



SINGAPORE

Synonymous with luxury and innovation

BY MARIANNE ROGERSON

Raffles Place...skyscrapers.



Singapore's eye-catching grand colonial architecture standing in the shadows of the towering new skyscrapers.



With its eye-catching architecture and designer-filled shopping malls, Singapore has become synonymous with luxury and innovation, as it continually reinvents itself in a bid to shrug off its straight-laced, chewing gum-forbidding image.

The recent revamp of Clarke Quay has given the city a new lease of nightlife and its bars and nightclubs now allow round-the-clock fun; last year's launch of the two integrated resorts - Marina Bay Sands and Resorts World Sentosa - saw the arrival of 24-hour casinos, while the city's hosting of the night time Formula 1 Grand Prix has placed Singapore firmly in the world sporting spotlight.

Yet, despite this yearning for progress, the country proudly

protects its history with grand colonial architecture stoically standing in the shadows of the towering new skyscrapers.

Additionally, great emphasis is placed on promoting the multi-ethnicity of Singapore's population and the cultural traditions therein. With a predominantly Chinese population interspersed with Malays and Indians, Eurasians and other ethnic groups, Singapore is a fascinating city for the tourist to explore.

A short stroll will bring you across Buddhist temples, mosques, churches and Hindu temples; an evening out will introduce you to culinary delights from all corners of the globe; and there will nearly always be the opportunity to join in with a traditional festival or celebration.



Clarke Quay... where you'll find plenty of mid-budget restaurants.



Marina Bay Sands Hotel...hogs Singapore's skyline.

Where to Stay

Currently creating the biggest buzz in town is the Marina Bay Sands Hotel, which hogs the skyline with its three 55-storey towers and rooftop swimming pool, bar and restaurant complex.

Linked to an enormous shopping mall, casino, theatre and numerous restaurants, you may never want to leave the premises.

The most expensive hotel in the world at the time of building, it promises you an exceedingly luxurious experience for your Singapore stay. (+65 6688 8868, www.marinabaysands.com)

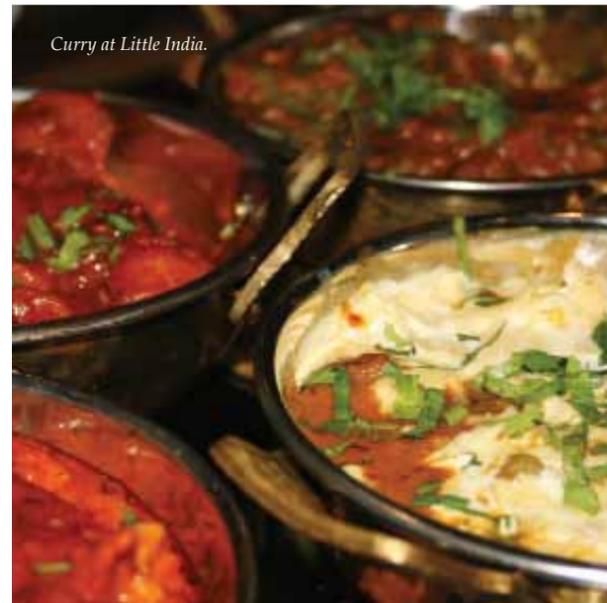
For something more traditional, Raffles Hotel remains Singapore's most famous landmark, despite the growing modernity of the city. Its colonial architecture and palm-filled courtyards transport you back to the days when Noel Coward and Charlie Chaplin walked its breezy balconies. (+65 6337 1886, www.raffles.com)

Travellers on a budget should check into Hangout @ Mt. Emily, which provides hip, modern hostel accommodation, with a choice of single or shared air-conditioned rooms. (+65 6438 5588, www.hangouthotels.com)

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One of the hawker centers in Singapore.



Curry at Little India.

Where to Eat & Drink

The recent opening of the integrated resorts attracted some of the world's most famous celebrity chefs to Singapore, including gastronomic maestros as Joel Robuchon, Wolfgang Puck and Tetsuya Wakuda.

Beyond the glitz and glamour of these new multi-million dollar complexes, however,

beats the real heart of epicurean Singapore. The well-loved hawker centers are the city's version of street food. For an authentic Singapore experience, pull up a plastic chair amongst the locals and take your pick from noodle soups, satays, curries, seafood and exotic desserts for as little as \$3 a dish.

Lau Pa Sat in the Financial District and Makansutra Gluttons Bay next to the

Esplanade Theatre are the most accessible to tourists. Another culinary highlight is a curry in Little India. Race Course Road is lined with eateries and whether you choose a basic canteen or a more upmarket restaurant, the iconic fish head curry is the dish to order.

For a livelier alternative, head to Clarke Quay on the river where you'll find plenty of mid-budget restaurants covering most worldwide cuisines.

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This is also where the young and the restless come out to play, so wear your party shoes - there is no shortage of bars and nightclubs to keep you entertained until dawn. Or join the in-crowd at one of the city's new rooftop bars. Ku De Ta on the roof of the Marina Bay Sands is the current see-and-be-seen hotspot, while 1-Altitude enjoys the prestige of being the tallest al-fresco bar in the world.

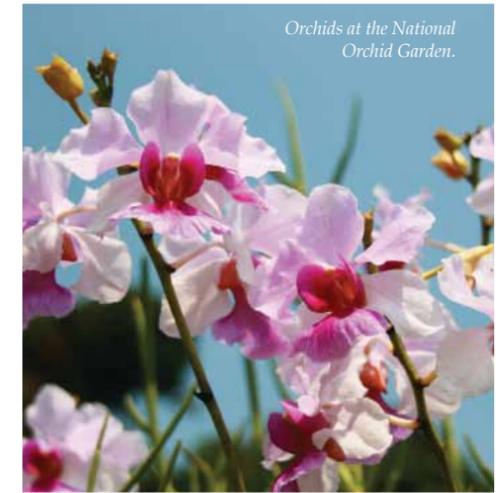
Don't leave town without trying Singapore's most famous dish, Chilli Crab. Head to the East Coast Seafood Centre and take your pick from a cluster of sea-facing open-air restaurants all dishing up these fresh Sri Lankan crabs smothered in a spicy tangy chilli sauce.



Chilli Crab...Singapore's famous dish.



Chinatown...for souvenir shopping.



Orchids at the National Orchid Garden.

What to Do

The Singaporeans' two main pastimes are eating and shopping and you just have to take a walk down Orchard Road to see how seriously they take the latter.

Shoppers elbow their way down the street via the world's highest concentration of shopping malls - all filled with international high street brands, designer showrooms and local boutiques.

When the retail frenzy gets too much, the Botanic Gardens are just a 15-minute walk

from the top of Orchard Road and are home to the National Orchid Garden, where you can admire a staggering 1,000 species and 2,000 hybrids of orchid.

With energy levels restored, head to Chinatown and wander around the souvenir shops and visit the enormous Buddha Tooth Relic Temple and Museum, where an impressive display introduces the life story and teachings of Lord Buddha.

To enjoy city views, take a flight on the Singapore Flyer, currently the world's tallest observation wheel, or take in the sights

during a leisurely ride up the Singapore River on board a traditional bumboat.

Travellers with children should head to Resorts World Sentosa, which boasts Southeast Asia's only Universal Studios theme park, where you can jump aboard movie-themed rides and meet everyone's favourite ogre - Shrek. Alternatively, the ever-popular Singapore Zoo continues to wow visitors with its natural rainforest environment and 'open zoo' concept.

Air Niugini flies to Singapore every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.



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To discuss how you would like to grow your business and how we can support you in PNG, contact our Brian Sarno, Managing Partner on +675 3271 300 or email us at pwc.png@pg.pwc.com