


# Chinatown, Tanjong Pagar & the CBD

## Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Chinatown Heritage Centre** (p69) Visiting the evocative museum and delving into the unspeakable hardships, destructive temptations and ultimate resilience of the immigrants who gave this part of town its name.
- 2 Chinese Theatre Circle** (p78) Meeting the stars of the show in the unusually informal teahouse.
- 3 Ya Kun Kaya Toast** (p73) Skipping your hotel brekkie and heading to this old-school coffeeshop for a traditional morning slap-up.
- 4 Burnt Ends** (p74) Giving the chopsticks a rest to savour show-stopping grilled meats at this mod-Oz favourite.
- 5 Operation Dagger** (p75) Toasting, chatting and flirting the night away in this basement bar before coming up for air at Club Street, the city's bar-scene heartland.



For more detail of this area see Map p206 and p209 

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

As with anywhere in Singapore, it's worth taking advantage of happy hours (usually until 8pm or 9pm) at the hot bars around Chinatown. If it's still too pricey for you, neck a few beers at a hawker centre instead.

### Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Burnt Ends (p74)
- ➔ A Noodle Story (p71)
- ➔ Momma Kong's (p74)
- ➔ Hong Kong Soya Sauce Chicken Rice & Noodle (p71)
- ➔ Ding Dong (p74)

For reviews, see p71. ➔

### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Operation Dagger (p75)
- ➔ Native (p80)
- ➔ Nylon Coffee Roasters (p75)
- ➔ Good Beer Company (p78)

For reviews, see p75. ➔

### Best for History & Culture

- ➔ Chinatown Heritage Centre (p69)
- ➔ Baba House (p70)
- ➔ Thian Hock Keng Temple (p70)
- ➔ Sri Mariamman Temple (p71)

For reviews, see p70. ➔

## Explore: Chinatown, Tanjong Pagar & the CBD

With the exception of the fascinating Chinatown Heritage Centre, sights here are interesting rather than must-see, but that's a good thing. It leaves more time 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 Singapore's hot-list eateries, serving anything from real-deal Mexican to punchy Southeast Asian.

In between meals, poke your head into an antiques shop, gallery or a heady temple or two. Savour beautifully renovated shophouses and superlative lattes on the gentrified streets of the Duxton Hill area (south of Chinatown). Once the sun's gone down, catch the breeze and the city skyline from a rooftop bar on Ann Siang Rd or Club Street.

## Local Life

➔ **Hawker centres** It's a wonder any of Singapore's high-end restaurants stay in business given that hawker-centre food is dirt cheap and so damn 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 Food Centre (p75).

➔ **Coffee versus kopi** While hip, third-wave cafes and roasteries are making big waves in the Duxton Hill area, don't miss the chance to slurp old-school *kopi* ('koh-pee') at a traditional *kopitiam*. Try Ya Kun Kaya Toast (p73) or for a twist on the old-school brew, Coffee Break (p77).

➔ **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 story. Our favourites are Tong Mern Sern Antiques (p79) and Utterly Art (p79).

## Getting There & Away

➔ **MRT** The heart of Chinatown is served by Chinatown MRT station, which spits you out onto Pagoda St. Telok Ayer station is handy for eateries and bars around Amoy St and Club Street. Further south, Outram Park and Tanjong Pagar stations are best for Duxton Hill. Raffles Place station is best for the CBD.

➔ **Bus** From the Colonial District, hop on bus 61, 145 or 166, which take 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.