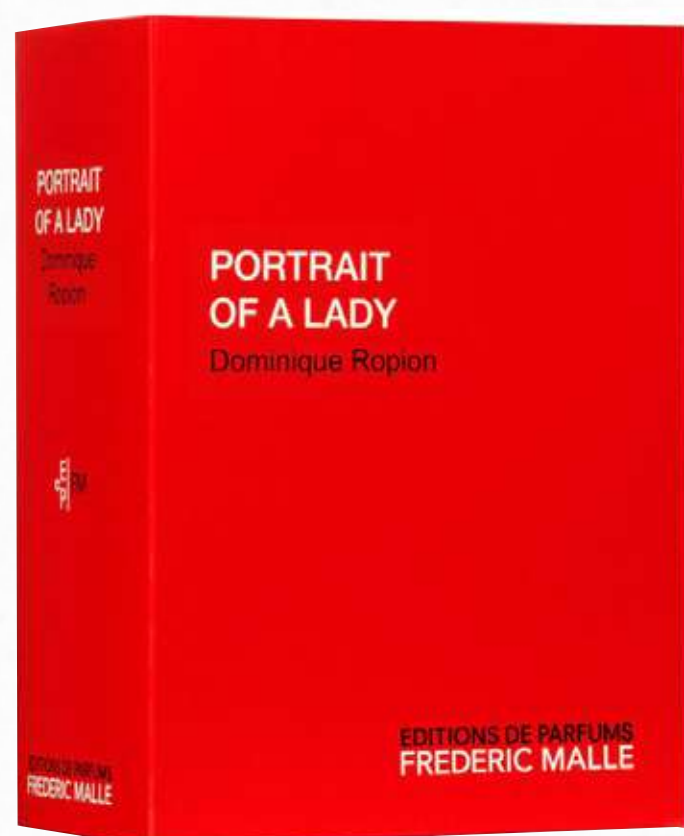
Gifts for a Blessed Aidil Fitri

As we travel home to celebrate Raya with our loved ones, why not make it one to remember with these special gifts for those we have missed.

◆ For him: **Jacquet Droz's Grand Seconde Skelet-One Plasma Ceramic**

Boasting a sapphire dial with 18-karat white gold indexes, the Grand Seconde is the perfect for casual or formal occasions. It has an 18-karat white gold base with gray treatment and is housed in a plasma ceramic case. The watch's movement is a self-winding skeleton mechanical movement, and it has a power reserve of 68 hours and is 3 bars water resistant. Its strap is rolled-edged handmade blue fabric.

Price upon request from the Swiss Watch Gallery



◆ For her: **Frederic Malle's Portrait of a Lady Parfum**

Show the elegant women in your life some love with this unforgettable scent from French perfume expert Frederic Malle. Portrait of a Lady embodies the perfect picture of a woman and her innate sophistication. Wearers will first notice the exuberant dose of Turkish rose (each 100ml bottle has 400 flowers), followed by the smell of patchouli heart imbued with sandalwood and frankincense, and finished with an accord of clove, blackcurrant and raspberry.

Price: RM 855 from Ken's Apothecary

◆ For her: **The Ria Raya Collection from Ariani**

Celebrate the joys of being a Muslimah this Raya by gifting an Ariani tudung from their Ria Raya collection. Our personal favourite? The Anastasia Diamond headscarf in Cream, which is made from satin and features tastefully-placed Swarovski diamonds to give the wearer a truly elegant and sparkling appearance at every open house. Seeking another shade or material? Ariani has you covered with their Estella, Alexis, and Valeria varieties as well!

Price: RM 289 from Ariani Luxe by Jakel



GOING GREEN AND REINVENTING TOMORROW WITH **COROLLA CROSS HYBRID ELECTRIC**

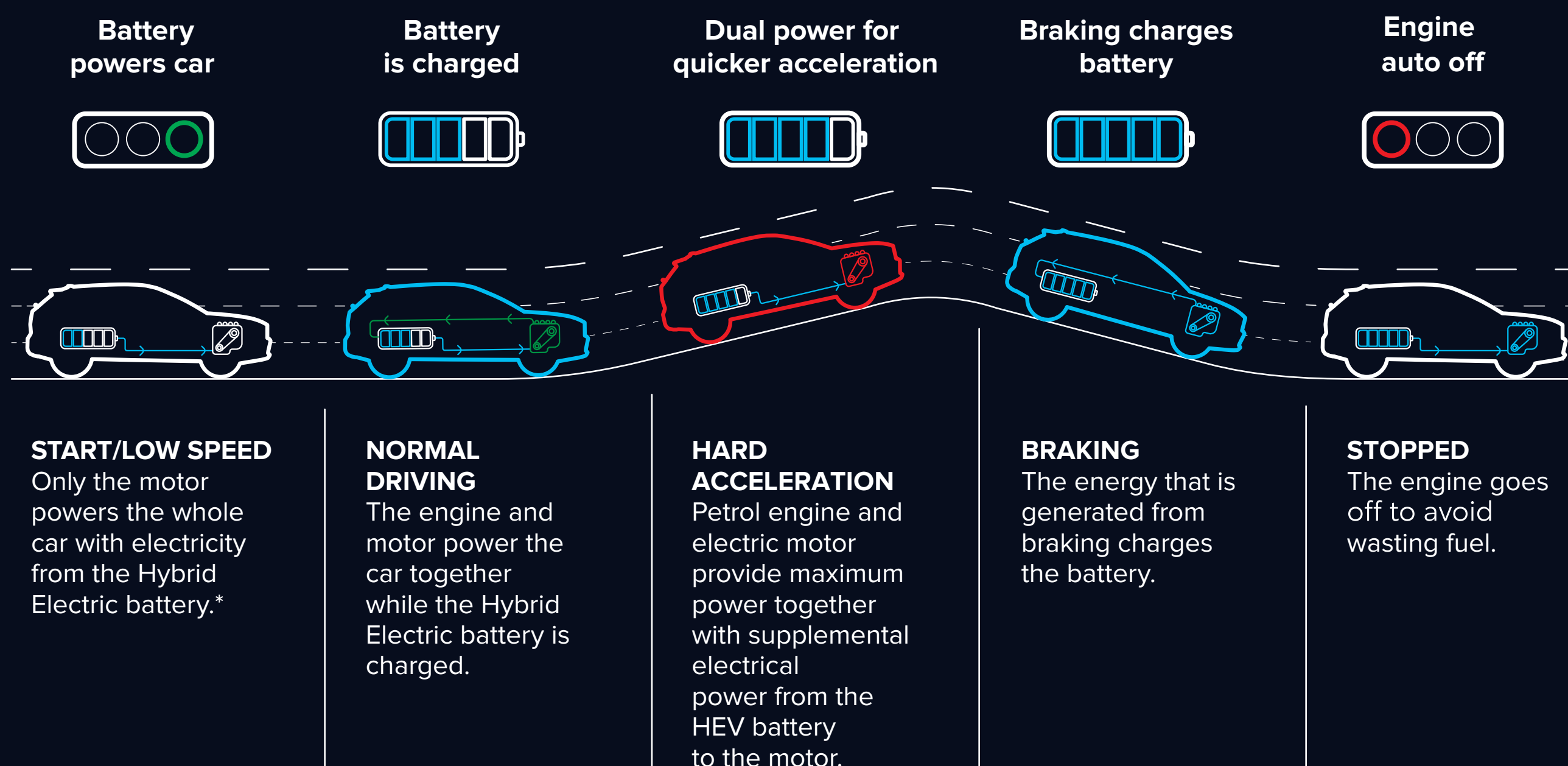


As we all look forward to the prospect of finally going home for the Raya holidays, 'why not travel in style while also working towards a greener tomorrow with Toyota's Corolla Cross Hybrid Electric? As one of the company's latest offerings, the Corolla Cross Hybrid Electric is carefully designed from the inside out to elevate every drive you take while also incorporating innovative tech that truly makes it ready for the future.

Changing from Within - Toyota's 4th Generation Hybrid Electric System

The exterior and interior of the Corolla Cross Hybrid Electric is designed to make you feel good every time you take a seat behind the wheel, but as with many things in life, it's what is inside that also counts. Powered by the 4th Generation Toyota Hybrid Electric System, this car has impressive fuel efficiency, handling, stability, durability, uncompromised space, quietness, and responsive acceleration.

HOW THE TOYOTA HYBRID ELECTRIC SYSTEM WORKS



* Toyota Hybrid Electric System will charge the Hybrid Electric battery automatically depending on the driving condition, weather and Hybrid Electric battery state of charge.

Reinventing Your Style with the Corolla Cross Hybrid Electric

On the outside, the Corolla Cross Hybrid Electric offers a variety of shades to suit your preferences: Celestite Grey Metallic, Silver Metallic, Red Mica Metallic, Nebula Blue Metallic, and Platinum White Pearl. If you're looking to stand out this Aidilfitri we'd highly recommend opting for the Platinum White Pearl colour, as it truly delivers a flawless finish on the car's exterior and stands out from the crowd thanks to its pure appearance.

Other key highlights of the car's exterior include 18" alloy rims for your tires that match the intricate design of the vehicle and automatic rain sensors embedded in the windshield that detect when it's drizzling and automatically activates the wipers. At the back of the car, you have a generous 440L of boot space, and a kick-sensor power back door, which allows you to automatically open and close the back door by performing a kick motion under the rear bumper.

Reinventing Your Comfort with a Gorgeous and Innovative Interior

Stepping into the Corolla Cross Hybrid Electric means stepping into a luxurious interior that is outfitted with advanced technology guaranteed to make every ride a smooth one. In the middle, the car has a 9" touch screen display with real-time navigation and music options that pairs up with Apple Carplay and Android Auto. In terms of seating, savour the spaciousness of the front seats, which has been made wider for an enhanced appearance and a sliding armrest. The rear seats of the vehicle now come with a 6-degree recline angle that assures the comfort of your loved ones on long journeys.

Reinventing Your Drive with Market Leading Performance

The Corolla Cross Hybrid Electric comes with a 1.8 16-Valve DOHC Engine, which has Chain Drive with VVT-I; this engine is exclusively designed to reduce friction, a greater management of heat, and to provide higher fuel efficiency. In fact, the size and weight of the engine have both been reduced to fit the new platform while also maintaining the optimum output and cabin quietness. Here are some key statistics on its output and torque:

- » **98PS/5,200 RPM MAX OUTPUT (ENGINE ONLY)**
- » **53KW MAX. OUTPUT (MOTOR ONLY)**
- » **122PS MAX. OUTPUT (WHOLE SYSTEM)**
- » **142 NM/3,600 RPM
MAX. TORQUE (ENGINE ONLY)**
- » **163 NM MAX. TORQUE (MOTOR ONLY)**



On the road, the Corolla Hybrid Electric drove smoothly on Drive Mode, and when switched to Sport Mode, the car offered more responsible acceleration; to maximise fuel efficiency, we switched to Eco Mode, before trying EV Mode, which lets the car's electric motor take full control and made the rest of our journey a silent drive with zero emissions.

The Corolla Cross Hybrid Electric: Ready to Reinvent Your Raya

If you're ready to reinvent your tomorrow, choose the Corolla Cross Hybrid Electric and make this Raya season truly one to remember.

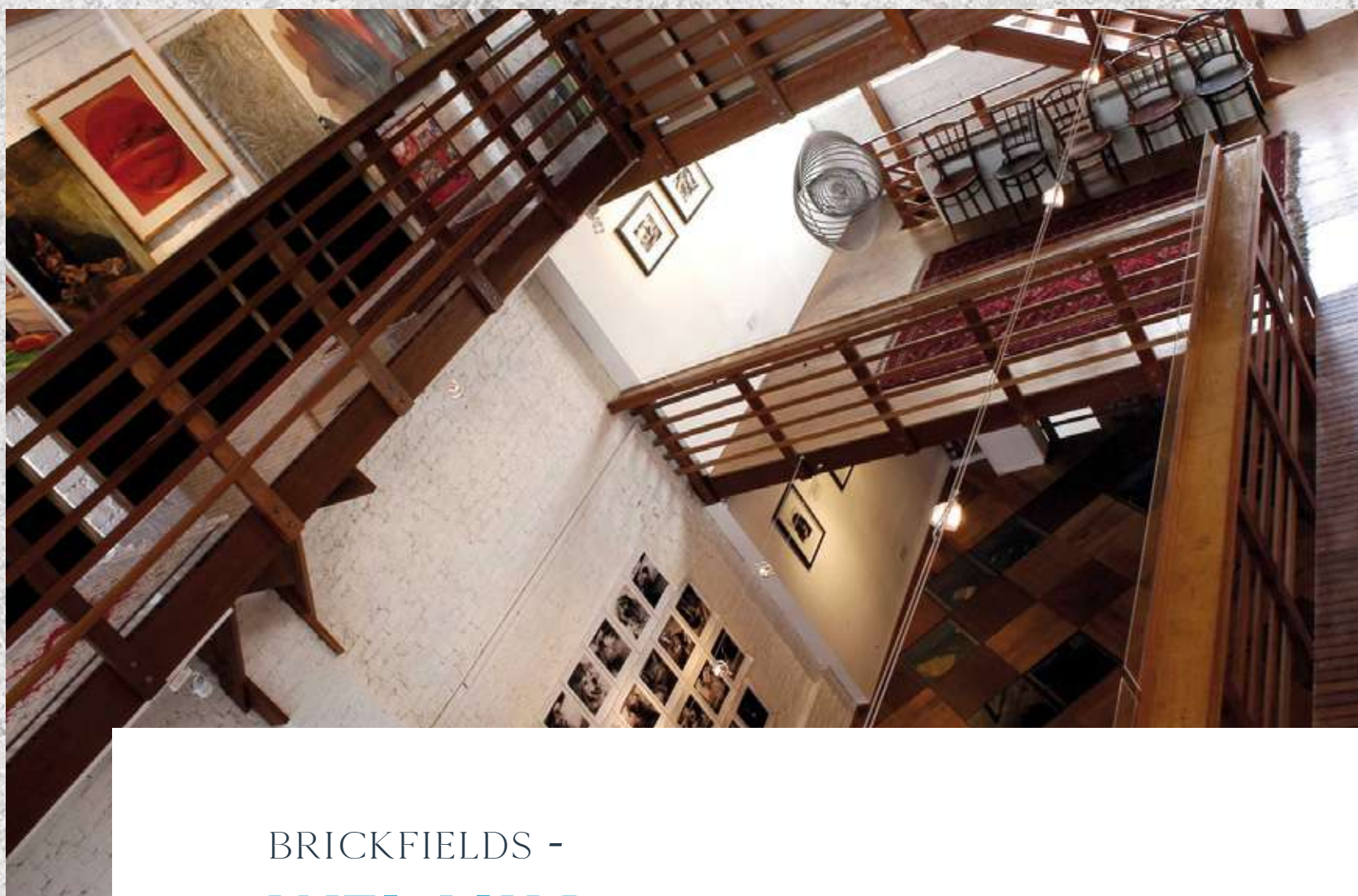
In Malaysia, this vehicle comes at an on-the-road starting price of RM 136,550, including SST exemption, without insurance for models in Peninsular Malaysia (for Individual Private Owners).

To test out the All New Toyota Corolla Hybrid Electric, check it out in Toyota's **virtual showroom online** or book an appointment today.

<https://toyota.com.my/shopping-tools/online-showroom>

AN ARTISTIC BEND

One of the most exciting parts of the Aidilfitri period is the opportunity to balik kampung and visit loved ones we haven't seen during the year. If, however, you're staying in the Klang Valley for Raya and would love an activity to do once you've made the rounds visiting friends and family, why not check out some of the lovely art galleries we have listed below?



BRICKFIELDS -

WEI-LING GALLERY

Not your average studio, this gallery is situated in a pre-war shophouse that was previously architect Jimmy Lim's office; sadly, the office burnt down in a fire in 2004, and Jimmy subsequently turned the space into an art gallery for his daughter Wei-Ling, who previously ran Townhouse Gallery in Bangsar.

Entering through the rusty iron-cast railing entrance brings you into an antique warehouse on the ground floor and a large three-floor gallery upstairs with wooden flooring that still has fragments of charred beams preserved in Perspex glass.

In terms of the art you'll find, one of the gallery's most prominent artists is:

Ivan Lam

Born in 1975, Ivan has spent the last 23 years showcasing his mastery of printmaking and contemporary painting; his trademark use of resin shows off his technical ingenuity and transforms the pieces' narratives, adding hyper-reality to the natural, distance to the familiar, and pragmatism to pathos. Recently, Ivan's work has been raising questions around authorship, the role of the artist, and the very nature of art itself.

Wei-Ling Gallery

8 Jalan Scott,
50470
Kuala Lumpur

Contact:
03 2260 1106

Opening hours:
Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm; Sat,
10am-5pm. Sundays by
appointment only.

 [weilinggallery](https://www.instagram.com/weilinggallery)



SENTUL –

A+ WORKS OF ART

A+ is another gallery that focuses on contemporary Malaysian and Southeast Asian art. Founded by Joshua Lim in 2017, it offers visitors a look at a variety of practices, including, painting, performance, drawing, sculpture, new media art, photography, video, and installation. The gallery's name is a play on striving for distinction while also emphasising the idea that art is never without context is always reaching to connect – it is always “plus” something else.

One of A+ Gallery's collaborative artists is:

Luke Heng

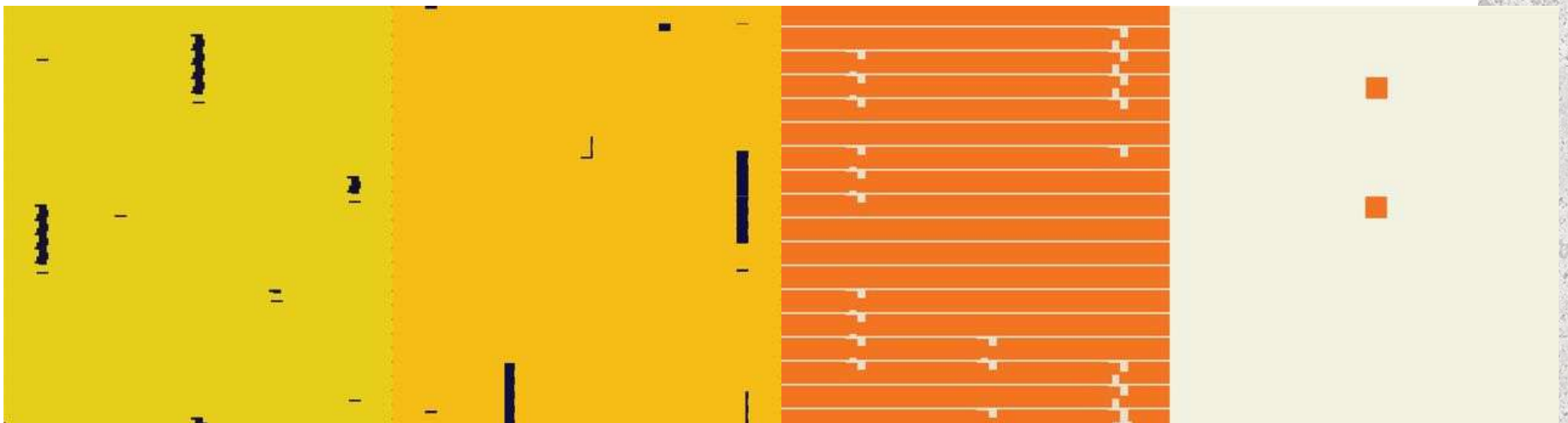
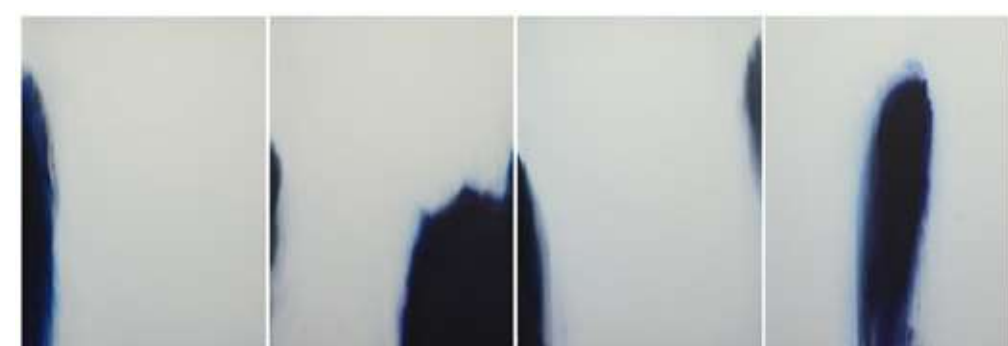
Luke is a Singaporean artist that is interested in the dialectics between painting, object, and picture making. His practice revolves around the conceptualisation and physical manifestation of painting with his works often responding to the history of painting while drawing from various other art forms to influence his approach and process, constantly questioning the possibilities of a painting. He held his first solo exhibition, *The Waiting Room*, at the FOST Gallery in Singapore in 2015.

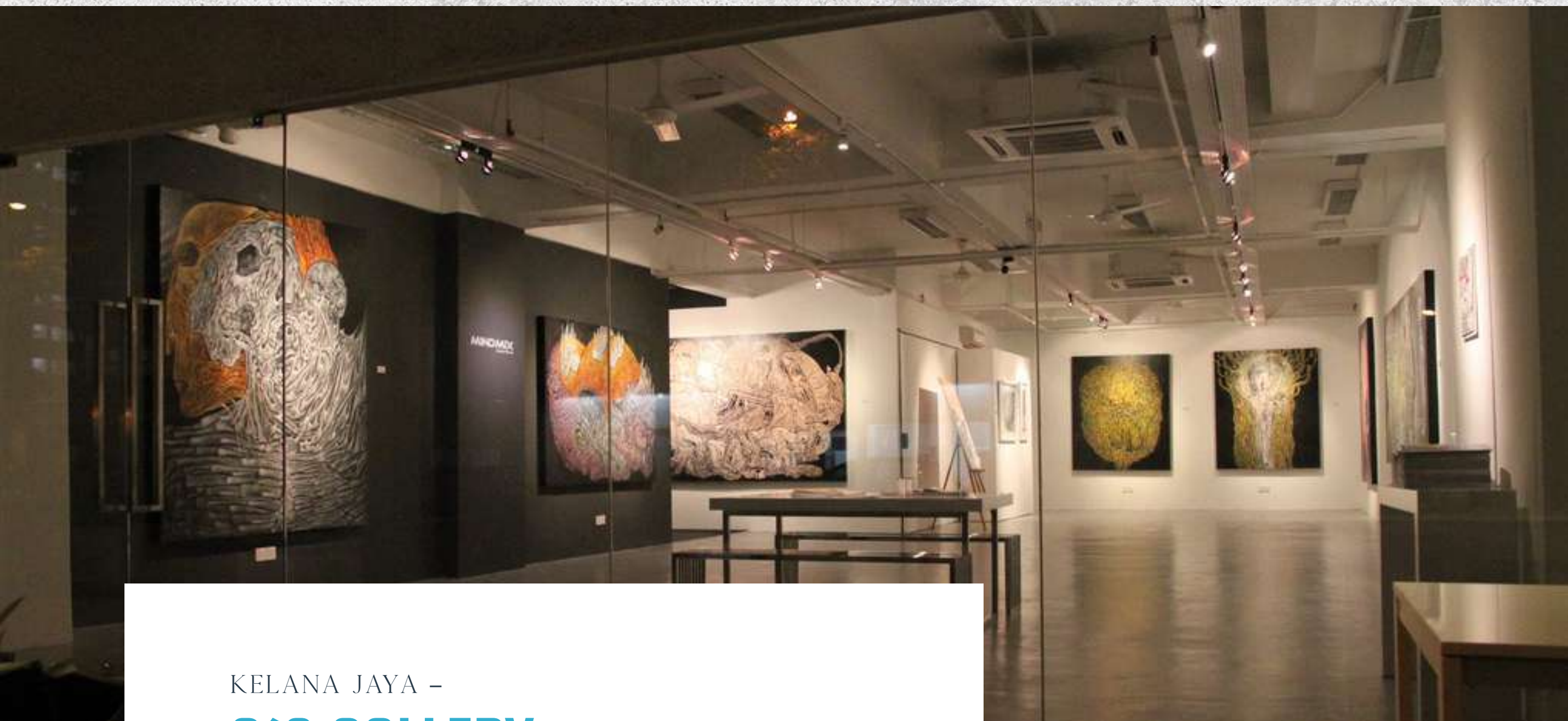
A+ Works of Art

d6-G-8 d6 Trade Centre,
801, Jalan Sentul,
51000 Kuala Lumpur

Opening hours:
12pm – 7pm except
Sundays and Mondays.

 [aplusart.asia](https://www.instagram.com/aplusart.asia)





KELANA JAYA –

G13 GALLERY

Showcasing a bevy of up-and-coming and established local and international artists, G13 aspires to develop synergy between artists and achieves this through cross-border collaborations, residences, and exhibitions. Most recently, it featured the third solo exhibition by artist Abdullah Jones entitled: *Mujarad Naga Tasek Chini*, which was inspired by the legends of Tasik Chini about a creature called Naga (dragon). This was a poignant exhibition, as Tasik Chini is now being destroyed by deforestation and mining activities, and the pieces displayed served to highlight the pressing issue of preserving Malaysia's flora and fauna.

Here's a little more about the exhibition's artist,

Abdullah Jones:

Abdullah was born in Kuantan in 1964 and still lives there to this day. His socially active position is manifest in both his artistic practice as well as his key involvement in the artist-run space Rajawali Art Studio. Abdullah focuses on themes of patriotism, self-critique, and social critique, which has received critical recognition in Malaysia and overseas. He also expresses his views in writing, having authored poetry and short stories.

G13 Gallery

GL13, Ground Floor,
Block B, Kelana Square,
SS7/26 Kelana Jaya,
47301 Petaling Jaya

Contact:

Tel: 603 - 7880 0991

Opening hours:

11am – 5pm (Closed on
Sunday & Public Holidays)

 [aplusart.asia](https://www.instagram.com/aplusart.asia)



Creating Handicrafts from the *Heart*

While Malaysia is developing at a rapid rate and Malaysians are looking towards to the future, it is important to remember our past and keep the traditions, cultures, and handicrafts we collectively share alive. This Syawal, Affin takes a quick look at three unique Malaysian handicrafts.

Mengkuang (Terengganu)

A huge pandan-like plant, Mengkuang (*Pandanus odoratissimus*) grows in the back mangroves and can also be found in the jungle. Locals eat the fruit and use the leaves for weaving. This activity used to be a leisurely pastime of coastal village women in the east coast states during the rainy months, and today, it is a thriving cottage industry. The leaves are collected, boiled, dyed, and made into colourful gift boxes, mats, beach bags, hats, fans, purses, and slippers. Most designs are inspired by Malaysian flora and fauna.



Pua Kumbu (Sarawak)

This craft is the native woven cloth of the Iban, and it is used to create colourful wall-hangings, table cloths, clothes, and furnishings. In the past, it was made using hand-spun cotton and weavers would use dyes made from roots, bark leaves, and other vegetation. The dyeing process itself takes months and done repeatedly to ensure the right shade is reached. The traditional designs of the pua kumbu come from the Iban environment and universe, with the most famous inspiration being the "Ancient Tree of Life" a spiritual vision of the world that is filled with creatures of the rainforest. The art of creating pua kumbu is a symbol of status in Iban society, and a young girl's matrimonial worth and value increases considerably if she is skilled at weaving.

Visitors who'd like to see the weaving in action today must first fly from Kuching to Sibul, take a three-hour boat ride to Kapit, a two-hour trip upriver to Nanga Kain, and another two-hour long boat journey to reach Sungai Kain.



Woodcarving (Kelantan and Terengganu)

In traditional Malay houses, relief wood carvings are usually found on doors, the walls, and windows. It is an ancient craft, passed down from usually father to son and requires patience, skill, and determination. The craft is divided into two categories, ukiran halus which involves carving relief patterns on the hilts of keris, headboards, and cupboards, and ukiran kasar, which is carving that is done on furniture, pillars, windows, rooms, and the eaves of roofs. The designs usually created by woodcarvers are governed by the basic design of awan larat and other common inspirational elements include Quranic verses and plants such as bean tendrils, growing leaves, and leaves of the water lettuce.



A Safe and Joyous Celebration

2022 is shaping up to be the year we finally get to celebrate Raya with our usual festivities and family gatherings, but should we remain cautious about COVID-19? A recent update in the news from a public health expert has in fact warned that daily COVID-19 cases may increase to 20,000 after Aidilfitri, especially since many of us have not received the booster shot and there has been a slow uptake of vaccines among children. It's therefore a good idea to make sure you welcome this joyous occasion by taking certain precautions.



■ Open Houses - To Go or Not to Go?

Open houses are not banned this year, and it's the best way to soak up the cheerful atmosphere that the Raya season always creates. While you're enjoying the myriad traditional dishes and munching on Raya cookies, do remember that it may be best to keep gatherings limited to a certain number of people, and try to do a COVID-19 RTK test before heading out.

■ Duit Raya - A Timeless Tradition

For the kids, receiving a small token of money during Raya is undeniably one of the parts they look forward to the most, but how do we hand out the money safely during endemic times? One way to do it is to take advantage of the eDuit Raya services that many banks (including Affin!) are offering during this period. You can also opt to do a regular online transfer for closer relatives for a safe and contactless way of making their day.

■ Virtual Calls - Keeping Everyone in Touch

While most of us have decided to gather with as many of our loved ones as possible this Aidilfitri, life and other situations may result in some people not being around during Raya; additionally, family members who are at high risk of COVID complications should be taken into consideration as well. Choose the safer option by suggesting a virtual call via the online platform of your choice with these people to ensure that they're kept safe during the festivities.





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