

## Cool Jazz in Tropical Borneo



Sax players Borneo Jazz Festival Miri



Sax player Miri Jazz

By DAVID BOWDEN

THE BORNEO JAZZ FESTIVAL will be staged in Miri, Sarawak on May 10-11 this year. What started off as the Miri International Jazz Festival in 2005 is now the Borneo Jazz Festival to reflect its exotic location on the world's third largest island. Now in its eighth year, the festival has established itself as one of the region's premiere music events that attracted 8,000 jazz enthusiasts in 2012.

Like many genres of music defining jazz is almost impossible but the musical direction of the festival is quite liberal to ensure that the music offers something for everyone. In the past delta blues, Cuban dance rhythms, boogie woogie and pulsating African dance music has been included alongside traditional forms of jazz. The concept is to entertain the audience while exposing them to various interpretations of jazz.



Mo'Blow (Germany)



Stage setting Borneo Jazz Festival



Hazmat Modine (USA)

For many, the event is just as important as what is being performed on stage. Few people in the oil-rich city of Miri have the opportunity to hear and appreciate international bands so the festival is eagerly anticipated by many who live here. This year's programme provides a balance between local, regional and international

acts.

Musicians to perform this year include – Mo'Blow (Germany), Hazmat Modine (USA), Jump4Joy (Sweden), The Nylons (Canada), the Lisa Young Quartet (Australia), the Scott Martin Latin Soul Band (USA) and the Asian Jazz All Stars Power Quarter (Asia). Local artistes, the West



Jump4Joy 2 (Sweden)



Trumpet player Borneo Jazz Festival Miri

Jazz Band from Sarawak will play their version of fusion jazz, swing and Latin alongside the international acts.

In addition to the actual festival, preview concerts will also be staged in Kuala Lumpur on May 7 and 8.

The festival is staged within the grounds of the Parkcity Everly Hotel (T: +60 85 418-888, W: [www.vhhotels.com](http://www.vhhotels.com)) located along the Miri waterfront and facing the South China Sea. Its expansive tropical gardens provide the perfect setting for two evenings of wholesome family entertainment in a location refreshingly cooled by sea breezes. Staying in the hotel makes good sense as guests can sit on their spacious balcony and listen to the performances. Early accommodation bookings are important here as it is also the official hotel that houses the musicians and officials.

Tents full of cool beer provide an excellent setting for staging the festival. Craft markets and stalls will also be set up to sell local products, CD's of the performing artists, handicrafts and delicious local food.

Head on over to Miri this May and take in the tropical atmosphere and cool jazz being performed.

Contact: The Borneo Jazz Festival is organised by the Sarawak Tourism Board (T: +6082 423-600, [www.sarawaktourism.com](http://www.sarawaktourism.com)) and the event will be held on the 10th and 11th May. Log onto [www.jazzborneo.com](http://www.jazzborneo.com) for more details on the bands, venue and activities. Tickets prices start from RM63 (adults) and RM33 (children) and can be purchased on line from [www.ticketcharge.com.my](http://www.ticketcharge.com.my).