

Singapore

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Singapore is a small, densely built island city-state at the tip of the Malay Peninsula, one of the most efficient and orderly places to visit in Southeast Asia. English is the working language, streets are clean and safe, and the public transit system reaches almost everywhere, so first-time visitors find it easy to navigate. The city blends Chinese, Malay, Indian, and colonial influences into distinct historic neighborhoods, alongside a very modern skyline around Marina Bay.

Singapore rewards travelers who enjoy food, architecture, and gardens more than nightlife sprawl or budget backpacking — it is a **compact but expensive** destination best suited to a focused two-to-four night stay, often combined with a longer Southeast Asia trip. Founded as a British trading post in 1819 by *Sir Stamford Raffles*, the city grew into one of the world's busiest ports and, since independence in 1965, one of the wealthiest nations in the world.

Money & payments

Singapore is a highly cashless society, with card and mobile payment accepted almost everywhere, including hawker centers and taxis.

Currency

CURRENCY	1 SGD	1 SGD
$	0.7044 EUR	0.7764 USD
SGD	1 EUR = 1.42 SGD	1 USD = 1.288 SGD

Cards widely accepted

Some older hawker stalls and small shops still prefer cash, so carrying a modest amount of Singapore dollars is useful. ATMs are widespread in malls, MRT stations, and banks.

Typical costs

Rough prices in touristic areas, per person

Hotel (double room, per night) mid-range hotel, room for two per night	130 – 280 $ €92 – €197
Dinner (mid-range restaurant) mid-range restaurant, one person, no drinks	20 – 40 $ €14 – €28
Inexpensive meal hawker centre meal, one person	5 – 10 $ €4 – €7
Local beer 0.5L draught at a bar	10 – 14 $ €7 – €10
Coffee espresso or cappuccino in a cafe	4 – 6 $ €3 – €4
Water 0.5L, shop	1 – 2 $ €1 – €1
Transit ticket single MRT ride, city	1.5 – 2.5 $ €1 – €2
Taxi (per km) per km, metered	1 – 1.5 $ €1 – €1

Tipping

Tipping is not part of Singapore's culture and is not expected anywhere. Many restaurants already add a 10% service charge plus tax to the bill, so an additional tip is not needed.

- **Restaurants**: not expected; a service charge is usually already included.
- **Hawker centers and food courts**: no tipping.
- **Taxis and ride-hailing**: not expected; round up only if you wish.
- **Hotels**: porters and housekeeping may appreciate a small tip, but it is optional.

Restaurant not customary; a 10% service charge is often already included	Optional
Bar not customary	Optional
Taxi round up only	Optional
Hotel small tip, not expected	Optional
Tour guide not required	Optional

Electricity

Singapore uses Type G plugs — the same three-pin design as the UK — at 230 V / 50 Hz. Visitors from North America or continental Europe will need an adapter.

ELECTRICITY



Type G

230 V · 50 Hz

Language

English is the language of government, business, and instruction, and is spoken fluently throughout Singapore — navigating the country requires no other language. Malay, Mandarin Chinese, and Tamil are also official languages, reflecting the country's main ethnic communities, and are widely used within each community. Signs are usually in English, with some also in Chinese, Malay, or Tamil depending on the neighborhood.

Useful phrases

Hello	Helo
Thank you	Terima kasih
Please	Tolong
Excuse me	Maaf
Yes	Ya
No	Tidak
How much?	Berapa harganya?
Cheers	Minum!
Help	Tolong!
Goodbye	Selamat tinggal
Do you speak English?	Boleh cakap Inggeris?
Sorry	Maafkan saya
Where is...?	Di mana...?
I don't understand	Saya tidak faham
The menu, please	Tolong beri menu
The bill, please	Tolong beri bil

Staying connected

Prepaid SIM and eSIM plans are sold at the airport, convenience stores, and telecom shops; registering one requires showing your passport. Coverage is excellent island-wide, including underground on the MRT. There are no internet restrictions that affect ordinary browsing for tourists.

Safety & emergencies

Singapore is one of the safest countries in the world for tourists, with very low rates of both violent and petty crime. Its safety comes with strict laws that are actively enforced: littering, jaywalking, and vandalism carry real fines, chewing gum is banned for sale (though allowed for personal use), and drug offenses carry severe penalties, including the death penalty for trafficking. Follow posted rules and you are unlikely to have any issues.

Emergency numbers

POLICE	AMBULANCE	FIRE BRIGADE
999	995	995

Health

Tap water is safe to drink throughout Singapore — it meets World Health Organization standards. Pharmacies are widely available in malls and neighborhoods, many open late; Guardian and Watsons are the two major chains.

No special vaccinations are required for most travelers, though a yellow fever vaccination certificate is required if arriving from a country with risk of yellow fever transmission. Healthcare quality is excellent but private treatment is expensive, so travel insurance is strongly recommended.

Visas & entry

Singapore allows visa-free entry for most nationalities, including the US, UK, EU, Canada, and Australia, typically for stays of 30 to 90 days depending on nationality. All visitors need a passport valid for at least six months and must complete the SG Arrival Card online before arrival.

Citizens of some countries need a visa in advance, arranged through a Singapore embassy, consulate, or an approved local agent.

> Visa and entry requirements change frequently. Verify current requirements with the official immigration authority or your country's embassy before travel.

Etiquette

Singapore's culture blends Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Western influences, and etiquette varies a little by setting, but a few rules apply everywhere.

- **Cleanliness rules**: littering, jaywalking, and eating or drinking on the MRT are all finable offenses — follow posted signs.
- **Religious sites**: remove your shoes before entering mosques, Hindu temples, and some Buddhist temples; dress modestly, covering shoulders and knees.
- **Hawker centers**: it's common practice to "chope" (reserve) a table with a packet of tissues before ordering food.
- **Greetings**: a handshake is standard in business and social settings across all communities.

Holidays & opening hours

Public holidays reflect Singapore's multicultural population, spanning Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Christian traditions. Most shops and malls stay open on public holidays, though some smaller family-run businesses close, especially during Chinese New Year.

Public holidays

Jan 1	New Year's Day
May 1	Labour Day
Aug 9	National Day
Dec 25	Christmas Day
movable — Feb	Chinese New Year
movable — Nov/Oct	Deepavali
movable — Apr/Mar	Good Friday
movable — May	Hari Raya Haji
movable — Mar	Hari Raya Puasa
movable — Jun/May	Vesak Day

Malls typically open around 10 or 11 am and close at 9 or 10 pm, seven days a week; hawker centers keep longer and more varied hours, with some stalls open only for breakfast or only at night.

Getting around

- **By MRT and bus**: the MRT subway network is fast, frequent, and air-conditioned, reaching nearly every part of the island; buses fill in the rest. Tap in and out with a contactless bank card, phone, or an EZ-Link card — no need to buy paper tickets.
- **By taxi and ride-hailing**: metered taxis are plentiful and can be flagged on the street or booked by app; **Grab** is the dominant ride-hailing app in Singapore.
- **On foot**: many central areas are very walkable, but the heat and humidity make midday walking tiring — many attractions connect via air-conditioned underground passages and malls.
- **By bike**: bike-sharing schemes are available, though most locals prefer the MRT for longer trips.

Driving

- **Driving side**: Singapore drives on the **left**, as in the UK and Malaysia.
- **Key rules**: most visitors can drive on their home license (if it's in English) for up to 12 months; an international driving permit is only needed if your license isn't in English. Drink-driving limits are strictly enforced.
- **Electronic Road Pricing (ERP)**: overhead gantries automatically charge a fee at busy times and locations — a rental car usually comes fitted with the device already, so no separate action is needed from a short-term visitor.
- **Cost and congestion**: car ownership is very expensive here, which keeps overall traffic light — public transit is the practical choice for most visitors, and renting a car is rarely worth it for a short stay.
- **Parking**: paid parking is standard everywhere, usually via an app or parking coupon; malls and hotels have their own paid parking.
- **Fuel**: stations are typically full-service or self-service, paid by card.
- **Electric vehicles**: charging points are increasingly common at malls and car parks.

URBAN	RURAL	MOTORWAY
50 km/h	70 km/h	90 km/h

PETROL	DIESEL
95-Octane, 98-Octane	Diesel

Drive on the left

No motorway vignette needed

No vignette system. Electronic Road Pricing (ERP) gantries automatically charge a variable fee for entering the city centre and some expressways during peak hours; rental cars typically come pre-fitted with the in-vehicle unit needed for this, so nothing extra to arrange for a short visit.

Food & drink

Food is central to Singaporean culture, and hawker centers — open-air complexes of independent food stalls — are the best place to experience it; UNESCO recognized Singapore's hawker culture as an element of humanity's Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2020. Meals are eaten throughout the day, and it's normal to share dishes or order several small plates rather than one large meal.

National favorites include Hainanese chicken rice, laksa (a spicy coconut noodle soup), and chili crab, alongside Malay dishes like satay and nasi lemak, and Indian dishes like roti prata and biryani. Breakfast is often kaya toast with soft-boiled eggs, paired with strong local coffee (*kopi*) or tea (*teh*), sweetened with condensed milk unless you ask otherwise.

Street food culture is strong even outside hawker centers, from bubble tea shops to durian stalls. Alcohol is relatively expensive because of high taxes, so many locals socialize over food rather than drinks.

What to eat & drink

BREAKFAST

Nasi Lemak
Coconut rice served with fried anchovies, peanuts, egg, cucumber, and spicy sambal chilli paste.

Roti Prata
A flaky, pan-fried Indian flatbread served with curry for dipping, popular at any time of day.

Bak Kut Teh
A peppery pork rib soup, traditionally eaten as a hearty breakfast with rice and youtiao dough sticks.

Kaya Toast
Toasted bread with coconut-egg jam and butter, served with soft-boiled eggs and coffee or tea.

LUNCH

Hainanese Chicken Rice
Poached or roasted chicken served with fragrant rice cooked in chicken fat and stock, considered Singapore's unofficial national dish.

Laksa
Rice noodles in a spicy coconut-milk broth, usually with prawns, fish cake, and cockles.

Char Kway Teow
Stir-fried flat rice noodles with prawns, egg, Chinese sausage, and bean sprouts in a smoky wok sauce.

DINNER

Chilli Crab
Whole crab stir-fried in a sweet, spicy, and savory tomato-and-chilli sauce, eaten with fried mantou buns.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Satay
Skewered, grilled marinated meat served with peanut sauce, a Malay-origin street food staple.

DRINKS

Kopi
Local-style coffee brewed with a sock filter, traditionally served sweetened with condensed milk.

Singapore – Plan Your Trip

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Where to explore

Singapore is small enough to cover its main areas in a few days, all connected by MRT.

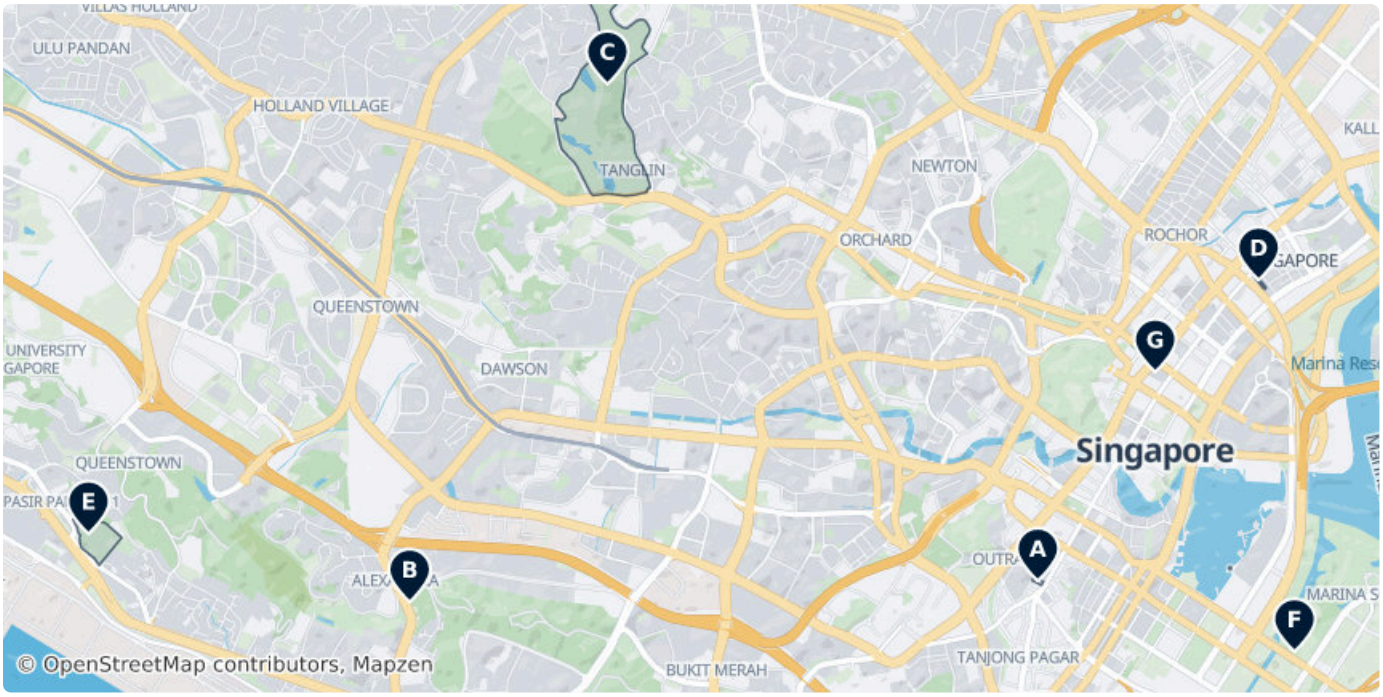
Historic districts: Chinatown centers on Chinese heritage shophouses, temples, and hawker food. Little India is a compact, colorful district of Hindu temples, spice shops, and South Indian food. Nearby, the Kampong Glam area around Arab Street and Masjid Sultan is Singapore's historic Malay-Muslim quarter.

Modern core: Marina Bay is the country's futuristic downtown, home to its skyline, waterfront promenade, and Gardens by the Bay. Orchard is the main shopping district, lined with malls along Orchard Road.

Beyond downtown: Tiong Bahru is a quieter residential enclave known for Art Deco architecture and a well-loved food market. Sentosa is a resort island reached by cable car or a short walk, with beaches, theme parks, and Southeast Asia's Universal Studios. For a slower pace, Pulau Ubin is a rustic offshore island reachable by bumboat, with no high-rises — a rare glimpse of what Singapore looked like decades ago.

Editor's Choice

Singapore's landscape blends historical heritage with futuristic design. This selection features the UNESCO-listed Botanic Gardens, established in 1859, and the 101-hectare Gardens by the Bay with its iconic Supertrees and biodomes. Cultural sites include the Tang-style Buddha Tooth Relic Temple and the unique mythological dioramas of Haw Par Villa. For modern leisure, the list covers the 10-kilometer Southern Ridges trail system, the vibrant street art of Haji Lane, and Chijmes, a former 19th-century convent repurposed into a Neo-Gothic entertainment complex.





A Buddha Tooth Relic Temple

Tang-style Buddhist temple and museum complex housing a sacred tooth relic. The four-story building features architecture inspired by the Tang Dynasty and the Buddhist Mandala.

288 S Bridge Rd, Singapore 058840 (1.28149, 103.84423)

Mo–Su 07:00–19:00

btrts.org.sg, +6562200220



B Southern Ridges

10-kilometer network of trails and walkways connecting Mount Faber Park, Telok Blangah Hill Park, and Kent Ridge Park. The system features elevated walkways, scenic viewpoints, and lush greenery.

Henderson Road, Mount Faber Park, Singapore 099203 (1.28010, 103.80298)

Mo–Su Open 24/7

+65 1800 471 7300



C Singapore Botanic Gardens

Tropical botanical garden founded in 1859, featuring a collection of over 10,000 plant species across 74 hectares. It serves as a significant center for botanical research and plant conservation.

1 Cluny Road, Singapore 259569 (1.31409, 103.81597)

Mo–Su 05:00–24:00

nparks.gov.sg/sbg, +65 6471 7138



D Haji Ln

Located in the Kampong Glam district, this narrow street is lined with petit storehouses that house various souvenir shops, fashion...

674 North Bridge Road, Singapore 188807, Singapore (1.30123, 103.85873)



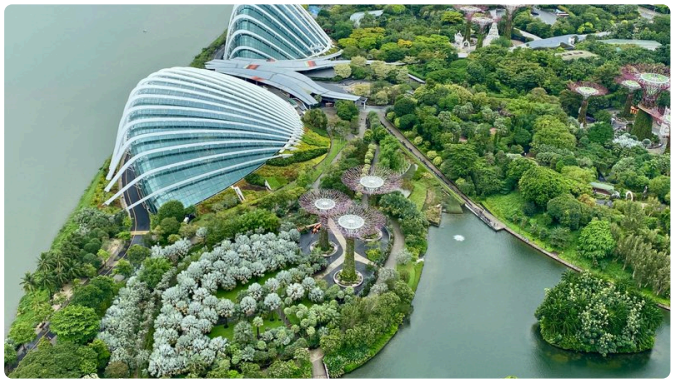
E Haw Par Villa

This peculiar theme park is dotted with huge dioramas and statues depicting Chinese legends, folklore, and mythological notions.

Pasir Panjang Road 262, 118628 Singapore, SG (1.28458, 103.78188)

Mo–Su 09:00–19:00

hawparvilla.sg, +65 6736 6622



F Gardens by the Bay

Sprawling urban park and horticultural destination featuring iconic architectural biodomes and massive vertical gardens. This 101-hectare site contains over 20,000 plant species within three distinct waterfront gardens.

Marina Boulevard, Marina 01, Singapore (1.27685, 103.86109)

Mo–Su 10:00–21:00

gardensbythebay.com.sg



Chijmes

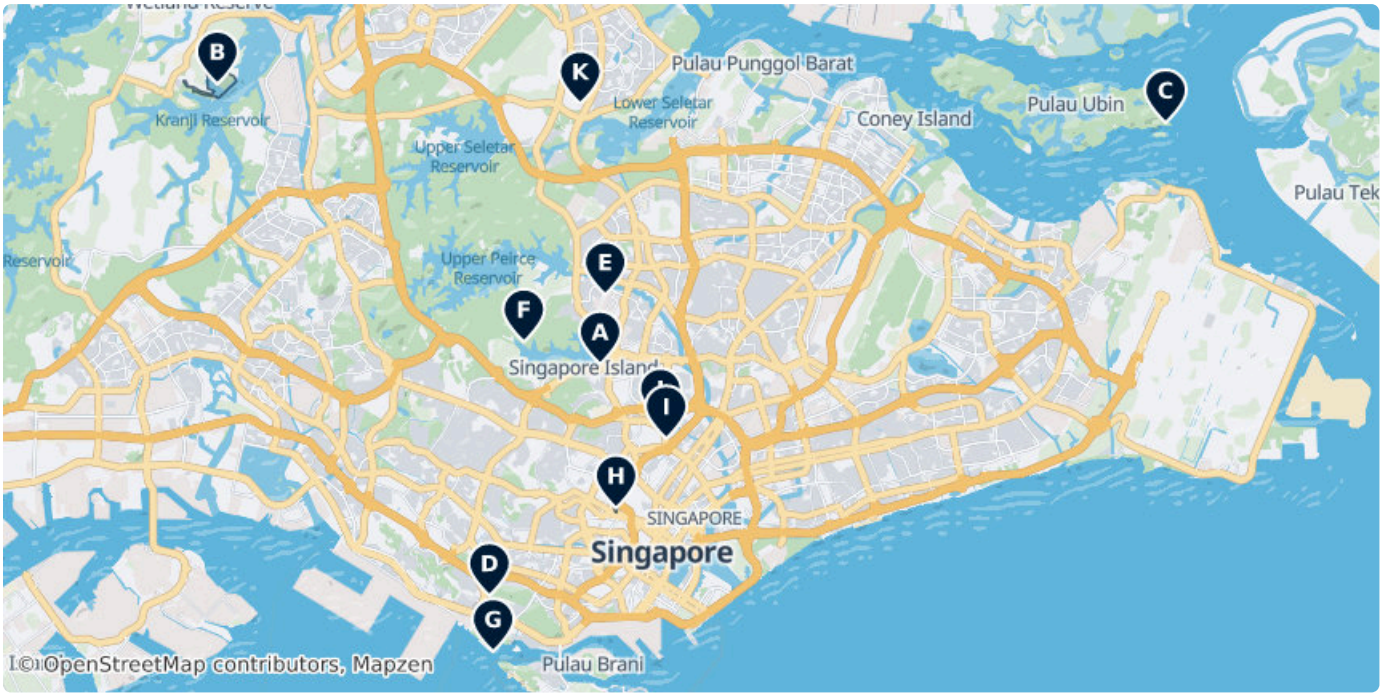
This former Catholic convent with Neo-Gothic chapel now serves as an entertainment venue.

30 Victoria St, Singapore 187996 (1.29519, 103.85194)

chijmes.com.sg, +65 6337 7810

Hidden Gems of Singapore

Quiet nature trails, wartime relics, heritage shophouses and art spaces away from the main tourist circuit.





A MacRitchie Nature Trail

This nature trail and TreeTop walk runs through Singapore's last remaining stretch of primary rainforest, offering quiet hiking paths home to monkeys and native wildlife.

Reservoir Road, 29, Singapore (1.34217, 103.83484)

nparks.gov.sg/gardens-parks-and-nature/parks-and-natu...



B Kranji Marshes

A 54-hectare freshwater marshland and nature reserve featuring woodland and wetland habitats. It offers birdwatching hides and a scenic raptor tower to observe over 170 bird species.

Lim Chu Kang 71, Singapore (1.41930, 103.72932)

Mo–Su 07:00–19:00

nparks.gov.sg/visit/parks/park-detail/kranji-marshes

C Chek Jawa Wetlands

(1.40869, 103.99077)



D Gillman Barracks

A historic architectural complex transformed into a contemporary art center.

(1.27838, 103.80431)

gillmanbarracks.com



E Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery

A peaceful Buddhist temple and monastery complex located in Bishan.

Thomson 57, Singapore (1.36131, 103.83625)

kmspks.org



F Syonan Jinja

Historical ruins of a Shinto shrine dating back to World War II, situated within a nature reserve.

57, Singapore (1.34827, 103.81381)

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syonan_Jinja

G Dragon's Teeth Gate

(1.26297, 103.80535)

H Emerald Hill

Emerald Hill Road, Singapore 238852, Singapore (1.30252, 103.83923)

I Balestier Art Deco shophouses

Balestier Road 230, Singapore (1.32162, 103.85305)

J Former Malay Film Productions

Jalan Ampas 8 (1.32645, 103.85150)



Live Turtle Museum

A specialized animal museum and park dedicated to live turtles and tortoises.

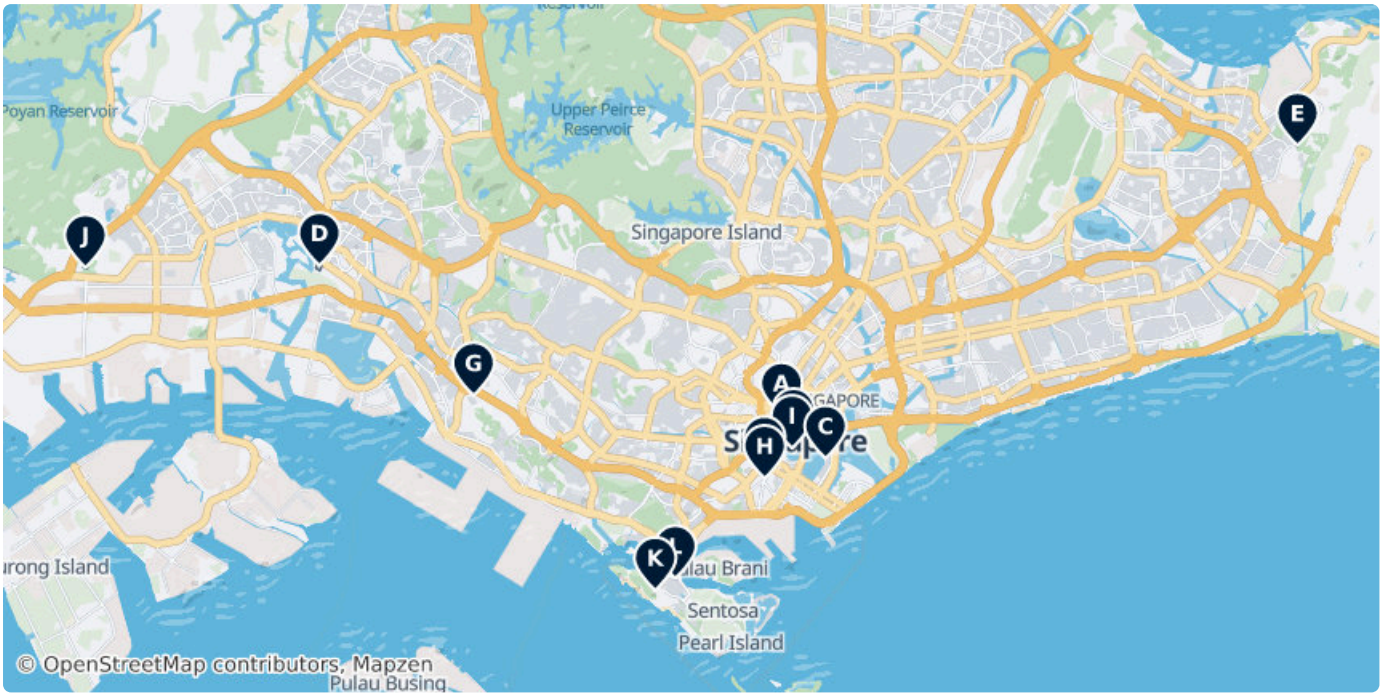
Lorong Chencharu 81, 769198 Singapore, SG
(1.41384, 103.82935)

Mo–Su	10:00–18:00

turtle-tortoise.com

Top Museums & Galleries

From national history and art to science and heritage centres, Singapore's best museums in one list.





A National Museum of Singapore

Housed in Neo-Palladian architecture, this museum showcases the nation's history through multimedia exhibitions and artifact displays.

Stamford Road 93, 178897 Singapore, SG
(1.29658, 103.84849)

Mo–Su 10:00–19:00

nationalmuseum.sg, +65 6332 3659



B National Gallery Singapore

The National Gallery Singapore, often known exonymously as the National Gallery, is a public institution and national museum dedicated to...

Saint Andrew's Road 1, 178957 Singapore, SG
(1.29026, 103.85147)

Mo–Su 10:00–19:00

nationalgallery.sg, +65 6271 7000



C ArtScience Museum

Housed in a distinctive lotus-inspired building, this venue blends art, science, and technology through touring exhibitions and interactive installations.

Bayfront Avenue 6, 018974 (1.28614, 103.85923)

Mo–Su 10:00–19:00

marinabaysands.com/museum.html



D Science Centre Singapore

This large science museum is dedicated to showcasing and promoting scientific achievements, featuring an IMAX theater alongside its exhibitions.

Science Centre Road 15, 609081 Singapore (1.33302, 103.73612)

Mo–Su 10:00–18:00

science.edu.sg, +65 6425 2500



E The Changi Museum

This museum explores the moving history of Singapore during World War II.

1000 Upper Changi Rd N, Singapore 507707 (1.36219, 103.97402)

Tu–Su 09:30–17:30

nhb.gov.sg/changichapelmuseum, +65 6214 2451



F Chinatown Heritage Centre

This cultural heritage museum preserves the history and appearance of Chinatown as it was during the 1950s.

Pagoda Street 48, Singapore, SG (1.28350, 103.84433)

chinatownheritagecentre.com.sg, +65 6221 9556



G Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum

Located on the Kent Ridge Campus of the National University of Singapore, this institution focuses on natural history and science.

Conservatory Drive 2, 117377 Singapore
(1.30143, 103.77362)

lkcnhm.nus.edu.sg/nus/, +65 6601 3333



H Buddha Tooth Relic Museum

Located in Singapore's Chinatown, this complex combines an active Buddhist temple with a museum.

South Bridge Road 288, 058840 Singapore, SG
(1.28130, 103.84443)

Mo–Su 07:00–19:00

btrts.org.sg, +65 6220 0220



I The Arts House

This multidisciplinary venue is situated in Singapore and hosts art exhibitions and concerts.

1 Old Parliament Ln, Singapore 179429
(1.28865, 103.85108)

theartshouse.com.sg, +65 6332 6900



J Singapore Discovery Centre

Also known as S'pore, this interactive facility combines elements of an educational centre and a theme park to explore science and history.

Upper Jurong Road 510, 638365 Singapore, SG
(1.33252, 103.67921)

Tu–Su 09:00–18:00

sdc.com.sg, +65 6792 6188



K Madame Tussauds Singapore

An iconic wax museum named after its founder, Marie Tussaud, who made the first figures herself, dates back to the second half of the 18th...

40 Imbiah Rd, Singapore 099700 (1.25410, 103.81777)

madametussauds.com/Singapore/, +65 6715 4000



L Trick Eye Museum

This museum features 3D artworks designed to create intriguing optical illusions.

(Unnamed Road), Sentosa 09, Singapore (1.25700, 103.82267)

trickeye.com/singapore/

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