

AN ARRIVAL GUIDE TO SINGAPORE



Singapore Area Coordinator
2026

WELCOME TO THE LION CITY – HISTORY

Singapore stands at a strategic shipping point in the western part of the South China Sea. Its name derives from the Sanskrit Singa, meaning lion, and Pura, meaning town. According to legend, lions once roamed this tropical island, however, by the time the British official Sir Stamford Raffles arrived in 1819 there were none to be seen.

For centuries, Singapore's shipping routes have drawn traders from far and wide, and long before the founding of Modern Singapore, the island was already a cosmopolitan commercial center. Rulers from Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and Indonesia all claimed the island at one point or another.

By the 1800's the Lion City was part of a large Malayan Sultanate. It then became a British East India Company trading post under the administration of Sir Stamford Raffles in 1819. The Sultan of Johor and Temenggong sold the island outright in 1824, and by 1826 the islands of Singapore, Malacca, and Penang were united to form the Straits Settlements. In 1867, the Straits Settlements became a British Crown Colony.

On December 8, 1941, Singapore awoke to bombs and invading Japanese troops. By February 15, 1942, Singapore had been claimed once again, this time falling under the rule of Imperial Japan. After its return to the British Crown in 1945, Singapore experienced a twelve-year State of Emergency when the Malayan Communist party attempted to seize control of the peninsula.

Following these crises, Singaporeans began to relentlessly pursue self-government, despite assumptions that the nation was too small to succeed on its own. By 1959, Singaporeans had elected a member of the People's Action Party, Lee Kuan Yew, as the first Prime Minister. Singapore became fully independent from British rule in 1963, at which time it joined the Federation of Malaya, which itself had been independent since 1957. Singapore's membership in the Federation of Malaya was turbulent and eventually resulted in Singapore declaring its independence on August 9, 1965. By September 1965, Singapore was accepted as a member of the United Nations and joined the Commonwealth of Nations in October of the same year. Singapore was now officially named the Republic of Singapore.

Since then, Singapore's economy has continued to develop rapidly, and its 5.69 million people have enjoyed continuing harmony and prosperity. Singapore is a multi-racial country with a majority Chinese population (74%), and substantial Malay (13%) and Indian (9%) minorities. The country, which is slightly smaller than New York City in terms of land area, has been the economic success story of the region and has grown into one of Asia's economic powerhouses.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Singapore Police	999
Singapore Emergency Services (Fire, Ambulance)	995
Ambulance Services (private operators)	1777
Gleneagles Ambulance Service	6473-7222
Mt. Elizabeth Ambulance Service	6731-2218
Traffic Police	6547-0000
Police Hotline	1-800-255-0000

DIALING DIRECTIONS AND ACCESS CODES

Singapore Country and City Code	65
From Singapore to US	001+1+ Area Code + 7 digit number
From US to Singapore	011 + 65 + 8 digit number

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Health care and public hygiene in Singapore is excellent. Tap water is safe to drink. Local pharmacies carry many products that you will find in the US although brand names may be different. Some products are not available at all so if there is something you need, bring it with you. Other products that are over the counter in the US (such as Advil) are kept behind the counter here and you need to ask a pharmacist to get it or you may need a prescription. Advil, cold medicine, and other over the counter medications are available for purchase at the Navy Exchange at Sembawang.

The hospitals listed below are often used for emergency services; however, call 995 to see if there is a closer government hospital (if the emergency is serious).

TRICARE ACCEPTED HOSPITALS

GLENEAGLES HOSPITAL	RAFFLES HOSPITAL	MOUNT ELIZABETH ORCHARD HOSPITAL
6 Napier Road	585 N. Bridge Road	3 Mount Elizabeth
Singapore 258500	Singapore 188770	Singapore 228510
Tel: 6473-7222	Tel: 6311-2222	Tel: 6737-2666
Ambulance: 6473-2222		Ambulance: 6473-2222

SINGAPORE SECURITY AND LAWS

I. Overall Crime and Safety Situation:

A. Crime Threats:

The crime rate in Singapore is one of the lowest in the world, but petty crime such as pickpocketing and street theft can occur if common sense precautions are not taken. Security assessment remains that Singapore's rating of being "low" threat for crime is accurate but notes that "low" crime does not mean "no" crime, and individuals should still take practical precautions to avoid being victimized.

With the exception of crimes occurring in housing developments – generally between family members and/or neighbors – crime in Singapore is generally non-confrontational and non-violent in nature. Criminal acts are usually crimes of opportunity such as purse snatching, pick pocketing, or thefts of unattended property. Individuals should be especially alert in crowded buses, the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system, streets, markets and night clubs. Additionally, valuables should never be left unattended in hotel rooms or in plain sight in vehicles. As previously mentioned, violent crimes are rare, if a weapon is involved, it's most likely an edged weapon (knife or box cutter), as firearms are strictly controlled, and the punishment is severe.

Specific areas of Singapore – Geylang and lower-cost government housing – suffer from more serious crimes such as muggings, loan sharking, and illicit drug use, although not on the scale of a similar sized U.S. city. Geylang is also a known "red light" district, harboring prostitutes and reportedly enduring an increase in organized criminal gangs. Police response to crime incidents is professional and generally effective. Do not attempt to argue, harass, confront, or bribe police

officers. If you have a confrontation or involvement with police, please contact NCIS or your command.

B. Road Safety:

Singapore is a left-hand drive nation, with first-world road conditions which include well-lit, well-paved, English language roadways and 4 to 6 lane expressways spanning the island. Traffic and driving can be a bit more hectic than typical American driving, with drivers seemingly occupying two lanes at once, and motorcycles darting from lane to lane between cars, but traffic accidents appear surprisingly rare. Drivers should be cautious as speeding violations are vigorously enforced by the police and speed cameras are prevalent throughout the island. Drivers should also recognize the difficulty posed by Singapore's frequent, heavy rain downpours that can produce inches of water on the roads in a matter of minutes.

II. Political Tension:

A. Historical Perspective:

The Government of Singapore (GoS) is defined by the Constitution of the Republic of Singapore to mean the Executive branch of government, which is made up of the President and the Cabinet of Singapore. Although the President acts in his personal discretion in the exercise of certain functions as a check on the Cabinet and Parliament of Singapore, his role is largely ceremonial. It is the Cabinet, composed of the Prime Minister and other Ministers appointed on his advice by the President, which generally directs and controls the Government. The Cabinet is formed by the political party that gains a simple majority in each general election.

Singapore has one of the most stable governments in the world, with the People's Action Party (PAP) assuming power in an election before independence and returning to power in every general election and has thus formed the Cabinet since 1959. The Government is generally competent in managing the country's economy and largely free from political corruption. On the other hand, it has been criticized for using unfair election tactics and violating freedom of speech, although the national elections in July 2020 were free, fair, and competitive and seen by many as the best in the nation's history.

B. Terrorism Threats:

Singapore remains relatively free from civil unrest, political instability, and credible terrorism threats. The GoS frequently cautions its citizens that while the Jema'ah Islamiah (JI) cell has been severely disrupted within Singapore, it has by no means been eradicated. Over the last decade, JI cells have been disrupted in Singapore in the midst of preparations to attack the U.S. Embassy, the American Club, the Singapore American School, and other locations associated

with the U.S. The head of JI in Singapore and Singapore's most wanted terrorist, Mas Selamat Kastari, escaped from prison in Singapore in early 2008 and was captured over a year later just across the border in Malaysia, raising fears of a possible support network existing in or near Singapore, and local press articles also continue to express concerns that home-grown, self-radicalized terrorists may become a security issue for Singapore in the future.

Whether concerning organized crime or terrorist activity, prudent measures should continue to be taken by businesses, schools, churches, and other locations where Americans assemble. Travelers should be vigilant when using public conveyances such as buses, subways, trains, planes and ferries. Singaporean officials frequently emphasize the importance of community involvement and preparedness as a critical element in national security, as well as the importance of the private sector in effectively fighting both crime and terrorism.

C. Organized Crime:

While organized criminal groups exist in Singapore, their strength remains unclear and it's believed that they focus on crimes such as prostitution, loansharking, and narcotics trafficking and rarely target foreigners. [Note: Prostitution in Singapore is legal, but various prostitution-related activities are not. This includes public solicitation, under-age prostitution, living on the earnings of a prostitute and maintaining a brothel. In practice, the police are believed to unofficially tolerate and monitor a limited number of brothels.

D. Drugs and Narcotics:

Visitors to Singapore should be knowledgeable of the severe penalties for narcotics trafficking, up to and including the death penalty. Despite these laws, drugs can still be found in Singapore, and individuals frequenting nightclubs should be particularly vigilant and remain aware of their surroundings. Incidents of individuals unknowingly ingesting a drug placed in a drink occasionally occur, and visitors should again exercise the same amount of caution as they would in any major U.S. city.

Additional laws to keep in mind:

Gum – There is a ban on importing chewing gum into Singapore which is strictly enforced. Since 2004, only chewing gum of therapeutic value is allowed into Singapore under the "Regulation of Imports and Exports (Chewing Gum) Regulations." The exception is made for dental or nicotine gum. Chewing gum is sold at NEX but only to be consumed on installation.

Littering – Fines are imposed for the smallest scraps if not disposed of properly.

Outraging the modesty of a female – This includes uninvited touching, suggestive comments and rude behavior. This crime is taken very seriously in Singapore.

Shoplifting – Shoplifting is considered theft and is punishable with imprisonment and/or a fine.

Smoking – Smoking is prohibited in all indoor and outdoor public spaces, except for in designated smoking zones. You may be fined for violating the rules.

Vaping – Although possession and use of vapes is banned in Singapore, vaping is a growing problem. The sight of teenagers vaping in public is increasingly common and the confiscation of illegal vapes has increased. There are fines for vaping as well as fines and jail time for those convicted of importing or selling vapes.

POLICE PROCEDURES AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

Police Questioning – If the police stop you for any reason, it is strongly advised that you be cooperative, friendly, and courteous. Your attitude should be one of respect.

Rights Upon Arrest – If arrested, you have the right to legal counsel, but only at a time when the investigation officer feels it is appropriate. You are usually permitted one phone call.

Police Custody – If arrested for a sizeable offense, you must be brought before a magistrate or released within 48 hours after arrest, except if the investigating officer requests the magistrate extend the detention.

Female Police Officers – Any female who is arrested, detained, or taken into police custody will be accompanied by a female police officer. Any search conducted will only be conducted by a female police officer.

GENERAL INFORMATION

BARGAINING

Bargaining is rapidly becoming a relic of the past, as most all retailers have moved to fixed prices and knowing that the expats will eventually pay for that special 'Asian' treasure. In markets, it may be possible to bargain as much as 20% discount, but the objective is to find a mutually satisfying price. Always bargain with a smile and an attitude of respect.

CREDIT CARDS

All major credit cards are widely accepted, although some establishments may require a

minimum purchase, and/or charge an additional fee for credit card purchases (approximately 2-4%). Be mindful that your receipt often includes your signature and complete credit card number (as does the copy left for the vendor). A local bank account is required if you want to use a common form of payment in Singapore called PayNow or PayLah. For most local online vendors, they will require either form for payment. Large retailers accept US credit cards.

CURRENCY

The official currency is the Singapore Dollar (\$, S\$, or SGD). It is issued in 2, 5, 10, 50 and 100 – dollar bills. The coins are five, ten, twenty, and fifty cents, and one dollar. All prices, when quoted in dollars, refer **only** to Singapore dollars. A price quotation in U.S. dollars will be stated in \$xxxUSD.

TIPPING

Tipping is not always required, as a 10% service charge is often added to almost every bill. However, tipping is not unheard of, especially with helpful taxi drivers and exceptional staff. The tip has been added to your bill if you see “service charge” below the GST (sales tax). It has not been added if you do not see the term “service charge”, so check your bill closely.

POWER SUPPLY

The power outlets in Singapore supply 220-240V. **Do not plug in American 110V electronics without a transformer.** Laptops and phones are typically dual voltage and will need a plug adapter to charge from the wall. Those items do not typically need a transformer. The plugs are the same as the British plugs – three slots. Military housing has both 110V and 220V outlets.

SALES TAX

Sales tax (GST) of 8% is included in the stated prices of groceries and merchandise. Prices are often quoted (verbally or in written form) by saying “\$++”. The statement “\$++” is the same as saying the price (\$) plus the 8% GST, plus the 10% service charge. GST is non-refundable by diplomats and all persons are required to pay GST.

WATER

It is safe to drink the water from the tap in Singapore. This is absolutely not the case for most regional travel destinations, except Japan, Korea, New Zealand, and Australia.

ATMs

ATMs are available all over the city. If you can't find one, ask a nearby vendor to direct you to the closest one. Most U.S. ATM cards will work here, though there may be service charges. Local

currency can be withdrawn from any automated teller machine displaying your system's symbol. Check the back of your ATM card for the systems supported.

TVs

The television system in Singapore is the PAL system and is not compatible with the NTSC system. Only TVs that are multi system will work here, which includes all newer models.

TOURIST INFORMATION BUREAU

Tourist information and much more can be found at the Tourism Center, conveniently located on the corner of Cuscaden Road and Grange Road, just across the street from the Traders Hotel and within walking distance of the Embassy. Look for the "Uniquely Singapore" sign.

CABLE, INTERNET AND CELL PHONES

There are two main cable providers in Singapore – Starhub and Singtel. Both companies offer cable, internet, and cell phone bundles. If you have school age children, provide a copy of their school ID and they are eligible for the student package with unlimited texting. To set up cable/cell phone/internet you will need to use your FIN paper, passport and obtain a letter from the HR office (civilian) or Command (active duty) stating your employment status and residential address.

Purchasing a SingTel Tourist SIM card <https://www.singtel.com/personal/products-services/mobile/prepaid-plans/hi-tourist>

- Can be installed in mobile phone and used as a hotspot

If you brought an unlocked phone with you, you should purchase a SIM card from 7-Eleven. You will be able to continue to use this number when you set up your phone service and internet

SINGAPORE PROTOCOL SUGGESTIONS

The weather here is humid, around 90+ degrees Fahrenheit, with a possibility of rain every day, especially during the months of November to February. Umbrellas are a daily necessity, whether for the frequent rain, or intense sunshine. Lightweight business casual is the normal dress code for conducting business. Jackets are not usually necessary, and neither are pantyhose. When visiting holy places or religious neighborhoods, it is best to cover shoulders and legs. Please dress appropriately when entering mosques or temples. Women are expected to cover their hair, shoulders and down to their knees before entering a mosque or temple.

Singapore is a friendly place that welcomes visitors and celebrates harmony and tolerance throughout its multicultural population. Be open minded, as this island is home to many ethnic groups, each with its own traditional conduct. Be polite and observant and you will be fine.

Most people do not wear shoes in the home, so be prepared to remove your shoes when

entering a private home.

Public places are kept very clean due to harsh penalties against littering, so be sure to use the trash bins and ashtrays.

The Muslim community in Singapore refrains from touching dogs as their saliva is considered “ritually unclean,” so bringing dogs out to high-traffic areas requires some sensitivity on the owner’s part. Please be mindful when bringing your dogs out in public. Often times repairmen will seem afraid of the dog, when in reality they are avoiding any contact whatsoever with the animal. Be considerate and put your pet in another room or on a leash while the repairman is on your premises. Be aware that many of the maids that work at serviced apartments are Muslim. They have the same fears and concerns about contact with dogs. It is best to take your dog for a walk while the maid cleans the serviced apartment.

TRANSPORTATION

Singapore is a modern, metropolitan city. Public transportation is readily available by bus, taxi, or subway and is affordable, timely, clean, and safe. Taxis are generally plentiful, except during rush hours, very late evenings, or when it rains. Bus service is frequent, clean, timely, and inexpensive. Please note the law mandates no eating or drinking while in a taxi, bus or MRT.

For both bus and MRT, the EZ Link card is the preferred method of payment. This stored value card can be purchased at any MRT station or bus station during business hours. The card itself requires a S\$5.00 deposit and can be topped up at MRT ticketing kiosks, or local 7-Eleven stores. Credit cards/phone digital wallets can also be used for “tapping” to pay the MRT/bus fare. Most school IDs double as EZ link cards.

SINGAPORE MASS RAPID TRANSIT (MRT)

Singapore public transportation is truly state of the art. The MRT consists of six lines, the North South (NS), East West (EW), North East (NE), Downtown (DT), Thompson East Coast (TE), and the Circle Line (CC). Most major attractions are accessible by MRT, or a combination of MRT, bus or taxi. Trains operate from about 6am to 12 midnight daily. First and last train departures vary between stations, as well as on weekends and public holidays. Changi Airport MRT station (CG2) is located at Terminal 2, just follow the “City Train” signs in Terminals 1, 2 and 3.

SINGAPORE BUS SYSTEM

Buses generally run every 10-30 minutes, regular buses operate from 6am-11:30pm, fares range from S\$.80 – S\$2.80 per ride. When riding the bus, ensure that you enter the bus using only the

front entrance, tapping the EZ Link card on the entryway card reader, and exit using the rear/mid-way exit, again tapping the EZ Link card on the exit card reader. Be sure to press the stop button for your exit as the bus does not stop unless a passenger requests the stop, or one is waiting to get on the bus at the bus stop. When hailing a bus at a stop, stand and raise your arm. The bus will not stop unless someone requests the stop either onboard or at the bus stop.

TAXIS

Over 25,000 air-conditioned cabs ply local roads and provide comfortable, hassle-free travel at a very reasonable cost. All taxis are metered and can be flagged down 24 hours a day on most roads. In certain districts, including the Orchard Road area, taxis can be most easily found at taxi stands. Taxi stands are generally located along roads and most major commercial, retail and office buildings where demand for taxis is high. In Sembawang, taxis are best ordered via app or found at MRT stations.

HAILING A TAXI

If your choice is to hail a taxi, then generally you can hail a taxi anywhere along the road if it does not result in a traffic violation or endanger the safety of other road users. There are also specific locations where a taxi cannot stop to pick up or drop-off passengers, such as along bus lanes during their operational hours, lanes with double zigzag lines, and at bus stops and all public roads and side roads in the CBD. They are instead required to do so at taxi stands/stops and driveways of buildings.

ENTERING AND EXITING THE TAXI

Always enter and exit the taxi curbside, to avoid putting yourself in the path of passing vehicles. Seatbelts are required for each passenger.

TAXI BOOKING SERVICE PROVIDERS

ComfortDelGro	6552-1111	Prime Taxi	6778-0808
Silvercab/Premier	6363-6888	TransCab	6555-3333
SMRT Taxi	6555-8888	Smart Taxi	6485-7777
Yellow Top	6293-5545	Dial-a-Cab	6342-5222

Each taxi service also has a mobile app for making a booking. Many employees and locals also utilize Grab (similar to Uber and Lyft) for local car services. Young children are exempt from car seat laws when riding in taxis, however, those exemptions do not apply to riding in Grab vehicles.

DRIVING

Vehicles in Singapore drive on the left hand side of the road. The rules of the road are very similar to those in the U.S. with a few deviations.

A driver's license instruction course and car buying brief will be offered after arrival. A valid US driver's license is needed for completion of the driver's license instruction course.

PARKING AND ERP

ELECTRONIC ROAD PRICING (ERP)

Every car in Singapore is outfitted with a dashboard cashcard reader (IU reader). As the driver of the vehicle, it is your responsibility to make sure the cashcard has enough value to cover the charges incurred by ERP gantries and parking fees. Cashcards can be purchased and topped up at most 7-Eleven stores and Top-Up machines are located in most public parking garages. If your ERP card does not have enough value to pay a gantry's fee you will be fined. The fine will arrive in the mail.

Taxi passengers are responsible for paying ERP charges incurred during a trip.

Public parking lots and curb-side parking require paying via App on Parking.SG. Using the Parking.SG App is easier than the parking coupons as you can top up your time without returning to your car, and if you depart earlier than planned, you can end your parking session on the app and be refunded the unused portion.

BANKING INFORMATION

DO I NEED A LOCAL BANK ACCOUNT?

It is definitely possible to live in Singapore for an extended period of time without a local account. Not only will U.S. ATM cards function at ATM's here, but most local utility bills (phone, cable, internet, cell phone, etc.) can be paid with cash at post offices, 7-Eleven stores, or company specific websites. If you plan to own a car and want to use the gasoline discount, you will be required to open a local account for automatic payment of gasoline card bills. If you are hiring a live-in helper, a local bank account is required.

OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

If you choose to open a local account, visit your command HR to obtain a statement of service letter that includes you and your spouse, if applicable, information as well as your salary. When you set out to “interview” banks, be sure to take your passport and the letter from command as documentation of your legal residence in Singapore. If you want to open a joint account with your spouse, you will also need to bring your marriage certificate and both parties need to appear in person with their passports and FIN documentation.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

RELIGIOUS

There is a large variety of Christian churches in Singapore as well as Synagogues and Mosques. To locate these places of worship, you can search for them at www.yellowpages.com.sg. This site has up-to-date listings of all religious locations in Singapore.

COMMUNITY CENTERS

There are nearly 100 community centers in Singapore that are open to residents, whether local or expatriate. To find the center closest to you, look in the Street Directory table of contents, or perform a “community center” or “centre” visit www.pa.gov.sg. Most community centers offer inexpensive adult education classes, as well as fitness and community facilities.

NEX at SEMBAWANG

THE NAVAL EXCHANGE STORE

The Naval Exchange (NEX) runs a small grocery store where one can find American products that may be rarely stocked or expensive in the local stores (prices are in U.S. dollars). The NEX accepts all major credit cards, U.S. checks, U.S. dollars and local currency. Remember that the NEX is only for use by authorized employees and their dependents. **Purchasing items for non-authorized individuals and taking reimbursement for such purchases is illegal.** If caught, the offending employee and dependents can be barred from all future use and access to the NEX.

NEX Hours of Operation:

Monday – Saturday: 9:00am-6:00pm

Closed on Sunday and US Holidays

NEX Store Phone Number: 6750-2409

NEX Store Manager: 6570-2408/2407

YOU WILL NEED TO SHOW YOUR MILITARY BADGE/DEPENDENT ID/CONTRACTOR BADGE TO

BE ADMITTED TO THE SEMBAWANG FACILITIES.

EATING IN SINGAPORE

Singapore is a wonderful place to find authentic cuisine from every country on the planet. A meal can cost anywhere from S\$3.50 – S\$350.

Take a look at the latest *The Finder, Expat Living Magazine* annual Restaurant Guide, or any other tourist guide if you are craving a fine dining experience, or take to the streets and food courts or hawker stalls, if you just want some good food. Napkins (locally referred to as serviettes) are rarely provided at hawker centers or most food courts. Bring your own if you know you will need them. Pick out your table (and make note of your table number) and save your table by placing a packet of napkins on the table prior to ordering your food from the stalls.

From hawker stalls to five stars, all eating establishments in Singapore must display their food hygiene grade: either A, B or C. This grade indicates the level at which a restaurant adheres to Singapore's strict standards of hygiene.

Plan in advance for dinner. It's easier to walk into a place for lunch without a reservation than it is for dinner. Places that you would not think would need a reservation, check online first.

FOOD – WHAT'S IN A NAME

Dining in Singapore is quite an adventure. Food choices run the gamut from wonderful burgers to sambal stingray. The adventure begins just trying to decipher the menu, with the choices as varied and numerous as the selection of restaurants, food courts and hawker stalls are in Singapore. In an effort to ease the confusion, please refer to the listing below of a number of foods and food terms that are common elements of even the most basic of menus.

Satay: Skewers of marinated beef or chicken, flame grilled and served with ketupat (rice cakes), cucumber, onions, and a spicy peanut sauce.

Chicken Rice: Boiled or roasted chicken, served over rice that has been cooked in seasoned chicken stock, served with cucumber, chili sauces, and soy sauces. This is to Asia, what pot-roast is to Americans.

Dim Sum: An array of steamed buns, dumplings, and mini dishes, served from bamboo baskets.

Fish Head Curry: A Singaporean creation where a large, meaty fish head is served in curry gravy with rice.

Curry Laksa: Noodles, chicken, fish, tofu, and vegetables served in rich curry sauce.

Pohpiah: A savory spring roll filled with bamboo shoots, bean curd, prawns, or pork. (unless the hawker stalls say or indicate “Vegetarian”)

Sambal Udang: Prawns served with a spicy chili (sambal) paste

Roti Prata: (Malaysian/Indian original) Roti (flaky flatbread) served with dhal (cooked lentils), chicken or fish curry. Roti Jagung consists of roti with a sweet corn filling. Roti Pisang is roti stuffed with banana.

Chapati: Griddle-cooked Punjabi flat bread, served with curries, meat, and vegetables.

Rendang: A hot, spicy beef or mutton curry, cooked with coconut milk and served over rice.

Chili or Black Pepper Crab: Hard-shell crabs cooked in either a thick gravy with tomato, sambal chili paste, and ground peanut, or coated with freshly-ground black and white pepper, salt and garlic. This is a Singapore favorite and usually charged by the gram so notice the price when ordering.

Bak Kut Teh: A tasty soup created from pork ribs boiled with numerous spices, garlic, and pepper.

Murtabak: An Indian pancake, prata, stuffed with sardines, chicken or mutton, onion, and egg, served with curry gravy.

Char Kway Teow “Fried Kway Teow”: made by stir-frying flat rice noodles kway teow in a thick black soya sauce. Usually, the dish includes a wider variety of additional ingredients, such as seafood, eggs, garlic, and an array of vegetables.

Chai Tau Kueh or “Carrot Cake”: Not your western carrot cake with cream cheese frosting...this is a radish and fried egg dish comes in white or black.

Ice Kachang: This dessert is made from ice shavings covered with bright red and green sweeteners and thick, rich condensed milk. At the bottom will be a layer of red beans, corn, and some palm seeds.

Halal: 'Halal' simply means lawful or permissible in Arabic. These dishes are prepared according to the rules of Islam. This includes rules on methods of slaughter to the abstinence from the consumption of any pork products.

SHOPPING IN DOWNTOWN SINGAPORE

The focal point of shopping is Orchard Road – the Rodeo Drive of Singapore – a very long

stretch of glitzy shopping malls packed with everything from designer wear to cheap chic. (A note of caution, most clothing does not fit Western sizes and there is a limited, if non-existent return policy, even with a receipt.) For a more authentic old-Singapore shopping experience, visit a few outdoor markets. Check out Bugis Village (Rochor Road, Bugis MRT), restored to retain the Straits Chinese Agricultural style, the Thieves Market on Pitt Street (Little India MRT), and the Chinatown market. Most stores are open from 11am – 10pm.

Cold Storage – A reliable expat-focused grocery chain with many locations island wide.

Fairprice (NTUC) and Giant – Both are local grocery chains. Prices are low, but selection may be limited depending on which outlet you frequent.

Guardian – Pharmacy and personal care items supplier.

Watson's – This store sells personal care products, toiletries, make-up and over-the-counter medications, but does not always have a pharmacy.

DIY/HomeFix – This store is the best place to find light bulbs, adapter plugs and other various home incidentals.

Wet Markets – Wet markets are also commonly used, as they offer good prices on items such as fresh vegetables, fruits, meats, fish and flowers. Prices are not always posted at wet markets, so you may have to bargain with stall owners. Some vendors at wet markets might charge ang-moh (Caucasians) higher rates than Singaporeans or helpers. If you think you are being overcharged, politely inform the vendor that you are not a tourist or shop at a different stall.

Little India – Explore the Tekka Centre wet market and hawker center, before crossing Serangoon Road and visiting the Little India Arcade, Sri Veeramakaliamman Temple, and Mustafa's Department Store (Essentially a huge Walmart type store – if you can't find it at Mustafa's, it doesn't exist). Mustafa's is open 24 hours.

Kampong Glam (Arab Street) – Shop here for exotic textiles, perfumes, and Malaysian and Indonesian treasures. Stop here to view the impressive Sultan Mosque.

Chinatown (Smith, Trengganu and Pagoda Streets, Chinatown MRT) – Find exotic treasures, amazing food, or Chinese medicine shops in this very vibrant and enchanting part of the Singapore of old.

Tanglin Shopping Centre – This older mall is full of a wider array of great antique, clothing, carpet, curio, furniture and more.

Forum Shopping Centre – This upscale mall caters to children from clothing, shoes, a large Toys R Us store as well as many restaurants.

Tang's Plaza – Tang's is a local large multi-level department store that competes favorably with all the other international megastores and boutiques that are along Orchard Road.

Wheelock Place – has numerous shops and services that are expat friendly to include hair salons, clothing, shoes, watch and a number of restaurants and coffee shops.

Lucky Plaza – If you like to bargain and are looking for everything from scuba gear to jewelry to cameras and watches, plus more, then this is the place. This is the down-scale mall on Orchard Road. Best to avoid on Sundays as it is very busy with workers sending remittances.

Paragon Shopping Center/ION/Takashimaya/Ngee Ann City – These malls, sitting directly across Orchard Road from each other, feature high-end shops from Prada, Gucci, Chanel, Fendi, Dior, Cartier and Calvin Klein.

Plaza Singapura – Located on the eastern end of Orchard Road, this very large mall features many named stores, a hobby and sewing store, musical instrument stores, DIY Home Fix stores and a theatre.

Holland Village – this is a shopping enclave that has a quaint and quirky collection of ethnically diverse shops and restaurants that cater to the western expatriate population. Lim's is located in the main shopping center and where uniforms for the Singapore American School (SAS) can be purchased.

VivoCity – Singapore's largest retail and lifestyle destination. This mall has a broad selection of stores ranging from fashion to homeware, toys to entertainment. There is also an open-air playground, along with a rooftop sky park and amphitheater. Restaurants, cafes, and eateries of all kinds can be found inside the mall, and outside along the harbor side promenade. There is a monorail from the top floor of VivoCity to Sentosa Island.

SIGHTSEEING AND ENTERTAINMENT

Raffles Hotel – Museums, old colonial building and shopping centers surround this hotel and national monument. Take a look around and then sip a Singapore Sling at the famous Long Bar.

Sentosa Island – Sentosa offers many activities including the Aquarium, I-fly, Universal Studios, Madame Tussauds Wax Museum, and Skyline Luge to name a few. For a spectacular view of the surrounding countries, take the cable car from Mt. Faber. Discount aquarium and Universal Studios tickets available through MWR counter in Café Lah.

Singapore Botanic Gardens – Stroll the lush and peaceful gardens safely at any time, day or night. The trails wind around three separate lakes, through ginger gardens, the Evolution

Garden and much more. Take the time to visit the National Orchid Garden (admission fee). Grab a light snack or enjoy a nice lunch or dinner at Halia located in the Ginger Garden. There is also a wonderful children's garden with climbing structures, sand and water play, turtles and plant nursery with a kid friendly restaurant located outside its entrance.

Singapore Zoo/Night Safari/River Safari/Jurong Bird Park – Singapore Zoo is an open concept zoo that allows you to see over 3,200 animals, representing 332 species, in their natural surroundings. The four parks are separate, and tickets can be either purchased separately or as a bundle ticket (yearly membership to all 4 parks are recommended if trips are frequent). The zoo has a children's play area to include water play, so remember to bring swimsuits and towels for the kids. The parks have schedules for feeding times that individuals can take part in as well as live shows with a variety of animals. The River Safari is the most recent addition and boasts 2 pandas and a River Quest.

Sri Mariamman Temple – This is the oldest Hindu temple in Singapore. For additional information, "Google" Sri Mariamman Temple.

Thian Hock Keng (Temple of Heavenly Happiness) – This beautiful temple is located in a quiet section of Chinatown, surrounded by old-style shop houses and is the oldest Chinese temple in Singapore. When it was completed in 1840, this temple was on the waterfront.

East Coast Park – This area is nice for biking, skating, long-boarding, and jogging or just taking a leisure walk. Boasting 185 hectares with over 15 km of scenic coastline, this is one of Singapore's most treasured getaways and attract millions of visitors each year. Bike and rollerblade rentals are available by the hour or the day.

Gardens by the Bay – This is a park spanning 101 hectares and consists of three waterfront gardens: Bay South Garden, Bay East Garden and Bay Central Garden. A unique and popular focal point of the gardens is the two conservatories: Flower Dome and Cloud Forest. Both are very large (about 2.5 acres) and the Flower Dome is the world's largest columnless glasshouse. (Admission fees apply to the conservatories) The Supertree Grove is also very unique and has a tree-top bridge that connects the trees and allows amazing views of the gardens. At 7:45pm and 8:45pm the Supertrees are lit in time to a musical display.

Singapore Flyer – As the world's largest observation wheel, standing at 165m from the ground, the Flyer is the height of a 42-storey building – over 30 meters taller than the London Eye. The wheel cost over S\$240 million to construct and features 28 fixed capsules the size of a bus. Each revolution takes approximately 30 minutes and offers a breathtaking view of the Marina Bay waterfront, city skyline and beyond. Open daily from 8:30am – 10:30pm.

Marina Bay Sands - This 55 story high building is one of the most spectacular hotels in Singapore with three tall buildings connected on the top by a long “surfboard looking” Skypark that includes a 150-metre infinity swimming pool. The iconic design has transformed Singapore’s skyline and tourism landscape since it’s opening in 2010. The property has a luxury hotel, convention and exhibition facilities, theatres, entertainment venues, shops and restaurants. The Art Science Museum is located at the Marina Bay Sands.

NIGHTLIFE

Clark Quay – Lying near the mouth of the Singapore River, this area is buzzing with activity. This waterfront area is host to a kaleidoscope of restaurants, bars, entertainment spots and shops.

Boat Quay – Enjoy relatively cheap bars and restaurants, such as Harry’s Jazz Bar. Located on the Singapore River, it’s a nice place to relax, eat, enjoy the entertainment, or go for a stroll.

Emerald Hill – Bars and restaurants, near the middle of Orchard Road, directly across the street from Somerset MRT station. A hideaway of eclectic locations, only slightly off the beaten path.

Club Street – A collection of trendy and quaint bars, clubs and eateries, all in one area.

Newton Food Center – A good place to drink cheap beers and sample food, Newton stays open until 0400, sit wherever you like, make note of your table number for food delivery. Food is paid for after it arrives, rather than when it is ordered.

Mohammed Sultan Road – Lined with many restaurants.

Chijmes – (Pronounced – chimes) – A former convent, this area now offers picturesque nighttime alfresco dining, as well as bars, clubs and shops.

Night Safari (Singapore Zoo) – Have dinner and hop on the tram to see the nocturnal animals. Don’t miss the Creatures of the Night show before or after your tram ride.

SCHOOLS

Singapore has a variety of international schools ranging in sizes from very large (around 4,000 students) to small (several hundred). For additional information please contact the School Liaison Officer (SLO) office located across the street in the Black and White housing at 213 Lagos Circle. +65.9663.4625 This is a shared office with CYP.

MUSEUMS

Visiting Singapore's museums is an excellent way to learn about the cultural, ethnic and political history of Singapore.

National Museum of Singapore – 93 Stamford Road, <http://www.nationalmuseum.sg>

Singapore Art Museum – 71 Bras Basah Road, <http://www.singart.com>

Asian Civilizations Museum – 1 Empress Place, <http://www.nhb.gov.sg/ACM>

Peranakan Museum – 39 Armenian Street, <http://www.peranakanmuseum.sg>

NUS Museum/Centre for the Arts – University Cultural Centre, 50 Kent Ridge Crescent, <http://www.nus.edu.sg/cfa/museum/index.php>

Singapore Tyler Print Institute – 41 Robertson Quay, <http://www.stpi.com.sg/>

Changi Chapel & Museum – 1000 Upper Changi Rd North, <http://www.changimuseum.com>

Singapore Science Centre – 15 Science Centre Road, <http://www.science.edu.sg>

MOVIE THEATRES

Watching a movie in Singapore is usually a very pleasant experience. Many American movies are released in Singapore theatres, usually with only minimal cuts from the Board of Censors.

All seats are assigned. When you purchase a ticket at the theatre, let the ticket seller know if you have a seat preference. Tickets may be purchased online, in advance, with a credit card. When coming to the theatre to claim for and finalize the purchase, the original credit card will need to be used. No-shows for credit card advance purchase tickets will be charged for the unused tickets. Theatres tend to be cold, so bring a sweater or wrap. Many theaters have special rooms with premier luxury seating which offer dinner, refreshments, a blanket, and seats that can be adjusted so that it is practically lying flat.

EXPAT COMMUNITY

*Please keep in mind that all expats (including military expats) might have different entitlements in Singapore. Please confirm all entitlements with your sponsor or command. www.singaporeexpats.com – Expat forum on a variety of topics, including dating and making friends. Excellent resource for newcomers.

www.expatsingapore.com – Expat forum on a variety of topics, including career resources, travel guide, dating and making friends. Excellent resource for newcomers.

www.angloinfo.com.sg – Expat Network

www.anza.org.sg – Australian and New Zealand expat forum - open to all nationalities

EMPLOYMENT

When looking for spouse employment, there are several different job sites to search.

www.usajobs.com

www.navyfederal.org/about/careers.html

<https://sg.usembassy.gov/jobs/>

<https://www.navymwrsingapore.com/careers>

Working on the economy in Singapore is also possible. Please consult Fleet and Family Support Office (FFSO) or JAG for further information about the steps needed for “in-town employment.”