

March 2012

going places

Only in Japan

Exploring the Land of the Rising Sun

- Sakura: Pink perfection
- Top three Tokyo side trips
- Meet onsen-loving snow monkeys



15 minutes with



A friend of all things furry, finned, scaled and webbed, **Fareea Ma** is the founder of APE Malaysia.

What is APE Malaysia? APE stands for Animal Projects & Environmental Education. Our goal is to develop a generation that will incorporate environmental conservation, animal welfare and people development into their daily lives. We do this through volunteer and education programmes.

APE Malaysia has a particularly soft spot for the orang utan

- why? Malaysia is one of two countries in the world that has orang utans living in its rainforests (Indonesia is the other). Their survival is testament to their strength, despite the devastating effects of the palm oil industry and deforestation. But beyond sheer evolution, the orang utans are extremely endearing creatures. They're strikingly similar to human beings, and share over 96 per cent of our DNA.

How has APE Malaysia been received? Our biggest challenge is to get businesses and NGOs to trust us. We're kind of an oddity so people can't figure out what it is we're trying to do. We don't set up conservation programmes – we support existing ones. We manage the participating volunteers and students and ensure they represent us appropriately by being socially responsible and environmentally ethical while contributing towards the projects we support.

What have our animal friends taught you? That they are highly intelligent, and just like us, they each have their own character. They're actually big thinkers – they'll observe you before deciding how best to interact with you. Some are little scavengers who like collecting shiny objects; others are jokers who patiently plot how to trick you into giving them more food.

www.ApeMalaysia.com