

TRANSPORT

Having invested vast sums in its public transport infrastructure, Singapore is undoubtedly the easiest city in Asia to get around. With a typical mixture of far-sighted social planning and authoritarianism, the government has built, and continues to extend, its Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) rail system and its road network.

If you're going to be using public transport heavily, buy the TransitLink Guide (\$2.50 from MRT ticket offices), which lists all bus and MRT routes. Maps show the surrounding areas for all MRT stations, including bus stops.

For online bus information, including a searchable bus guide and the useful IRIS service (which tells you in real time when your next bus will arrive), see www.sbstransit.com.sg. For train information, see www.smrt.com.sg. Book flights, tours and rail tickets online at www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services.

AIR

Singapore's location and excellent facilities have made it a natural choice as a major South-east Asian aviation hub, with direct services all over the world. It is also serviced by four budget airlines, which often offer extremely cheap deals if you book well in advance.

Websites worth checking out for flights to and from Singapore include the following:

www.bezurk.com Similar to Zuji, but helpfully lists fares including the taxes and charges.

www.cheapestflights.co.uk This site really does post cheap flights (out of the UK only), but you have to get in early to get the bargains.

www.lastminute.com This site deals mainly in European flights but does have worldwide flights, mostly package returns. There's also an Australian version (www.lastminute.com.au).

THINGS CHANGE...

The information in this chapter is particularly vulnerable to change. Check directly with the airline or a travel agent to make sure you understand how a fare (and ticket you may buy) works and be aware of the security requirements for international travel. Shop carefully. The details given in this chapter should be regarded as pointers and are not a substitute for your own careful, up-to-date research.

www.statravel.com This is STA Travel's US website.

There are also sites for the UK (www.statravel.co.uk) and Australia (www.statravel.com.au).

www.travel.com.au This is worth checking out for cheap flights from Australia.

www.travelonline.co.nz This is a good site for New Zealanders to find worldwide fares from their part of the world.

www.zuji.com.au This site offers decent deals on a range of top-notch carriers.

Airlines

Below are some of the major airline offices in Singapore. Check the Business Yellow Pages for any that are not listed here.

British Airways/Qantas (Map pp74–5; ☎ British Airways 6622 1747; www.britishairways.co.uk; 06-05 Cairnhill Pl, 15 Cairnhill Rd)

Cathay Pacific Airways (Map pp62–3; ☎ 6533 1333; www.cathaypacific.com.sg; 25-07 Ocean Towers, 20 Raffles Place)

Garuda Indonesia (Map pp74–5; ☎ 6250 5666; www.garuda-indonesia.com; 12-03 United Sq, 101 Thomson Rd)

KLM-Royal Dutch Airlines (Map pp62–3; ☎ 6832 2220; www.klm.com.sg; 06-01, 79 Anson Rd)

Lufthansa Airlines (Map pp74–5; ☎ 6245 5600; www.lufthansa.com; 05-01 Palais Renaissance, 390 Orchard Rd)

Malaysia Airlines (Map pp52–3; ☎ 6336 6777; www.malaysiaairlines.com; 02-09 Singapore Shopping Centre, 190 Clemenceau Ave)

Qantas (Map pp74–5; ☎ 6415 7373; www.qantas.com.sg; 06-05 Cairnhill Place, 15 Cairnhill Rd)

Singapore Airlines (Map pp74–5; ☎ 6223 8888; www.singaporeair.com; Level 2, Paragon Bldg, Orchard Rd)

Thai Airways International (Map pp62–3; ☎ 6210 5000; www.thaiairways.com.sg; the Globe, 100 Cecil St)

The following budget airlines operate out of Singapore. They are changing their networks all the time, so check websites for details. Bookings are made almost entirely online, though Air Asia tickets can also be bought at post offices.

Air Asia (☎ 6733 9933; www.airasia.com)

Cebu Pacific (☎ agents 6735 7155, 6737 9231, 6220 5966; www.cebupacificair.com)

Jetstar Asia (☎ 6822 2288; www.jetstarasia.com)

Tiger Airways (☎ 6538 4437; www.tigerairways.com)

GETTING INTO TOWN

Bus

Public bus 36 runs from terminals 1, 2 and 3 to Orchard Rd and the Colonial District (\$1.70, one hour). They leave roughly every 15 minutes, the first departing at 6.09am and the last just after midnight.

Faster and more convenient are the airport shuttle buses (adult/child \$9/6, 20 to 40 minutes) that leave from all main terminal arrival halls and drop passengers at any hotel, except for those on Sentosa and in Changi Village. They leave from Terminals 1 and 2 and the Budget Terminal (6.15pm to midnight, every 15 minutes; all other times every 30 minutes) and Terminal 3 (6am to 10am and 6pm to 2am, every 15 min; all other times every 30 minutes). Booking desks are in the arrival halls.

Train

The MRT is the best low-cost way to get into town. The station is located below Terminals 2 and 3, the fare to Raffles Place is adult/child \$2.70/\$1.50 (including a \$1 refundable deposit) and the journey takes around 35 minutes. You have to change trains at Tanah Merah (just cross the platform). The first train leaves at 5.30am and the last goes at 12.06am.

Taxi

Taxi lines at Changi are usually fast-moving and efficient. Even at the Budget Terminal you rarely have to wait long. The fare structure is complicated, but count on spending anywhere between \$18 and \$35 into the city centre, depending on the time of travel. The most expensive times are between 5pm and 6am, when a whole raft of surcharges kick in.

A limousine transfer service operates 24 hours a day and costs a flat \$45 to anywhere on the island.

Airports

CHANGI AIRPORT

Unless you are travelling from Tioman or Redang Islands in Malaysia, your plane will land at one of the three main terminals or the Budget Terminal at **Changi Airport** (☎ 6542 1122, flight information 1800 542 4422; www.changiairport.com.sg).

Regularly voted the world's best airport, Changi Airport is vast, efficient and amazingly well organised. Among its many facilities you'll find free internet, courtesy phones for local calls, foreign-exchange booths, as well as the following:

Left luggage (🕒 24hr; cabin bag 1st/subsequent 24hr \$3.15/4.20, suitcase \$4.20/5.25) Terminal 1 (☎ 6214 0628; Basement West); Terminal 2 (☎ 6214 1683; Level 1, Arrival Hall North); Terminal 3 (Basement 2 South)

Medical centres Terminal 1 (☎ 6543 1113; Level 2, Transit Mall West; 🕒 8am-2am); Terminal 2 (☎ 6543 1118; Basement South); 🕒 24hr Terminal 3 (☎ 6241 8818; Basement 2 South, 🕒 24hr)

Napping rooms Terminal 1 (☎ 6541 8518; www.rainforestsats.com; Rainforest Lounge, Level 3, Transit Mall West; per person per hr single-occupancy only \$10); Terminal 2 (☎ 6541 9107; www.airport-hotel.com.sg; Level 3; Transit Mall South; per 6hr \$40.45)

Post offices (🕒 6am-midnight) Terminal 2, Level 2, Departure Hall South; Level 2, Transit Mall North.

Shower/spa/massage/gym Terminal 1 (☎ 6541 8518; www.rainforestsats.com; Level 3, Transit Mall West);

Terminal 2 (☎ 6545 0388; www.plaza-ppl.com/sg_en/index.ppl; Level 3, Transit Mall South)

Swimming Pool (☎ 6546 5357; www.airport-hotel.com.sg; Level 3, Transit Mall East, Terminal 1; per visit \$13.90; 🕒 7am-11pm)

SELETAR AIRPORT

This small, modern facility is more used to corporate flyers and visiting luminaries. You may come here to catch the daily Berjaya Airways flights to Tioman Island in Malaysia.

Seletar is in the north of the island, and the easiest way to get there is to take a taxi; otherwise bus 103 will take you from Serangoon MRT or outside the National Library (Map pp52-3) to the gates of the Seletar Air Force base, from where you take a local base bus to the airport terminal.

BICYCLE

Singapore's roads are not for the faint-hearted. The roads are not only furiously hot, but also populated by fast, aggressive drivers who tend to be unsympathetic to the needs of cyclists. Fortunately there's a large network of parks and park connectors, and a few excellent dedicated mountain-biking areas at Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, Tampines and Pulau Ubin.

Other excellent places for cycling include East Coast Park, Sentosa, Pasir Ris Park and the new route linking Mt Faber Park, Telok Blangah Hill Park and Kent Ridge Park.