



Islands & Day Trips

Pulau Ubin p141

An unkempt jungle of an island, Pulau Ubin offers a forest full of weird and wonderful creatures, dusty village streets and, best of all, the chance to explore it all by bicycle.

Southern Islands p143

Located just off the southeast coast of Sentosa, this trio of islands is tailor made for beachside picnics and lazy tropical lounging. Head across for a quick, soothing getaway.

Pulau Bintan p144

Expats and moneyed Singaporeans lap up the all-inclusive resorts in the north, but exploring Bintan's south offers an altogether more authentic taste of Indonesian island life.

Johor Bahru p147

Just under an hour away by bus from Singapore, the Malaysian city of Johor Bahru, or JB, is popular for cheap food, cheap-ish shopping, lively streets and a Lego theme park.

Pulau Ubin

Explore

It may be just a 10-minute bumboat ride from Changi Village, but Ubin seems worlds apart from mainland Singapore, and is the perfect city getaway for those who love the outdoors; particularly cycling.

Singaporeans like to wax nostalgic about Ubin's *kampung* (village) atmosphere, and it remains a rural, unkempt expanse of jungle full, of fast-moving lizards, strange shrines and cacophonous birdlife. Tin-roofed buildings bake in the sun, chickens squawk and panting dogs slump in the dust, while in the forest, families of wild pigs run for cover as visitors pedal past on squeaky rented bicycles. Set aside a full day if you can. It takes a couple of hours just to get here and, once you arrive, you won't want to be rushed.

The Best...

- ➔ **Sight** Chek Jawa Wetlands
- ➔ **Place to Eat** Pulau Ubin Village
- ➔ **Activity** Cycling

Top Tip

To help reduce litter, maps are no longer given out on Pulau Ubin. However, you will find maps of the island drawn on wooden signboards that you can photograph and use for navigation.

Getting There & Away

Getting to Pulau Ubin is half the fun. First catch bus 2 from Tanah Merah MRT station (30 minutes) to the terminus bus stop at Changi Point Ferry Terminal. From there it's a 10-minute chug-along bumboat ride to Ubin (one-way \$2.50, bicycle surcharge \$2; 6am to 9pm). The small wooden boats seat 12 passengers, and only leave when full, but you rarely have to wait long. No tickets are issued. You just pay the boathand once you're on board.



SIGHTS

PULAU UBIN VILLAGE

VILLAGE

Although not really a tourist sight, Pulau Ubin's only village of note is a ramshackle time capsule of Singapore's past and an interesting place to wander round. Fish traps and the skeletal remains of abandoned jetties poke out of the muddy water, stray cats prowl for birds, and docile dogs laze around on the sleepy streets. It's also the gateway to the island; home to the ferry terminal, bike-hire shops and the island's only restaurants.

CHEK JAWA WETLANDS

NATURE RESERVE

(☉8.30am-6pm) **FREE** If you only have time for one part of the island, make it this part. Skirting the island's southeast, Chek Jawa Wetlands features a 1km **coastal boardwalk** that will have you strolling over the sea and through protected mangrove swamp to the 20m-high **Jejawi Tower**.

CYCLING AROUND UBIN

Apart from walking (which isn't a bad option at all) cycling is the only way to get around Ubin. Those heading for the Ketam Mountain Bike Park tend to bring their own better-quality bikes with them, but for the rest of us there are plenty of places in Pulau Ubin Village that rent perfectly adequate bikes for the day, from around \$5 to \$12. The bikes are pretty much identical, although some vendors seem to change prices on a whim. Cheapest and fairest of the lot is **shop 31**, which rents adult bikes for \$5 to \$8, and kids bikes for \$5. Vendors should throw in a basket, a bike lock and a helmet if you ask.

You can't get maps of the island, but there are maps on signboards dotted around the place, so you can follow them. Because of the large swamp area in the central northern region of the island, you can't do a complete loop so if you want to explore the east and the west (note: the far west is off limits) you'll have to do a bit of backtracking, but distances here are small so it hardly matters.

Although it looks like you can on the signboard maps, you can't in fact cross Sungai Mamam swamp for a shortcut between Noordin Campsite and Mamam Campsite. You have to go back via the main road.