

# Greater KL Offers Plenty of Pleasant Surprises



Many new arrivals in Greater KL aren't quite sure what to expect. Though some have visited the Malaysian capital previously, others arrive with only vague notions of what life here will be like. Fortunately, KL really delivers the goods, and pleasantly surprises virtually everyone who moves here.

**F**ounded in 1886 as a family business under Samuel Curtis Johnson, a small parquet flooring company in Racine, Wisconsin grew over the years to become SC Johnson, a thriving global enterprise with products in virtually every country around the world, and now has operations in more than 70 countries worldwide. Despite its great size, the multinational has established a generations-long legacy of environmental responsibility and community leadership, and has repeatedly been named by *Fortune* magazine as one of the 'Top 10 Companies to Work For.' US-born expat Max Rangel, moved to Greater Kuala Lumpur in 2015 to run the company's Asia Pacific operations, and we caught up with him recently to get his opinion on his new home away from home.

## Can you tell us a little about yourself and what you do?

My name is Max Rangel, and though I'm a US citizen by passport, I'd say I'm a global citizen by upbringing and professional experience. I've spent half my life in North America, with the balance split equally between Asia and Latin America. I have the good fortune to currently run the Asia Pacific business for SC Johnson, a family company.

## How long have you lived in Greater KL and what do you think about the quality of life here?

My position with SC Johnson brought me to Kuala Lumpur about 18 months ago, and actually, I accepted coming to KL sight unseen! I have been greatly surprised by the city, its people, and its cultures. The quality of life has

exceeded my expectation, and I honestly believe that I haven't yet maximized what KL has to offer.

## What are the key factors for a company making a decision to locate in Greater KL, especially when it comes to placing their expat employees?

A number of variables factored into our decision to make KL both our ASEAN and Asia headquarters. Ease of doing business, proximity, and easy access to the markets where we operate, along with quality of life for our employees are just a few very important factors.

## What advantages do you see Greater KL offering over other cities in the region?

KL has good infrastructure, solid school options for expat children, and English language proficiency among its people, all of which are critically important.

## What was your first impression about the lifestyle in Greater KL and tell us about your usual weekend.

My first impression of the lifestyle in KL was flawed, I luckily found after a short time! It's not just about spending your weekend in malls (although that indeed seems to be a pastime). I believe KL offers great outdoor options for families. You just need to embrace the heat and put on a little mosquito repellent and sunscreen to delve into it! I normally occupy my weekends with three to four things: I love cycling, so I get out to ride different routes around the city; I love eating, so I explore the myriad cuisine options in KL; and finally, I do like to just discover the cultural richness Malaysia has to offer, so I visit museums, walk around

downtown, and explore other places like Chinatown, too.

## In the time you've been here so far, have you found any favourite places to satisfy your food cravings?

I enjoy local street food, so savouring *nasi lemak* is now a weekly occurrence. When I am craving Indian food, I do enjoy Qureshi at the TPC Club; when I'm missing Western comfort food, I love going to see my friend Chef Paolo at Michelangelo, or visiting La Mexicana. Lastly, I do enjoy going to Troika to have a meal at Fuego while looking at the Petronas Towers. Oh, and for good coffee, I like the Ministry of Coffee. ■



Tasked by the Malaysian government to attract and facilitate large global multinationals to set up their regional business, innovation, and talent hubs in Greater Kuala Lumpur and strategically grow their business in Asia, InvestKL works with other government ministries, entities, and agencies to formulate attractive fiscal packages and help corporations identify business opportunities while strengthening their competitiveness regionally and globally.