

For more detail of this area, see Map p201 ➡

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

As with anywhere in Singapore, it's worth taking advantage of happy hours (usually until 9pm) at the fancy bars around Chinatown. If that's still too pricey for you, have a few beers at a hawker centre instead.



Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Maxwell Rd Hawker Centre (p60)
- ➔ Blue Ginger (p58)
- ➔ Cumi Bali (p58)
- ➔ Lau Pa Sat (p60)
- ➔ Ya Kun Kaya Toast (p58)
- ➔ Dim Joy (p58)

For reviews, see p58 ➔



Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Beaujolais (p61)
- ➔ Screening Room (p61)
- ➔ Nanyang Old Coffee (p60)
- ➔ Tantric Bar (p62)
- ➔ Maxwell Rd Hawker Centre (p60)

For reviews, see p61 ➔



Best Places for History & Culture

- ➔ Chinatown Heritage Centre (p57)
- ➔ Baba House (p57)
- ➔ Sri Mariamman Temple (p57)

For reviews, see p57 ➔

Explore Chinatown

With the possible exception of the Chinatown Heritage Centre, sights here are interesting rather than must-see, but that's a good thing. It leaves more time for visitors to focus on Chinatown's star attraction – food. Start early with a traditional Singaporean breakfast in a *kopitiam* (coffee shop). For lunch join the crowds at one of Chinatown's bustling hawker centres. Come evening take your pick of fine restaurants from a huge variety of national cuisines (it's not just Chinese food in Chinatown, you know).

In between meals, poke your head into an antiques shop here or an art gallery there as you wander past beautifully renovated shophouses in the gentrified streets to the southwest (Duxton Hill area) and southeast (Ann Siang Rd area) of Chinatown's touristy heartland (the lanes fanning off Trengganu St).

Once the sun's gone down, unwind with a cocktail in one of Ann Siang Rd's rooftop bars or grab a cheap beer at a street-side stall.

Local Life

➔ **Hawker Centres** It's a wonder how any of Singapore's expensive restaurants stay in business because the cheap food at hawker centres is so goddamn good. Chinatown is no exception. Eat at as many hawker centres as you can while you're here, but if you've only time for one, make it Maxwell Rd (p60).

➔ **Coffee versus kopi** Fresh-ground Western-style coffee can be found across Chinatown – head to any swank bar or cafe around Ann Siang Rd or Duxton Hill – but locals prefer *kopi* (pronounced 'koh-pee') at a traditional *kopitiam*. Try Nanyang Old Coffee (p60), but read our *kopi* primer (p61) before you go.

➔ **Souvenirs** Skip the tourist tat in the lanes around Trengganu St and hunt down an antiques shop or a local art gallery for a souvenir with a difference. Our favourite is Tong Mern Sern Antiques (p64).

Getting There & Away

➔ **MRT** Not surprisingly the heart of Chinatown is served by Chinatown MRT station, which spits you out onto Pagoda St. Outram Park station is better for the Duxton Hill area, while Tanjong Pagar is a handy third alternative. Raffles Place is the station for the CBD.

➔ **Bus** From the Colonial District, hop on bus 61, 145 or 166, which takes you from North Bridge Rd to South Bridge Rd. From Hill St, buses 2, 12 and 147 run down New Bridge Rd. It's easy to walk from the river and the CBD to Chinatown, but from Raffles Quay, bus 608 goes to South Bridge Rd, or take bus C2 from Clifford Pier.