



Jalan Alor, a 500m stretch in Bukit Bintang, is quiet during the day but comes to life at night with tourists flocking there in droves to patronise the over 100 stalls and 50 restaurants there. — Bernama photo

KL's Jalan Alor turns magical at night

KUALA LUMPUR: The 500-metre stretch Jalan Alor at Bukit Bintang, among the popular tourist attractions in the federal capital, has nothing much to offer during the day.

With a backdrop of shop buildings on the left and right side of the road, the place is just like any other commercial area with constant honking, engine roars, and the general hustle and bustle of busy streets in a city.

However, as the sun begins to set, Jalan Alor – once dubbed the city's red light district – begins to change its face and aura as it is filled with tourists from both within and outside the country who flood the street every day.

The tourists, who arrive in droves, not only go there to enjoy the colourful neon lights, but also indulge in a variety of local delicacies, especially the reasonably-priced seafood which has earned Jalan Alor the reputation of a seafood paradise.

The magical atmosphere of the night on Jalan Alor, with its 100 stalls and 50 restaurants lining the street, attracts nearly 10,000 visitors every day.

In addition to seafood, fruit stalls offering Musang King durians and vendors selling sweets are also popular choices for visitors who come here.

Ah Ling, 55, who has been operating for 32 years and is one of the longest-serving seafood traders there, said there have been various changes in the

area, the most noticeable being the condition of the streets, cleanliness, and the number of visitors compared to when she started her business in 1992.

"The roads here used to be very bad with many potholes but now they are much better since the government has repaved them and added more street lamps.

"The pipes have also been replaced and cleanliness is better maintained. The government did this eight years ago before Covid-19 because they knew many foreign tourists were coming here," said Ah Ling, who is affectionately known as Lalola.

Ah Ling, who runs the business with her husband, now owns six shops.

She said the number of restaurants and stalls in the area is increasing, with the presence of street entertainers such as buskers enlivening the night atmosphere.

"There weren't many shops here when I first opened my stall, and they were also small. But since 20 years ago, people from all corners of the world started coming," she said, adding that her regular customers include a man from Holland who has been her customer for 28 years.

Tourist Firma Winda, 24, from Indonesia said she learned about the excitement of Jalan Alor through TikTok and came to experience it herself.

Firma, who is from Riau, said she would order the viral South

Korean fruit-based food known as Tanghulu.

"I want to try unique street food so I searched on TikTok and found Jalan Alor. This is my first visit to the place," said the woman, who is on holiday in Malaysia with her best friend Sri Maharani, 25, who is aiming to try the Musang King durian.

According to Jalan Alor Hawkers Association secretary Simon Ang, the liveliness at Jalan Alor typically begins at 6pm when tourists start to flock to the area.

"Safety is our major concern, especially against pick-pocketing. The problem can be reduced with the installation of closed-circuit cameras and the presence of Rela members, but we need proper documentation from Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL)," he said, adding that an application had been submitted to DBKL in August last year.

Ang, who also runs a food shop there, said various community activities such as the Chap Goh Mei celebration parade were also held to make Jalan Alor more attractive to tourists.

He said an arch, to be decorated with LED lights, would be built across Jalan Alor to make the place livelier and more beautiful.

"We have received the approval to build the arch in 2020 from DBKL but now we are thinking of upgrading to new technology which is in the form of LED to make the place more attractive," he said. — Bernama