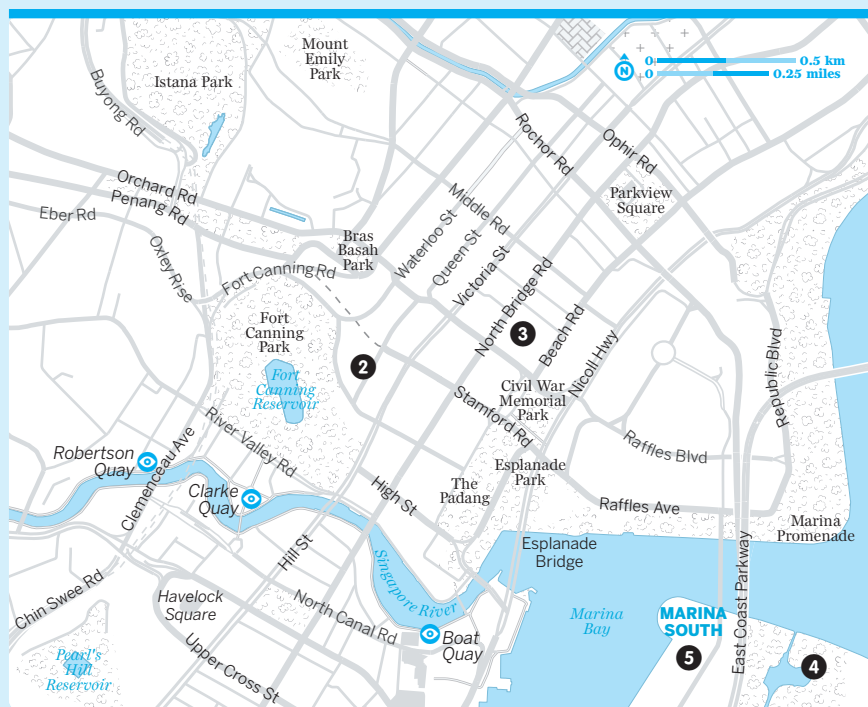


Colonial District, Marina Bay & the Quays

Neighbourhood Top Five

- Getting a glimpse of Singapore's Colonial past set against its modern glamour via a **walking tour** (p44).
- Learning about the rich Peranakan culture at the **Peranakan Museum** (p43).
- There's just something that keeps people chugging back Singapore slings at the **Raffles Hotel** (p49).
- Strolling in the early mornings or evenings across the Double Helix Bridge through the Marina Bay Sands into the brand-new landscaped **Gardens by the Bay** (p53).
- Catching the stunning view of the bay, the Singapore River and tight web of the city from one of the many rooftop bars. **Ku Dé Tah** (p49) is hugely popular and a good place to start your night.



Explore Colonial District, Marina Bay & the Quays

This is the heart of Singapore: an urban treasure-trove of colonial buildings, museums, shopping centres, parks and riverside entertainment strips. The City Hall MRT station bolts the neighbourhood together and is a perfect starting point. Wander northwest off along Stamford Rd towards the museums.

Head in the opposite direction to the contemporary Esplanade and Marina Bay. Stroll through the rambling Gardens by the Bay, right behind the unmissable structure that houses the Marina Bay Sands.

Scope out the edifices of colonialism around the Padang. It's here you'll find the famous Raffles Hotel, a string of old churches, the old and new parliament houses, and the mouth of the Singapore River.

Save the three riverside quays for night time. Clarke Quay is a raucous cluster of bars and clubs, and Robertson Quay is where you should head if you want a nice meal. Set behind it all is idyllic Fort Canning Park.

Local Life

- ➔ **Food courts** The average local eschews the fine-dining options for food courts.
- ➔ **Foreign enclaves** The influx of migrants means that places such as Peninsula Plaza have turned into hubs for various groups of migrant workers. Don't be surprised to find Burmese food in a mall!
- ➔ **(Public) bus tours** Take a trip on bus 14. A double-decker doing the east-west route, it skirts the southern edge of downtown on the seven-storey East Coast Parkway, offering impressive views of the skyscrapers to the north and the harbour to the south.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **MRT** The efficient subway service is centred on City Hall, an interchange station. The station is also connected via underground malls towards the Esplanade, from where you can cut across to Marina Bay. Raffles City is the next stop for the Quays. The Bayfront MRT station at Marina Bay Sands is scheduled to open some time in 2012.
- ➔ **Bus** The area is also well connected by bus to other parts of the island. Key bus stops are just outside the Raffles Hotel and outside St Andrew's Cathedral along North Bridge Rd. Bus 2 takes you down Victoria St and Hill St. Buses 51, 61, 63 and 80 go along North Bridge Rd. For Beach Rd, hop on bus 100, 107 or 961. Along Bras Basah Rd, get on bus 12, 14, 16, 77 or 111.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

The National Museum and some galleries offer free entry from 6pm to 9pm every Friday, plus some museums offer combined tickets that save you a few bucks. Most bars in the area have 'happy hour' specials from 5pm to 8pm or 9pm. During these hours, drinks are either one-for-one or heavily discounted. Clubs have ladies nights where ladies get free entry and, sometimes, free booze (sorry boys). Unlike elsewhere, Singaporean ladies' nights tend to be sleaze free.

Best Sights

- ➔ Peranakan Museum (p43)
 - ➔ Asian Civilisations Museum (p43)
 - ➔ Fort Canning Park (p42)
- For reviews, see p42 ➔

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ DB Bistro Moderne (p45)
 - ➔ Gluttons Bay (p46)
 - ➔ Kilo (p45)
- For reviews, see p45 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Loof (p49)
 - ➔ Brewerkz (p48)
 - ➔ 1 Altitude (p49)
- For reviews, see p48 ➔