

MEDIA INFO

SEAWALKING FOR NON-DIVERS



Seawalking – a safe and fun experience to be up-close with the marine life

There is hope yet for non-divers who are afraid to take the plunge yet can't resist the call of the sea. Try the unique undersea experience of seawalking.

This activity is offered only at Sabah's famous Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park. Though a new concept in Malaysia, it has been enjoyed for some time in the United States and Japan.

Though professional divers may scoff at the idea, seawalking is an appealing option for those who are not ready to go diving.

With seawalking, non-divers and non-swimmers can experience the marine world safely without fear. The operators of this activity claim

anyone from age seven can do it without any danger or risk. Those who have tried it say that it is better than snorkeling and not as scary as deep-sea diving.

The equipment for seawalking is fairly basic, consisting of a 35-kg bubble helmet with a hose attached to the top through which oxygen is pumped. Worn over the head, the helmet rests on the shoulders. Due to the science of pressure, it keeps water out so your head and hair remain dry and you can breathe normally. Although it is heavy, seawalkers only don the helmet once they are about to enter the water, after which, it would feel weightless. Seawalkers are also required to wear special shoes (which are provided) to protect their soles.

Before participants go to the seawalking site, they are told about the do's and don'ts of being underwater such as the techniques of walking, and simple hand signals for communicating underwater. After the briefing, participants are ferried to a pontoon where the waters are protected from heavy boat traffic and strong underwater currents.

Attached to the pontoon is a ladder from which seawalkers descend to the sea floor, some five metres below. As many as three professional divers are on hand throughout the 30-minute experience to guide, guard and monitor seawalkers.

Once on the ocean floor, seawalkers walk in single file, guided along ropes anchored into the sand while one of the divers points out the beautiful corals and fish. Sergeant-major fish, clownfish, lunar wrasse, Marr's fusilier, and green chromis swim by to enthrall non-divers who may otherwise never experience the beauty of the undersea world.

At the end of the session, participants can take home a certificate and digital photos of themselves during the underwater experience.

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