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Looking In



Looking for a better life, **Smitha Shaji** moved to Kuala Lumpur 13 years ago with her four-month-old daughter and husband; she never thought that this country would become more than a passing fancy but Malaysia is now a big part in her life.

Age *37 years* Nationality *Indian*
 Profession *Housewife* Years in Malaysia *13*



Smithas quick takes

- **Favourite Sunday hangout** Royal Selangor Club; my son goes for football practice, my daughter sits in the library, and my husband and I enjoy a bit of peace.
- **Favourite Malaysian radio station** Hitz FM 92.9; I love listening to the current chart-toppers.
- **Favourite Malaysian holiday/festival** My children love Christmas because of the lengthy school holiday and I love Diwali because it is ever-colorful.
- **Favourite Malaysian saying** "Okay lah!"
- **Favourite Malaysian dish** *Nasi lemak*, curry puffs and *laksa*.
- **Favourite weekend getaway** We frequently go to Melaka and Pulau Pangkor, and we find the reception at both awesome.
- **A Malaysian custom or culture you have incorporated in your daily life** The old Chinese custom of lowering the eyes while shaking hands.

■ **We decided to chance it all.** My husband and I moved to KL when he was given a sudden business opportunity here. He shifted his company, and I got to enjoy the sights of a city I had always longed to visit.

■ **I love trying out new cuisines.** Malaysia provides every menu available! Before I came to Malaysia, all I would eat was Indian food, but within a short time of arriving here, I began sampling different cuisines and fell in love with Chinese and Malay food.

■ **KL is a small place, yet it has all the luxuries which can only be found in a much bigger place.** Malaysia provides everything in one go: Culture, entertainment, and luxury. It's like a mix of the old and the new. Recently, we visited FRIM, the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia in Kepong, Selangor (www.frim.gov.my) and I must say, it was the experience of a lifetime. I love the canopy walk – the view is awe-inspiring.

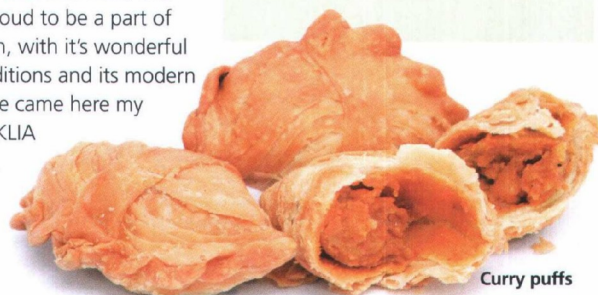
■ **My family and I love exploring new places and we never run out of places to discover.** We recently visited Port Dickson and found everything to our liking. My husband and my older daughter went swimming and they claim

it was the best sensation they had ever experienced.

■ **Malaysia is a place where anything can happen.** My husband came here as an employee to a successful company, and now we are members of the elite Royal Selangor Club. I find the transition from rags to riches quite amazing, and it's all thanks to Malaysia.

■ **The culture here amazes me. It's a mix of old and new and honestly, it's really hard to find a place like that nowadays.** I love the fact that there are towering skyscrapers in one place, then you drive two hours and you are welcomed at a kampung. Also, the Malaysian people are really very friendly and ever-smiling.

■ **When I arrived here, the Petronas Twin Towers was under construction** And look at it now, it is a world icon. I am proud to be a part of this wonderful nation, with its wonderful cuisines, colorful traditions and its modern technology. When we came here my husband was in the KLIA construction site out of nowhere – now see how KLIA has transformed Malaysia. ☺



Curry puffs

TEXT MICHELLE BALMER MAIN PHOTO MOHD JABIR SUHILAN