

21 meals for RM150

MONDAY



Breakfast Scrambled eggs on toast, coffee



Lunch Chap fan, **RM5**
Ah Sou Chap Fan, first floor, Wisma Central,
Jalan Ampang, KL.

Recipes
can be found at
www.timeoutkl.com/brokeinkl



Dinner Steamed white rice, spicy stir fried
chicken with curry leaves, wilted greens
and tomato salsa

TUESDAY



Breakfast Coffee and nasi lemak bungkus, **RM2**
Studio 69, Jalan Kerja Ayer Lama, Ampang, KL.



Lunch Homemade chicken soup with
crusty bread



Dinner Pasta and homemade meatballs in
tomato sauce

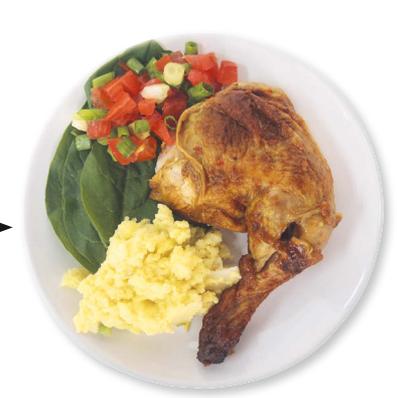
WEDNESDAY



Breakfast Cereal with milk, a banana and
orange juice



Lunch Ipoh nga choy chicken rice, **RM6**
New Restaurant Ipoh Chicken Rice, 107
Jalan Gasing, PJ.



Dinner Honey and spice chicken drumstick
with wilted lettuce, tomato salsa and
crushed garlic potatoes

How to survive on **RM150** a week

Seven days, three meals a day – **Anucyia Victor** shows you how to do it, and with enough money left for a bottle of cider. Photography **Amir Rashid**

THURSDAY



Breakfast Two slices of toast with butter and honey, a banana, and orange juice



Lunch Vegetarian chap fan, **RM2**
Ho Guang Vegetarian Fast Food, Jalan Semenyih, Kajang (opposite police station)



Dinner Chicken curry with carrots and potatoes, dosa and coconut chutney

FRIDAY



Breakfast Coffee and mihun bungkus with a fried egg, **RM2.50** *Studio 69, Jalan Kerja Ayer Lama, Ampang, KL.*



Lunch Homemade meatballs with mashed potatoes, wilted greens and tomato salsa



Dinner Seafood aglio e olio, **RM5**
Humble Chef, 54 Jalan Medan Setia 2, Plaza Damansara, KL (014 229 6854).

SATURDAY



Breakfast Bacon, fried egg, sausage, sautéed mushrooms, baked beans and toast



Lunch Chicken rice, **RM4** *Restoran Al-Hafiz, Jalan Memanda 7/11, Ampang, KL*



Dinner Homemade chicken soup with crusty bread

SUNDAY



Breakfast Cereal with milk, an apple and orange juice



Lunch Pasta and homemade meatballs in tomato sauce



Dinner Shredded chicken salad with Romaine, bacon bits, tomatoes, shallots and sugar snap peas

Trust me, RM150 for one week's worth of food may seem like a measly amount but it can be done. All you need to do is budget judiciously, shop wisely, and accept the fact that shopping on the cheap is not easy at all. But it can be very rewarding, especially in the purse area.

Firstly, forget buying all your meat and poultry in one place. Hypermarkets and food halls are great when you have cash to splash but for this case a wet market is where you should be (I went to the Taman Megah wet market). And the earlier you get there, the fresher the produce.

RM14.80 for a whole chicken is a steal especially when I've previously spent RM7 just for a tray of chicken drumsticks. If you are the queasy sort, the smells, sounds and slippery floors of a wet market can be daunting. But a whole chicken, expertly portioned by the friendly abang manning the market stall, can feed me for a week. So I hold my breath and add my voice to the cacophony.

I tell the trader of my challenge and he comes up with recipe suggestions. 'Yang ini boleh buat kari,' he says, picking up the wings and drumsticks. 'Flavour ayam ni lebih hebat dekat tulang. Boleh buat sup, juga. Kalau adik bijak, boleh masak macam-macam dengan satu ekor ayam.' It's not an exchange I would have in my usual hypermarket when picking up a clingfilm-wrapped Styrofoam tray. His invaluable input ringing in my ears, I head to the dry part of the market, where curry leaves, lemongrass and heaping mounds of red onions greet me. There are sacks of spice and curry powders and jars of freshly ground pastes towards the back of each stall and the spice aunty tells me what powders and pastes complement each other. I leave the market with my bespoke curry powder and a heaving basket of goods, my purse RM25 lighter.

Buoyed by my wet market experience, I'm more positive about this challenge now. Tomorrow I will visit my local supermarket (Jaya Grocer). Usually an impetuous shopper, I force myself to make a list before heading out and this immediately dampens my thrill.

Walking down the aisles, I ignore the siren calls of extra virgin olive oil, imported pork sausages and the jars of Manuka honey with my name on them. I am here for peanut oil, frozen sausages and squeezey bottle honey. Nothing can steer me from my goal. Imported baked beans (RM4.69) are discarded for a



Delayed gratification: Spend wisely and you could even afford a bottle of cider to reward yourself

local brand (RM1.80). Beef mince (RM8.90) is substituted with minced Indian buffalo (RM3.69). And forget Marmite; at over RM25 for a jar, my breakfast staple is now a luxury. It's a dispiriting experience and my cheer soon fizzles out.

Later while standing in line at the cashier, I can feel my nerves fraying when I make the mistake of glancing at the cart of a fellow shopper which spills over with artisan breads, a hunk of honey-glazed ham and most painful of all, the mocking sounds of clinking wine bottles. I have trolley jealousy. But I give in to one weakness—bacon.

A pressing concern is whether I am getting all the nutrients I need from the cheaper products. Does squeezey honey contain more sugar than nectar? (Maybe, but I ignore it). Is the cheaper bread going to poison me with

its additives? (It doesn't, but I still worry). What's surprising is the discovery that organic vegetables aren't that much more expensive than the usual kind, so I stock up on greens, hoping the vitamins will offset any negative effects of cheaper food. I'm drained by the entire experience having spent 90 minutes, instead of my usual 30, wandering the aisles in search of bargains.

“ I didn't have to resort to instant noodles, I've curbed my impulse buying tendencies, and I've learnt that a little bit can go a long way

TIPS & TRICKS

- ▶ Rice, dry pasta, baked beans, canned tomatoes, stock cubes and cream crackers are invaluable pantry cupboard staples. So you need to have these items ready for this challenge to work.
- ▶ Instead of buying multi-packs of vegetables, buy just what you need.
- ▶ Try minced buffalo. It has lower cholesterol, less fat and fewer calories than beef and is just as tasty.

I also have a new-found appreciation for the weekly shopping struggles of those on a shoestring budget. When you are on a tight budget, meals have to be precisely planned. It requires some creative thinking if you don't want to eat the same thing every day.

Thanks to the wet market traders, I have my recipes cracked. And while not being an instinctive cook, I've spent enough time around people who are to know my way around the kitchen. Necessity is the mother of invention and I boldly experiment. Instead of a bolognaise, my buffalo mince is turned into spicy meatballs; some which I have in a tomato sauce with pasta and the rest with mashed potatoes and veggies (that makes three meals). The whole chicken becomes a roast, a curry, a salad, a stir-fry and a hearty broth (another six meals). Breakfast is the most difficult meal to crack but by keeping it simple with eggs, toast, cereal, the odd packet of bihun goreng and fry-up treat at the weekend, I manage to start my days healthily (there, seven meals sorted).

Eating out proves to be a challenge in itself. Even Jalan Alor with its relatively cheap hawker fare costs too much for me and I'm forced to seek less expensive options. So I allow myself the luxury to tapau the remaining five meals instead (eating there would mean extra expenditure on drinks), feeling left out when I read tweets of friends who are out sampling gourmet burgers and sipping on sauvignon blanc.

So there—21 meals over seven days. It can be done and I ate quite well considering I had approximately RM7 to spend on each meal; try getting a fry up for that price at a restaurant. I didn't resort to instant noodles, I've curbed my impulse buying tendencies, and most importantly, I've learnt that a little can go a long way. When I tot up the receipts at the end of the week, it's a pleasant surprise to find I've spent a grand total of RM130.15—just enough change left for a bottle of cider. So I toast my success with that; after all, a girl needs to live a little.

SHOPPING LIST

Eggs	RM4.79
Whole chicken	RM14.80
1 pack buffalo mince	RM3.69
Baguette	RM1.79
Sliced bread	RM3.20
Cereal	RM7.99
Baked beans	RM1.80
Tomato puree	RM3.15
Dosa flour	RM5
Carrots	RM3
Potatoes	RM2.50
Baby choy sum	RM2
Spring onions	RM0.98
Sugar snap peas	RM1.99
Curry leaves	RM0.50
Shredded coconut	RM1
Celery	RM1.50
Apple	RM1
Banana	RM2
Honey	RM7.18
Romaine lettuce	RM2.99
Tomatoes	RM3
Button mushrooms	RM3.50
Orange juice	RM4.80
Milk	RM4.65
Frozen sausages	RM4.95
Bacon	RM9.90
7 'tapaus'	RM26.50
Bottle of cider	RM19.88
GRAND TOTAL	RM150.03

FOR CHEAP GROCERIES, SEE FOOD P42

Boozing bargains

More dash than cash? Get off your drinking high horse and indulge in the city's cheap-as-chips drinking deals

BARFLY

Best deal More than your average gentrified bar, Barfly offers Tiger beer at just RM10 as well as Guinness and Kilkenny at RM13 every day. Don't forget to order the ikan bilis chili onion to go with them. The selection of drinks might not be extensive but the cheap prices make up for it.
D1-G3-06, Solaris Dutamas, 1 Jalan Dutamas 1 (012 671 5883).



Barfly

BEER JUNCTION

Best deal This neighbourhood bar is an oasis in Kota Damansara where you just chug cheap beers. For the whole month of March, drink their house pouring all you can at just RM30 throughout the day. A far cry from dingy, this house of imported beers stocks 40 types of beers and ciders from Belgium, England and Scotland.
7-G Garden Wing, Sunsuria Avenue, Persiaran Mahogani, PJU5, Kota Damansara, PJ (03 6143 3335).

THE BIER BAR

Best deal What goes well with the bar's famous half-metre sausage and quarter-metre schnapps? Surely, it's the one-metre long draught beer, which actually measures up to 11 glasses. Get it at RM66 before 8pm.
Or try If that sounds too much, buy one pint to get another free throughout happy hour (4-8pm).
47 Changkat Bukit Bintang (03 2148 0511/www.thebierbark.com).

THE ESTABLISHMENT

Best deal Get a free pint of beer at The Establishment whenever it rains,

a quirky deal that makes saving for a rainy day a breeze.
31 Jalan Mesui, Bukit Bintang, KL (www.facebook.com/theestablishmentkl).

FRESCA MEXICAN KITCHEN & BAR

Best deal Buy one mug of draught Tiger beer and get a second for just RM5++ all day long every Monday. If that beer deal is not enough to jazz up your Mondays, purchase one grande Classic Margarita and get a single on the house.
Or try Get 50 percent off the restaurant's signature sangria and classic margarita every Tuesday, 4-8pm.
G-242A, The Gardens Mall, Mid Valley City, KL (03 2201 2893/www.facebook.com/frescabar).



La Bodega

LA BODEGA

Best deal If you like to party in packs, La Bodega's ladies night offer is the promotion for you. Five ladies who come in a group will receive a free bottle of wine or five cocktails for free every Wednesday night.
Various locations including Bangsar Shopping Centre (03 2287 2768) and Jalan Telawi, Bangsar (03 2287 9468/www.bodega.com.my).

THE LIBRARY, KLANG

Best deal If you find yourself in Klang on a Tuesday, you'll get three pints for the price of one across selected Kronenbourg, Hoegaarden, Erdinger, Franziskaner, Leffe, Stella Artois and Asahi brews.
Or try There on a Wednesday? You'll get a pint for just RM18. If you rock up on a Thursday, buy three pints of

Hoegaarden and you'll get one Carlsberg tower free.
BBT One, Jalan Batu Nilam 2, Klang (03 3325 1116/www.thelibrary.my). Available 4-10pm.

MEZZA9

Best deal Mezza's all-you-can-drink buffet only sets you back RM50. The only thing stopping you here is your booze tolerance. Go for wine

and margarita on Mondays, wine on Tuesdays, and wine and sangria on Saturdays.
B-G-03 A, Glomac Galleria, Desa Sri Hartamas (03 6206 1216).

MOVIDA BAR & LOUNGE

Best deal This is not just a club, no. It's a kitchen, bar and club lounge set in a classy setting. Get started on your cheap drinks as early as 12noon: buy one pint and get two more free.
Or try If you don't make the afternoon shift, you can still get two pints for the price of one from 8.30pm to 11pm. From 11pm until closing time, buy two pints and get one free pint, or buy three pints and get two more free.
C-03 & C-03A, Block C, Sunway Giza, 2 Jalan PJU 5/14, PJU 5, Kota Damansara, PJ (03 6141 8022/www.movida.my).

STAGE KL

Best deal Any day of the week from 5pm to 8pm, buy one pint and get two pints for free. It's the perfect place to bring your inner party animal as the club promises star-studded performances with good booze.
Or try Buy one pint and get another one free (8-11pm). Choice includes Hoegaarden, Kronenbourg and Asahi.
Avenue K, 156 Jalan Ampang (016 339 8013/www.thestage.my).



Stage KL

LADIES ONLY

A week's worth of free drinks, courtesy of KL's best ladies nights

Monday SOULed OUT Ampang

Free Sangria every Monday from 9.30pm to 12midnight. See, Monday nights don't have to be manic or blue after all.
Ground floor, Menara HSC, 187 Jalan Ampang, KL (03 2181 1626).



Tuesday Vertigo

It's free entrance for ladies all night long. Experience all the different EDM genres - techno, house and progressive - at this hip club located on the sixth floor of The Gardens Mall. You get two free drinks, and two of your friends can enter for free.
The Gardens Mall, sixth floor, Mid Valley City (010 215 9701/www.vertigo.my).

Wednesday SkyBar

It's the best excuse to check out the revamped SkyBar if you haven't been yet. Get free cocktails from 6pm to 9pm. You won't find avant-garde concoctions, just perfectly balanced renditions of the classics.
Traders Hotel, KL (03 2332 9888/www.skybar.com.my).



Movida

THE VENUE

Best deal The Venue is one of Bukit Bintang's newest joints, and they're racking up the drinks promos. Enjoy three glasses of house red or white wine for RM49.90.

Or try Get shots of gin, rum, vodka, tequila, whisky or cognac for RM15 each. Connection level 4, Pavilion KL (03 2110 2800/www.facebook.com/TheVenueKL).

F BY BUFFALO KITCHENS

Best deal It's worth sneaking out of work early to take advantage of F's daily happy hours (before 7pm and after 9.30pm). If you're feeling thrifty, their cocktails are available at RM18++; Carlsberg by the glass at just RM9++.

69-1 Jalan Telawi 3, Bangsar (03 2201 1710/www.facebook.com/buffalokitchens).

WATAMI

Best deal Over ten different cocktails

going for RM12.90 each – check out the milkshake-like Cookie & Ice-Cream.

Or try Celebrate all things Japanese at this cheap and cheerful restaurant chain by downing shots of shochu at RM10.90 each.

Pavilion KL (03 2141 6671); 1 Utama Shopping Centre (03 7727 1399); Paradigm Mall (03 7886 9661/www.watami.com.my).

ZOUK CAFÉ

Best deal From 10am to 9pm, buy one glass or a jug of Tiger beer and get another one free. That means you practically start boozing immediately upon downing your morning coffee.

Or try Buy two and get three free on all house pouring liquors (glass only, 4–6pm). After 9pm, buy one drink and get two free on all house pouring liquors (glass and jug) everyday.

The Gardens Mall, Mid Valley City (03 2288 1997/zoukcafebar.com.my).



Zouk Café

Cheap drinks & parties

FREE CLUB NIGHTS

Just want to dance? Get in for free at these hotspots

► Zeta Bar

Live band performances are the main draw at Zeta Bar, which also features a stylish champagne bar for patrons with a penchant for the bubbly. From 9.45pm onwards, be entertained by Sonic, an energetic seven-piece band led by bassist Ricardo Ranito.

Hilton Kuala Lumpur (03 2264 2592/life.hiltonkl.com).

► Bedroom

With free entry on nights when no special events are held, Bedroom is the place to be to celebrate house, techno, top 40, R&B and dirty disco tunes. Since you've saved on cover charge, treat yourself to the club's selection of imaginative cocktails.

Sixth floor, Pavilion KL (03 2141 9620/www.bedroomkl.my).

► SkyBar

Nothing beats the picturesque view of the KL skyline from this ever-popular bar, which is perched on the 33rd floor of the Traders Hotel. Saunter into one of the sunken booths next to the open windows and enjoy the scenery while sipping on some top notch cocktails.

Traders Hotel Kuala Lumpur, KLCC (03 2332 9888/www.skybar.com.my).

► Frangipani Restaurant & Bar

Slinky Saturday takes centre stage from 10pm to 3am, where you gain free entry and enjoy amazing drink deals. Selected cocktails are one for one from 10pm to 12midnight, with happy hour deals happening all night long.

25 Changkat Bukit Bintang, KL (03 2144 3001/www.frangipani.com.my).

► The Establishment

The iconic Deer Society Saturday nights have found a new home at The Establishment, where party-goers find solace in indie dance, nu disco and other choice alternative cuts.

31 Jalan Mesui, Bukit Bintang, KL (www.facebook.com/theestablishmentkl).

Thursday

twenty.one kitchen + bar

Get in early before it fills and amuse yourself with a variety of free cocktails (Raspberry Fix, Tropical Punch and Sour Apple Collins) from 9pm onwards. First 21 ladies in high heels also get a glass of Chandon for free. Knowledgeable staff, excellent food and a good looking crowd – why wander off somewhere else?

20-1, Changkat Bukit Bintang, KL (03 2142 0021/www.twentyone.com.my).

Friday

Lust

Somewhere in Lust, there's a bartender who's waiting to make a drink for you. Ladies night starts from 6pm to 8pm and you get free cocktails with delicious barbecued grub.

Office Tower, 1 Jalan Nagasari, KL (03 2142 0525/www.lustkl.com).



Saturday

Desire Club

Pumping life into Asian Heritage Row is Desire, and you'll find a mix of clubbers here. Line your stomach with their cheap bar bites before quaffing their selection of free drinks. Free entrance before 2am; free drinks from 9pm to 2am.

64 Jalan Doraisamy, Asian Heritage Row, KL (03 2691 9618).

Sunday

The Pool

No need to break out in your bikini for free drinks. Every third Sunday of the month at The Pool is Sensational Wet Party. It's free entrance for everyone dressed in white, and free flow of Kronenbourg 1664 from 4pm onwards. If you insist on taking a dip, there's free tequila shots for everyone in the pool too.

347 Jalan Ampang KL (017 998 5577).

The RM100 shopping challenge

We give each of our writers RM100 to find the best party outfit they can, across KL's different shopping districts. Who will get the most return on their ringgit? By the **Time Out KL** team. Photography **Amir Rashid**

HITTING UP THE HIGH STREET

On the high street, everything is engineered to make you want to buy, buy, buy – the bright lights, the mesmeric layouts, the pounding music. Shopping with a plan becomes nigh on impossible when you're faced with a rack of dresses (none of which you need), bristling with colour, studs and '50 percent' tags. What's a girl to do?

Setting myself a budget of RM50 for a suitable party dress proved surprisingly hard – the only frocks at my disposal were jersey skater affairs, or flimsy bodycon numbers that looked more suited to claustrophobia than clubbing. Navigating a mindnumbing array of black dresses, I finally hit gold at the sales racks at **Forever 21** with a terracotta peplum dress (yes, also available in black). The fabric was thin but silky, and the fit surprisingly good. For some extra zing I grabbed a neon studded belt from **Cache Cache** – possibly intended for tweens, but you can wear anything with a sense of irony. A plain gold chain bedecked with a triangle came next, a 10 percent discount knocking it down a few ringgit.

Shoes were the trickiest – there were cheap strappy heels for as low as RM25, but they looked like a surefire way to a broken ankle. I decided to amp up the neon with a pair of ballet flats from **H&M** for RM39.90, bringing me a whisker over budget. **Emma Chong**



5 high street picks

► **Forever 21**

We can't guarantee the quality of fabric and fit but, like blondes, Forever 21 seems to have more fun. Flirty sundresses and California Gurls-worthy ensembles abound.

Various outlets (www.facebook.com/F21Malaysia).

► **H&M**

Look no further for seasonal, trendy items that reference the biggest catwalk fashions. H&M has some of the best designer collaborations, as well as a great line of basics. Various outlets (www.hm.com/my).

► **Cotton On**

Prices at this Aussie shop hit rock-bottom come sale time,

and their brand of relaxed, summer-focused pieces is great for our weather. Various outlets

(www.cottonon.com).

► **Charles & Keith**

The Singaporean store has really upped their design game this season, with plenty of covetable neon and pastel bags and shoes. It's a little pricier than local counterpart

Vincci, so just wait for the sale.

Various outlets (www.charleskeith.com).

► **Uniqlo**

Though not the cheapest store on the high street, Uniqlo quality is excellent, and their weekly deals can be very worth your time. Plus, free alterations in-store.

Various outlets (www.uniqlo.com/my).

**TRYING
WHOLESALE
ON FOR SIZE**

On the surface, Kenanga Wholesale City brims with eye-blinding colours and shouty promotional tags, no different from Sungei Wang Plaza or Berjaya Times Square. I wasn't expecting to find anything edgy or, if we're being honest, classy. But upon digging through racks of clothes, the selection here surpassed my expectations. The stuff range from cutesy floral skirts, flowy kaftan tops, designer-inspired bodycon dresses and a few casual tribal-printed maxis. If not covered in studs or glitter, some of the clothes look identical to those in a posh boutique.

The best part: prices are insanely low. It's best to buy in bulk, so if you see a dress for RM50, chances are you'll get three dresses off the same rack for RM100. The same applies with accessories. If a chunky necklace costs RM25, they may wrap up three for RM50. Skip the shoes at this mall as choices (and possibly, comfort levels) are poor. The smaller shops are not equipped with fitting rooms, so best go with your measurements in hand.

Surekha Ragavan



Blue dress with PVC detailing from **La Belle** (second floor) RM55.30 (original price RM79)

Pink clutch (unnamed kiosk, ground floor) RM25

Pink ballet flats (unnamed shop, lower ground floor) RM15

5 Kenanga picks

► **Chinos**

The conspicuous store is Kenanga's equivalent of Nichii Fashion City.
26 & 27, ground floor (03 2714 9016).

► **Merry Berry**

Dress prints here are unusually tasteful, especially those stashed in the back of the store – imported from Korea, purportedly.
97, 2nd floor (03 2714 9051).

► **W + Y**

This chic store stocks designer-inspired apparel, and although

prices are steeper than its peers, the choices are less shoddy.
1-7, first floor (03 9221 3636).

► **Serret**

The stuff here is bizarrely edgy. Case in point: A velvet skirt with what looks like John Lennon's bespectacled face printed across it.
57, ground floor (03 9226 1566).

► **Verve**

Great for when you need sleek corporate dresses or silky tops to go beneath blazers.
55, ground floor (03 2722 0055/
www.verve.my).
Kenanga Wholesale City 2 Jalan Gebuor, off Jalan Kenanga, KL (03 9221 8081/www.kenangacity.com.my)

FASHIONING AN OUTFIT ONLINE

Aside from having to bother with measurements and conversion, the most challenging part about shopping for an outfit online was finding a decent-looking dress below RM40 to be able to have enough left for shoes and accessories.

This is where **Vintagebiribiri** (*vintagebiribiri.com*) came in and saved the day. The store is known for its vintage wear (which were all out of my budget), but it stocks a decent line of new items as well, out of which I managed to get a cream-coloured lacey dress for RM39. The payment process was easy, although the site could do with a bit of fixing (some items listed had broken links).

With the dress done, online giant **Zalora's** (*zalora.com.my*) catalogue of shoes looked pretty extensive, and I scored some killer clog heels for a mere RM45.50. With the need to add a pop of colour to the dress (but not having the funds for an envelope clutch), I settled for a pink skinny belt with a diamanté buckle, bringing my total spending to just 30 cents over budget. I'm quite happy with my purchases too (they fit well and weren't bad quality either).

Syarifah Syazana



Vintagebiribiri dress RM39 (additional RM5.70 for shipping)

Wraps by Catalyst skinny belt (via Zalora), RM15.80

Sole Nice clog heels (via Zalora), RM45.50



TOTAL RM106
Verdict There are loads of internet bargains to be found, if you have the patience to trawl through vast online catalogues.

5 online picks

► **Zalora**

With a big catalogue (that keeps on growing) and free nationwide shipping, there's no denying that Zalora is the online go-to place for womenswear (if you're not looking

for vintage, that is).

zalora.com.my

► **Vintagebiribiri**

For genuine vintage pieces at affordable prices.

vintagebiribiri.com

► **Covetz**

Go here for girly frocks and tops.

There's free local delivery too.

covetz.com

► **soak republic**

One word: Accessories. From kitschy animals to couture, soak republic stocks necklaces, bracelets, rings, headpieces and more that will satisfy nearly

everyone.

soakrepublic.com

► **TheRivulet**

The envelope clutches are the objects of desire here. Prices aren't bad either.

therivulet.com

GETTING INTO INTERNET SHOPPING

affordable and in good condition, but the size did run slightly small.

However, in terms of sheer value and selection, nothing around here tops **ASOS** (www.asos.com). With its free worldwide shipping and frequent sales, the British website should be your go-to online shopping destination, especially if you have time to wait out its nominal eight-working-day delivery period. The purchased chino shorts fit really well but crease easily, so have them ironed before a big night out.

Instead of casting envious glances at our spoilt-for-choice female counterparts, visit online shops like **Luccacal** (www.luccacal.com), where affordable unisex accessories become available occasionally. The coated wooden spectacles feel a tad flimsy, but they certainly add a dash of geeky charm to any outfit. **Wong Boon Ken**

Wooden spectacles from **Luccacal** RM26 (shipping RM6)



Tigasukuvintage
Dunlop vintage shirt RM38 (shipping RM6)

ASOS chino shorts RM39 (original price RM106)



TOTAL RM115
Verdict Though the variety is improving, online shopping in Malaysia is still slim pickings for men.

Sifting through the meager assortment of local menswear-centric online shops was frustrating. Tops were either too costly or unappealing, or both, with bottoms and shoes even pricier. There's where **Tigasukuvintage** (tigasukuvintage.blogspot.com) came in. The purchased one-off vintage piece was remarkably

5 online picks

▶ ASOS

The undisputed cream of the menswear crop features free worldwide shipping.

www.asos.com

▶ Tigasukuvintage

This blogshop stocks affordable quality vintage pieces and offers quick, friendly service to boot.

tigasukuvintage.blogspot.com

▶ Urban Outfitters

Ludicrously pricey \$30 shipping cost aside, this US favourite

boasts a repertoire of fantastic items at bargain prices.

www.urbanoutfitters.com

▶ Zalora

Navigating this cluttered webstore results in more misses than hits, but dig deep enough and you may find decent items at higher price points.

www.zalora.com.my

▶ WEUL

Awkward male model aside, this blogshop is a good place to start for your menswear needs.

www.weul.blogspot.com

HEADING TO THE HYPERMARKET

Department stores like Aeon (or Jusco) usually stock a huge selection of clothing, and most of them are of a local variety. The offerings may be quite generic, but if you're not fussy about brands, shopping at department stores is definitely value for money, especially during sale periods.

Both the shirt and T-shirt I picked out at Aeon fit well, and the material was comparatively decent. While the cutting of the jeans ran slightly small (more like skinny jeans than a straight leg), the price definitely made up for it. But other than clothes, there was only a small range of shoes and accessories here. (Remember, the 14-days return policy applies.) And like most department stores/hypermarkets, if you sign up for the membership card, there are special discounts sometimes. **Ian Loh**



Rags jeans, RM35.95 (original price RM119.90)

Suave short-sleeve shirt, RM39

Seed t-shirt, RM24.50 (original price RM49)



TOTAL RM99.45
Verdict Don't expect this season's biggest trends and you won't be disappointed.

5 hypermarket/department store picks

▶ AEON

This is the default go-to local department store if you're looking for a huge variety of clothes – from menswear, womenswear to anything in between, at competitive prices.

www.aeonretail.com.my

▶ Tesco

Offerings are mostly generic though you can find the F&F fashion brand available exclusively at certain outlets.

www.tesco.com.my

▶ Carrefour

Attractive prices for label-less mediocre-quality clothing.

www.carrefour.com.my

▶ Giant

Budget-conscious shoppers who aren't fussed about off-beat or trendy items should come here.

www.giant.com.my

▶ Isetan

An upscale department store featuring mostly international brands. Prices might be higher, but you get what you pay for.

www.isetankl.com.my

*All from Aeon (Jusco).

It's all about the money

Sell your skills or volunteer for perks – here's a guide to all the best money-spinning side gigs

GET SOMETHING FOR NOTHING

★ Recycle and Reward

WHAT TO EXPECT When you sign up as a member with Recycle and Reward, separate your waste according to type (paper, plastic, aluminium, etc) and start recycling with them. You can choose to deliver your recyclables at their centre, but if that's too much of a hassle, just pay RM50 to upgrade your account and you'll be entitled to a lifetime of free pick-ups from your home.

WHAT YOU GAIN Instead of cash, you get points with every item you recycle; collect enough of them and you can redeem from their catalogue of goods ranging from shopping vouchers, electrical appliances and even gadgets. If you keep up your recycling habit with them you can even redeem a Nintendo Wii or Sony LCD TV. If you've unsuccessfully tried to save up for a new console before, this point-based system should keep you better on track to getting it.

Membership, free; premium member, RM50. More info on www.recycleandreward.my.



Recycle your way to a new TV

★ ATP Malaysian Open Kuala Lumpur

WHAT TO EXPECT Volunteer as a crew member and earn tickets to watch the game. You can assist the Court Services Department with daily maintenance of courts, distribute uniform and meals to players and engage in crowd management. Different positions would require different skills but generally, you must be friendly, hospitable and highly organised.

WHAT YOU GAIN Three sets of complimentary tickets to watch selected matches, on-site meals, RM25 allowance per shift, certificate of appreciation and an autograph session with the marquee players. *Venue TBA. Sep 23 – 29. More info on www.malaysianopentennis.com.*



Swap clothes at Friendly Fashion

★ Friendly Fashion

WHAT TO EXPECT Friendly Fashion provides a space for you to sell your stuff, simple as that. Primarily clothes, but also accessories, shoes and bags. There's no membership or listing charge, so if you have old clothes you no longer wear (come on, we all do), take a few clear photos and get them up online. You never know who'll be interested.

WHAT YOU GAIN Apart from the actual buying and selling of clothes, where Friendly Fashion excels is in the flexibility of their transactions. If you find an item of someone else's that you particularly like, but don't want to part with any cash, drop the seller a message and see if they want to swap. Bargain a price down, do a partial barter or even (if you're lucky) get something for free – some sellers are just looking to give their stuff away, no catch.

Membership, free. More info on www.friendlyfashion.my.

★ Cronier Wines free wine tasting

WHAT TO EXPECT Round up your friends (not more than five per group) and head over to famed South African wine distributor Cronier Wines's weekly hour-long free wine tasting session, where you educate your palate through sampling selected Cronier wines.

WHAT YOU GAIN An increased knowledge of wine, not to mention an enjoyable and educational day out with your friends.

5-6 The One Avenue, Dataran Pelangi Utama, PJ (03 7722 2252/www.cronierwines-my.com). Every Fri, 5 – 6pm. Reservations required.

★ RockCorps concert tickets

WHAT TO EXPECT RockCorps Malaysia is a platform for you to give back to the community in exchange for free tickets to concerts and gigs. RockCorps organise their own voluntary projects in addition to working with NGOs as well as shelters. Generally, you are expected to participate in cleaning up, refurbishing, and painting. For music or sporting events, volunteers will be required to assist in crowd control, security, ticketing and registration.

WHAT YOU GAIN For every four hours of community service, you'll get one ticket to their annual RockCorps Malaysia Concert.

Register to be a volunteer at rockcorpsmalaysia.com.my.

BEST MEMBERSHIP CARDS

F3 (*Topshop, Topman, Miss Selfridge and Dorothy Perkins*)

YOU PAY nothing – spend RM200 in store to apply for free
YOU GET 10 percent off regular priced items at Topshop, Topman, Miss Selfridge and Dorothy Perkins stores across Malaysia and Singapore; birthday vouchers during your birthday month; RM25 voucher for every RM800 spent; access to members-only sales and promotions.

www.f3.com.my



Borders Rewards Card

YOU PAY RM20 for two years (or apply for free if you spend at least RM150)

YOU GET One members card and two supplementary cards; 10 percent off books; 5 percent off magazines; 5 percent off greeting cards; 10 percent off inhouse Starbucks

orders; additional discounts on monthly promotions.

www.borders.com.my



The Body Shop Love Your Body Club

YOU PAY nothing – spend RM100 in store to apply for free.

YOU GET RM15 rebate voucher for every RM150 spent; free gift packaging; access to members-only sales; 25 percent off selected treats on your birthday; previews of new products; additional offers and discounts.

www.thebodyshop.com.my



Aeon Member

YOU PAY RM12 for one year
YOU GET points accumulation to redeem against gifts and vouchers; discounts at over 500 merchant partners across Malaysia; extra rewards on your birthday; special parking rates at certain AEON shopping malls. Plus, you

get RM10 for every RM100 spent on Aeon Day.

www.aeonretail.com.my



PJLA Live card

YOU PAY RM50 for one year.
YOU GET Ticket discounts for shows at PJLA – the discounts vary, but are usually between 10 and 30 percent and can go up to 50 percent.

www.pjlivearts.my



MAKE EXTRA MONEY



Ply your skills via Culture Run

★ Culture Run

WHAT TO EXPECT Culture Run is a community marketplace of classes to connect people who want to share or learn new skills. Classes here go beyond the walls of a classroom as the workshops take place in restaurants, parks, studios and even rooftops. Ply your skills by following four simple steps: submit a ShareShop idea, promote your class via social networks, gather your participants and start teaching. Folks at Culture Run will hook you up with a venue.

WHAT YOU GAIN The teacher dictates the price of the workshop, and since it's free listing on the website, the Culture Run owners only take 20 percent commission per every ticket sold. Say your ticket is RM100, Culture Run takes RM20 and you keep RM80. Based at Nook, 9 Jalan Riong, Bangsar. Register at www.cultureun.com.



Sell your stuff at Art for Grabs

★ Art For Grabs

WHAT TO EXPECT What started off as an ad-hoc bazaar has turned into a mini arts fest happening every three months at The Annexe Gallery. Independent vendors gather to sell all manner of crafts, from homemade accessories to old magazines. Get a booth at RM120 for two days (tables, podium, plinth are extra RM15 each) or book an event slot for RM200 per hour to launch a product, facilitate a workshop, hold a forum, throw a gig or screen films. But no selling secondhand clothes or pre-loved items – this is not a flea market.

WHAT YOU GAIN Cash from sales as well as free access to all the workshops, readings and screenings throughout the bazaar.

The Annexe Gallery, second floor, Central Market Annexe, KL (016 489 2603/annexegallery.com). Mar 16 & 17, 12noon – 8pm.

★ Kakiseni

WHAT TO EXPECT Brush up on your moves, give your hair a little poof and you're ready to land a role in a musical, concert, play or music video. Kakiseni is the epicentre for all local theatre, film and music auditions but they also list runway castings occasionally. You may not think working as a backup will catapult you up the acting or singing career ladder but hey, Madonna, Jennifer Lopez and Whitney Houston proved otherwise.

WHAT YOU GAIN Money and fame – two things a celebrity needs. If you're the zealous kind like James Earl Jones who's willing to die for art, you shouldn't mind the meagre pay. Find auditions on www.kakiseni.com.

FOR SOME FAST CASH...

Participate in product research

WHAT IT IS Product research is carried out to measure marketability and to find out what consumers think. Products range from chocolate to luxury cars. As participants, you are rewarded 'tokens of appreciation' in the form of cash (between RM30 – 400) or free giveaways.

WHAT TO EXPECT The easy part is the participation; the hard part is actually getting in. There is a screening process. The researchers usually already have a demographic in mind, so if you fail to fit into their mould, you're out. But if you pass, just sit back, sample the product, answer some questionnaires, or endure a couple of hours of interview.

HOW TO GET STARTED Here's the catch – many research companies do not recruit participants themselves. They hire 'agents' who go around scouting for the right people. They all operate differently, either through word of mouth, social networking sites, blogs or job vacancy websites. If you don't personally know an agent, visit cheongsurvey.blogspot.com, www.cariparttime.com, or www.wowjobs.my (keyword: survey respondent) to get started.

Become a mystery shopper

WHAT IT IS Run by market research companies, you are recruited to visit a specific outlet, dine, make purchases or receive service. You are then asked to gather specific information and report it. A mystery shopper performs these tasks anonymously.

WHAT TO EXPECT Your wage will be determined by the complexity of the task. It could be anything from just making enquires at a store and filling up a questionnaire to acting out a very specific scenario created by researchers and report it in a lengthy questionnaire as well as a written report. They will set up a time frame for you to complete your tasks. Some will require you to snap a few shots. Aside from cash, you will be able to dine, receive services or products for free. In a perplexing way, you are paid to shop.

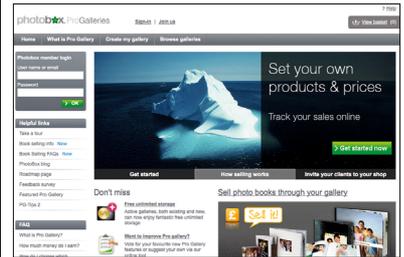
HOW TO GET STARTED Aside from job recruitment websites, some marketing research companies allow you to set up an account on their website. They will ask for your personal details, and will contact you if they deem you fit for the job. Visit www.crcg.com.my or dynamic-search.com.my to try your luck.

★ Top 3 websites to sell your photos



Instaproofs.com

After creating an account, you'll be able to upload images immediately for free. Your images remain online for up to 270 days, and you can promote your works via automated sale, discount notifications and social bookmarking. Instaproofs keeps eight to 15 percent of your sale.



Photoboxgallery.com

PhotoBox's service is free so customise your photo gallery and set your own price list to start selling. There's unlimited photo storage for new as well as existing gallery owners. They only keep 10 percent of your profit.



Zazzle.com

It's a free online marketplace that allows you to sell t-shirts or posters featuring your art, photos and designs. Best of all, you can also make more money when you recommend your friends to join Zazzle. All profit goes to you.



★ Sell your stuff

Weekender Bazaar

With two instalments under its belt, Weekender Bazaar is the newest market in town. The goods on sale encompass fashion, food and lifestyle – but most importantly, pre-loved goods.

www.facebook.com/weekenderbazaar

I Love Bazaar

I Love Bazaar is one of the most regular markets, happening twice a month. Hawk your wares to the good people of Subang at Subang Parade.

www.ilovebazaar.net. Mar 2, 3, 30 & 31

Hello Deer Pasar Ahad

Nothing but pre-loved at this sale, so you won't be competing with blogshop offerings and indie designers.

www.ilovehellodeer.com