



Singapore

📍 65 / POP 5.57 MILLION

Includes ➔

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Best for Regional Specialities

- ➔ Maxwell Food Centre (p630)
- ➔ Ya Kun Kaya Toast (p630)
- ➔ Tekka Centre (p631)

Best Places for Culture

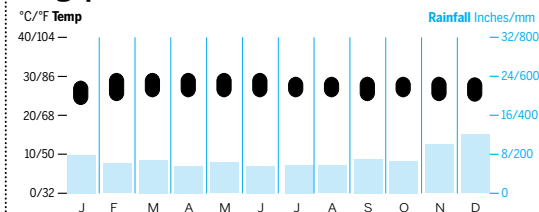
- ➔ Peranakan Museum (p611)
- ➔ National Gallery Singapore (p611)
- ➔ Asian Civilisations Museum (p611)
- ➔ Little India (p619)

Why Go?

One of Asia's success stories is tiny little Singapore, whose GDP consistently ranks it as one of the wealthiest countries in the world. Along with that wealth comes a rich culture borne of a multiracial population. Get lost in the mad swirl of skyscrapers in the central business district, be transfixed by the Bolly beats in the streets of ramshackle Little India, hike a dense patch of rainforest in Bukit Timah, navigate the air-conditioned retail mayhem of Orchard Rd or rub shoulders with the glamorous crowd at one of the city's rooftop bars.

It's affluent, high-tech and occasionally a little snobbish, but Singapore's great leveller are the hawker centres, the ubiquitous and raucous food markets where everyone mucks in together to indulge the local mania for cheap eating and drinking. In short, Singapore makes for a perfect pit stop to recover from the rough-and-tumble of the rest of Southeast Asia.

When to Go Singapore



Jan & Feb
Chinese New Year and Chingay are the events to catch.

Apr & May Lots of events, and just before the local school holidays start.

Dec The northeast monsoons bring lashing rains, but they also cool Singapore down.

AT A GLANCE**Currency** Singapore dollar (S\$)**Language** English (primary), Mandarin, Bahasa Malaysia, Tamil**Money** ATMs widely available; credit cards accepted most places**Visas** On arrival; generally not needed for stays up to 30 days**Mobile phones** SIM cards usually S\$18, you'll need your passport for identification**Fast Facts****Area** 718 sq km**Emergency** ☎999**Exchange Rates**

Australia	A\$1	S\$1
Euro	€1	S\$1.54
Malaysia	RM10	S\$3.26
UK	UK£1	S\$2.15
US	US\$1	S\$1.40

Daily Costs**Dorm bed** US\$16–40**Hawker meal** US\$3**Bottle of Tiger** US\$4.50**Museum entry** US\$7**Short taxi ride** US\$4**Entering the Country**

Changi Airport is Singapore's main flight hub. Buses link Singapore with Malaysia and Thailand; ferries connect to Malaysia and Indonesia.

Don't Miss

The Colonial District and Marina Bay are the heart of Singapore and the former seat of British power. Today, the cityscape here is evidence of Singapore's ambitions, with gleaming architecture sitting cheek by jowl with preserved heritage buildings and a retro-futuristic conservatory garden. Get to a rooftop bar for a bird's-eye view of the entire area, best enjoyed as the sun sets.

Of course, Singapore is famous for its cuisine. Find a hawker centre or food court (there's one in every mall) and follow your nose or join the longest queues for gastronomic delights.

ITINERARIES**Two Days**

Begin your first day taking in the architectural glory of the Colonial District; wander along the Singapore River and through the Quays before getting your culture fix at one of the area's many museums. Head for the impressive Gardens by the Bay before dining at Satay by the Bay. Spend day two immersed in the sights and sounds of Little India and finish with dinner and drinks in Kampong Glam before hitting the dance floor in Clarke Quay.

Five Days

Get back to nature at Singapore Zoo followed by an afternoon stroll through the Botanic Gardens; exiting Tanglin gate, wander down to the retail jungle of Orchard Rd. Spend day four in the entertainment hub of Sentosa Island and enjoy sunset drinks at one of its beachside bars. Finally slow down the pace on Pulau Ubin Island; finish off with dinner and a Tiger beer at Changi Village.

Essential Food & Drink

Hainanese chicken rice Tender poached chicken served on a bed of fragrant rice (cooked in chicken stock) with accompanying garlic chilli sauce.

Char kway teow Flat rice noodles wok-fried with bean sprouts, cockles, prawns and Chinese sausage in dark soy sauce and chilli sauce.

Roti prata Fried flour-based pancake served with chicken or fish curry, variations include mushroom, egg and banana.

Nasi padang Steamed white rice served with your choice of meats and vegetables; just choose and point. Lots of curries available.

Fried carrot cake Not a sweet dessert but steamed rice flour, water and white radish cake stir-fried with eggs and preserved radish. Dark version is cooked in soy sauce.