



Local Currency The unit of currency in Singapore is called the Singapore Dollar (SGD). There are 100 cents to the Singapore Dollar. Notes are available in the following denominations: 2, 5, 10, 50, 100, 500, 1,000 and 10,000.

Office/Telephone Facilities A Post Office is located on level 2 of the Singapore CruiseCentre at Harbourfront Centre.

A Telephone Office for international calls, telegrams and telex is located within the Singapore Port Centre and is open 24 hours daily.

AT&T: 800-0111-111 / MCI: 800-0112-112 / SPRINT: 800-0177-177

Tourist Information The Singapore Tourist Visitor's Centre is located in the arrival hall of the Cruise Centre. Open daily.

Transportation Taxis are available at the pier. Singapore taxis are strictly regulated and metered. Drivers should show a tariff card for charges. From midnight to 6:00 a.m. there is a 50% surcharge over the metered fare. "Bumboats" (6 passenger water taxis) are available from Clifford Pier. The local bus system is extensive and efficient, visitors may purchase a day use "Explorer" ticket. The Subway (MRT), considered by many visitors the best city feature, has two lines and 64 stations. A ferry service leaves from the World Trade Center for the islands. Local transportation requires Singapore Currency.

Useful Words Yes – Ya No – Tidak
Thank you – Terima kasih
You're welcome – Selamat datang
Good morning – Selamat pagi How much? – Berapa harga
Where is the toilet? – Di mana tandas

The four official languages of Singapore are Mandarin, Malay, Tamil and English. Malay is the national language and the words listed above are from that language.

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Singapore

General Information

The Republic of Singapore is situated at the southern tip of peninsular Malaysia, only 85 miles (137 km) north of the equator. The Republic consists of a tropical island of approximately 226 square miles (585 sq km) and some 54 smaller islets. An island of low undulating hills, Singapore reaches 26 miles (42 km) from west to east and extends 14 miles (22.5 km) from the Straits in the north to the island's southern tip.



This "city state" of approximately 4 million inhabitants is a cosmopolitan community of Malay, Chinese (76% of the total), Indian and Eurasian races who enjoy the second highest standard of living in Asia after Japan.

Singapore is often called the "Garden City" because of its attractive green park like areas. It is a city of towering skyscrapers, huge shopping complexes and vast industrial estates, while its deepwater anchorage and natural harbor on the Straits of Malacca have helped make it Southeast Asia's largest port and one of the world's greatest commercial centers. However, beneath the Western facade it is still strongly Oriental. Vestiges of the colonial past still remain and can be found throughout the city.

Places of Interest



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The **Singapore National Museum and Art Gallery 1**, in Fort Canning Park, was opened in 1867 and is an architectural gem with 20 dioramas and numerous other fascinating exhibits.

Raffles Landing Place / Old Colonial Quarter 2 are near Empress Place. The Landing Place marks the spot where the legendary Sir Stamford Raffles is thought to have landed on February 6, 1819.





Merlion Park and Merlion Statue **3** can be found on Fullerton Road near the mouth of the Singapore River. The Merlion is the tourism symbol of Singapore, a mythical beast, half lion, half fish. The 25 foot (7.5 m) high statue stands guard at the mouth of the river.

Little India **4**, centered around Serangoon Road, embodies the vibrant and colorful culture of the local Indian community, with an exotic array of shops and temples.

Raffles Hotel and Raffles City **5** is one of the most famous hotels in the world which recently added a shopping arcade complex after an extensive \$160 million refurbishment. The “Singapore Sling” was invented here and is the most popular drink ordered at the Long Bar.

Chinatown **6** is a maze of narrow streets, shops, restaurants, traders and trishaws. It was recently renovated, but most of the old charm remains intact.

Thian Hock Keng Temple **7**, also known as the Temple of Heavenly Happiness, is located along Telok Ayer Street. The temple was built in 1841 by a seaman grateful for a safe passage. The temple is but one of the many diverse religious edifices to be found around Singapore. The temple is currently under renovation.

Arab Street **8** is another colorful quarter of the city. The Arabs were first to arrive in Singapore to trade, bringing the Islamic religion. The Sultan Mosque dominates the area with its impressive gold dome. The street itself contained colorful goods for sale in the shops in the past, but many shops have moved to other sections of the city.

Beyond The City Center

Singapore Zoo, on Mandai Lake Road, has 1,700 animals from 172 species, the largest colony of any zoo in the world. Admission charge.

Jurong Bird Park at Jalan Ahmad Ibrahim has the world’s largest walk-in aviary set amongst 50 acres (20 hectares). Admission charge.

Jurong Crocodile Paradise, located adjacent to the Jurong Bird Park, has thousands of crocodiles in a landscaped setting, with underwater viewing areas. The crocodile wrestling performances are at 10:45 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Admission charge.

Sentosa, Singapore’s Discovery Island and Resort, can be reached by cable car from Mt. Faber, by ferry boats or overland by the causeway bridge. Sentosa (The Isle of Tranquility) is a playground with parks, hotels, golf courses, restaurants and museums. **Underwater World**, a spectacular aquarium, is Sentosa’s most popular attraction. Displays include the turtle pool, moray eel enclosure, reef enclosures with live coral, a touch pool and a theater. Admission charge.



History

Early records show that Malay sea gypsies and pirates were among the first to visit the island followed by Chinese traders. Colonists from Palembang in Sumatra arrived in 1287 and established a small fishing village. At various times this isolated sea port was controlled by the Sumatran Empire of Srivijaya and the Cholas from South India. During this era the name was changed from Temasek (Sea Town) to Sing Pura, “City of the Lion.” This later evolved into Singapore and to this day the lion is a city symbol.

In 1376 the town was destroyed by the Majapahit Empire of East Java. By 1819 the British East India Company had established a trading post at the mouth of the Singapore River and Sir Stamford Raffles began to design and build a city. He declared Singapore a free port and organized a code of law, trading regulations and town planning schemes. During 1822 the Sultan of Johore ceded Singapore, Penang and Malacca to Great Britain in perpetuity and in 1867 Singapore became a British Crown Colony.

In 1877 rubber plantations were introduced making Singapore a leading economic power. Singapore surrendered to the Japanese early in 1942 and was occupied until 1945. During this time the infamous Changi Prison (site of the present air terminal) sent many of its prisoners of war to work on the notorious “Death Railway.” Singapore became an internally self governing state within the British Commonwealth in 1959 and in 1963 joined the Federation of Malaysia. In 1965 it separated from Malaysia and became an Independent Sovereign State. From 1959 to 1990 Singapore was governed by Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, considered by some to be the “Father” of modern Singapore. He is now a Special Minister, and he remains a powerful influence in the Cabinet and in the public arena.



Shore Excursions

To make the most of your visit to Singapore, we suggest you take one of the organized Shore Excursions.

For further information consult your Shore Excursion brochure or contact the Manager at the Shore Excursion desk.



Local Customs

Bargaining: Bargaining is widely practiced in Singapore. The type of store generally determines the depth of the discount, while most department stores have fixed prices.

Tippling: It is generally not customary to tip, although a 10% service charge is included in many restaurants.

Dress Code: Light cotton clothes are ideal for the tropical and balmy weather. Shorts and T-Shirts are acceptable for most sightseeing. When visiting mosques though, make sure that shoulders are covered and legs are covered to the knees.

Local Cuisine: Food in Singapore is relatively inexpensive and the selection is outstanding. You will find Malay, Chinese, Indian, Thai, Indonesian and Western (fast) food. *Teochew* (smoked turkey), *Kao Pao Chicken* (Mandarin spicy), Peking crispy duck, *Fukien* soups and stews as well as the ever popular *Dim Sum* (small eats) are the most popular. *Biryani* is a favorite Muslim Indian dish which is served with chicken or mutton curry and takes its name from the saffron colored rice it is served with.

Drink Specialties: There is a whole range of cosmopolitan drinks available, but the best known, perhaps in the whole world, is the Singapore Sling. This local invention is made with Gin, Cherry Herring, Cointreau, Benedictine, Angostura Bitters and pineapple and lime juices. To be truly authentic it must be ordered and drunk at the Long Bar of the Raffles Hotel. Tiger Beer is the best known local brew. In general, alcoholic drinks are expensive.

Bottled water is recommended.

Avoiding Offence: Pointing the soles of your feet at a person or touching his head are considered rude in almost all of Singapore’s cultures. Singapore remains tough on a number of minor issues: smoking in public places is illegal. Jaywalking is a minor crime, and crossing the street at the wrong place could get you a stiff fine. Eating, drinking or smoking on the MRT (subway) is against the law. The sale and importation of chewing gum is banned and subject to heavy fines, although individual “possession” is not an offence.

Illegal Substances: Drugs in Singapore are a serious subject. Heavy fines, various punishments and prison sentences are levied for possession of all illegal drugs. The sale of drugs is punishable by death.



Shopping Facilities

The main shopping areas are found at the Singapore Port Centre, Orchard Road, Chinatown, Change Alley, Serangoon Road, Holland Village and People’s Park.

The specialties of the city include cameras, electronic goods, crocodile goods, jade figures, leather, silk, batik, oriental antiques, watches, jewelry and works of art.

Many tourist oriented stores and street merchants will accept U.S. Dollars. Most stores accept major credit cards.

In Singapore there is a 7% general sales tax (GST) included in the price of the goods. Visitors who spend over a certain amount (in one store) may be entitled to re-claim some or all of the tax paid. However, regulations and conditions governing the refund of this tax are subject to change and RCCL cannot guarantee the cooperation of local authorities