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The best of both worlds

Kepong boasts a wide selection of eateries, recreational activities and green spaces



By JAROD LIM

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LOOKING for a place to dine in Kepong seems to be a constant battle.

This is not because there is lack of eateries but residents are merely spoilt for choice with the wide selection in the area.

That was, at least, my first impression of the place I once called a "temporary" home.

During my three-month internship, I had the privilege to stay at Bandar Manjalara with my relatives who spoiled me by introducing good eateries every now and then.

With the *yuet kwong hor* (fried *koay teow* with egg) for breakfast and *bak kut teh* (pork in herbal soup) or dim sum for dinner, there seemed to be unlimited choices to choose from.

These hawker stalls are a common hang-out for young and old to get their usual fix at their favourite food stalls.

Yet, the considerably short period staying in Kepong made me discover that the township has more than just good eateries to offer.

The bustling township with its dense residential neighbourhood and commercial centres has a fair share of beautiful parks and greenery.

Places such as **Forest Research**

Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) and Kepong Metropolitan Park in the north of Jinjang definitely have a pull for nature lovers.

Visitors would head to FRIM for trail walks, jungle trekking as well as walks through the 150m suspended canopy walkway.

FRIM also draws students who love nature study.

The Metropolitan Park is usually crowded on the weekends with visitors biking, jogging, fishing, flying kites and other recreational activities at the park.

Other smaller parks such as the Taman Tasik Manjalara and Desa Park City are usually crowded with residents from nearby areas exercising amid the calm and serene surrounding.

A fun fact about the township lies in its name.

The word Kepong means 'to surround' in Bahasa Malaysia and according to the Kuala Lumpur City Hall, there are two possibilities how the area got its name.

One is because the area was surrounded by undulating hills.

As for the second reason, Kepong being one of the biggest new villages formed during the Malayan Emergency (1948 -1960), had barbed wire fences and security checkpoints surrounding it to keep out the communist insurgents.

During the 1860s, Kepong was one of the major tin mining areas in the Klang Valley.

The tin mining activities led to the formation of new villages that

brought a large number of Chinese people to Kepong.

Maybe this is the reason why the township has a huge Chinese community.

During Chinese New Year, there is a vibrant festive atmosphere around Kepong.

Stalls selling festive goods are set up on roadsides. Their wares include colourful lanterns and other items in shades of yellow and reds.

The Kepong market, where most residents do their early marketing, is also filled with stalls selling Chinese New Year decorations as well as prayer paraphernalia.

To be frank, one thing I dislike about Kepong, as well as other parts of Kuala Lumpur, is the endless traffic congestion on the main roads.

Jalan Kepong as well as parts of Jalan Burung Hantu and Jalan Lang Emas are always reduced to a gridlock as a result of bottlenecks that need to be addressed.

Roads leading into commercial lots are narrow, and widening of roads is necessary.

The upcoming Duke Highway 2 of the Sri Damansara Link that cuts through Jalan Lang Emas is said to elevate traffic congestion, but I can only remain hopeful.

Other than that, to me, Kepong makes a fine neighbourhood to stay in as everything seems to be within reach.

This explains why I still fancy going to some of my favourite eateries in Kepong for my meals.

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Fresh and convenient: Kepong residents at the Kepong wet market sourcing for the goods and ingredients to cook their meals.



No food worries: There are a lot of roadside eateries in Kepong offering a wide variety of food.

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Picturesque and serene: There are a number of scenic spots for visitors to enjoy at FRIM.



Kite-flying: Families spending quality time at the Kepong Metropolitan Park.