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## SEALED WITH A FRENCH KISS

Couple takes 3-month break in Malaysia before moving on with world tour

SITI NURSURAYA ALI

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LOVE IS IN THE AIR: Nathalie (left) and Jean are smitten with Malaysia

**KLANG:** After travelling almost a year in their caravan, French couple Nathalie, 44, and Jean Constantin, 49, are taking a three-month break in Malaysia before proceeding to the next leg of their four-year journey.

They would like to spend more time here compared with other countries they've visited to explore Malaysia's diversity in culture and heritage.

"Until recently, the world was a big mystery to us, especially Asia. I knew nothing about Asia and I am surprised to find such a modern city like Kuala Lumpur," said Nathalie.

"I've been to other parts of Asia but I have not seen such a place with such diversity in culture, language, heritage and not to forget colours."

She was surprised to see Chinese, Malays and Indians getting on well together here and everyone speaks a common language. In some countries in Europe, there is only one culture throughout, she said.

The expedition started on May 6 last year from Bellegarde, France, and they expect to arrive home sometime in 2013. The couple spent a year studying the world map and preparing for the trip.

The journey has been smooth so far, except for a small accident in Italy two weeks after they started the roadtrip.

Jean was driving through a narrow street when the roof of their vehicle hit a streetlight. Minor repairs were needed, but the couple were given spare parts by the manufacturer of the caravan, Blucamp Grosso.

"Anywhere in the world, the company will send us parts for free.

"We only pay for repair and service charges," Jean said. Their van has been customised for the trip, with added solar panels, water tank, suspension and a metal protection plate for the engine. So the couple is biding their time to look for a local company to ship their beloved "home" to their next destination, Australia.

Nathalie and Jean plan to start a travelling consultancy in France when the trip is over.

"We want to help travellers find their way around. We will give them information, but not too much. We don't want to spoil their surprise in discovering new things along the way."

Picture by SHAHIR OMAR.

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