

Hotels & Hostels

Want more Sleeping recommendations than we could ever pack into this little ol' book? Craving more detail – including extended reviews and photographs? Want to read reviews by other travellers and be able to post your own? Just make your way over to [lonelyplanet.com/hotels](https://www.lonelyplanet.com/hotels) and check out our thorough list of independent reviews, then reserve your room simply and securely.

SLEEPING

top picks

- Raffles Hotel (p161)
- Fullerton (p162)
- Goodwood Park Hotel (p169)
- New Majestic Hotel (p165)
- Gallery Hotel (p163)
- Robertson Quay Hotel (p164)
- Siloso Beach Resort (p174)
- Betel Box (p173)
- Sleepy Sam's (p166)
- Lloyd's Inn (p171)

SLEEPING

When it comes to accommodation in Singapore, there's good news and bad news. First, the good: despite the fact that you may run into one fully-booked hotel after another during major events, there have never been more hotels in Singapore than there are now. Now the bad: though not exactly across the board, prices have gone up in the last couple of years. Many former budget hotels have crept into the midrange category – sometimes, but not always, accompanied by corresponding improvements. Prices for many midrange and top-end hotels have also gone up, though not in all cases. (Indeed, there are some fine bargains to be found around town, especially through the internet.) While some new budget hotels have opened up (particularly those offering 'transit', or hourly rates), others have been driven out of business by rising property values.

Thanks to the peerless public transport system, it doesn't really matter where you stay in central Singapore. Everywhere is less than half an hour from everywhere else. If you're looking for atmosphere and character, we recommend Chinatown or Little India, both of which harbour most of the budget accommodation and boutique hotels in shophouse conversions. If you don't mind being a bit further out, there is a cluster of new hostels in the Joo Chiat area.

Orchard Rd and its environs are crammed with identikit upmarket hotels (with a few distinctive exceptions), as is the area around Marina Bay, where you'll find the Esplanade complex and Suntec City mall. There are also good options dotted close by the redeveloped quays of the Singapore River.

If you want to experience the grittier side of Singapore outside your hotel room, then Geylang is worth considering; we've found two hotels in that area that are high in cultural interest and low in sleaze. If you want the sea and a beach close at hand, Sentosa's the go, but avoid weekends, when rates and occupancy are higher.

LONGER-TERM RENTALS

For medium- to long-term stays, Singapore has a number of serviced apartments. It is also possible to rent rooms in private flats (check the classified pages of the *Straits Times* for listings). Rents are high, regardless of how near or far from the city centre you are. Note that the prices quoted include all taxes.

Probably the best place to start looking for long-term rental in Singapore is [Singapore Expats](http://www.singaporeexpats.com) (www.singaporeexpats.com), which has detailed information on the different districts, outlines the whole rental procedure and carries an

apartment search engine. The Singapore section of www.craigslist.org is also a good place to look for long-term stays.

SOMERSET BENCOOLEN

Map pp52–3

Serviced Apartments \$\$\$

☎ 6730 1811; www.somerset.com;

51 Bencoolen St; 1-bedroom apt per week from \$2590;

📍 Dhoby Ghaut; 📺 📶

If you're going to live large in Singapore, the Somerset Bencoolen might be the place to do it. Fully furnished service apartments are big and beautiful with floor-

ACTUAL PRICES MAY VARY

In Singapore's midrange and top-end hotels, room rates are about supply and demand, fluctuating daily.

Travellers planning a trip to Singapore need to keep this in mind, especially if you're planning to come here during a major event. Be aware that reservation desk staff in top hotels usually add a casual (and often barely audible) 'plus plus plus' after the rate they quote you. Ignore this at your peril. The three plusses are service charge, government tax and GST, which together amounts to a breezy 16% on top of your bill.

To further complicate matters, Singapore's high-end hotels offer a stunning array of pricing packages, from rooms for a few hundred a night to Bill Gates-class suites costing thousands (with many incremental, ever-fluctuating price levels in between).

All prices quoted in our listings are from the day of our visit; your own price may vary. Don't thank us: that's the invisible hand of capitalism at work.