

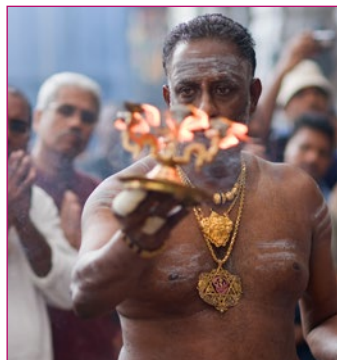
World Gourmet Summit

Gourmands from around the world visit Singapore for the annual World Gourmet Summit (in 2014 it's on 26 Mar-05 Apr), where the 'finest haute cuisine' is available at the city's top hotels and restaurants. There are gourmet workshops around the city, and top chefs are joined by winemakers from the world's top wine-making regions. See worldgourmetsummit.com

... Food Festival

For a foodie festival that's a little more down to earth, there's also the Singapore Food Festival (around Jun-Jul each year). There are food carnivals, tasting sessions and myriad discounts and promotions on offer around the city.

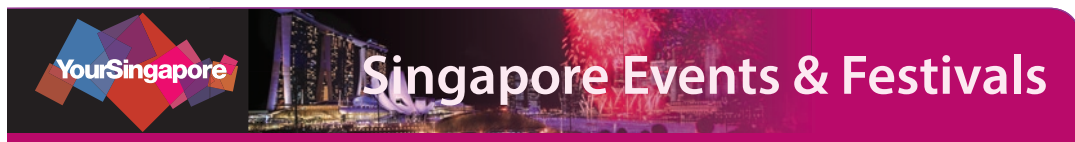
Walking The Walk



For a true spectacle and display of devotion in Singapore, look no further than Thaipusam, a Hindu procession held mid-Jan each year. Hindus seeking blessing or fulfilling vows make the 4.5km journey from Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple on Serangoon Rd to Sri Thendayuthapani Temple on Tank Rd, bringing traffic to a standstill. The devotees make the walk carrying milk pots as offerings, or a wooden Kavadi perched on their shoulders, strung with garlands and feathers. Some even pierce their tongues and carry a wooden arch.

... Deepavali

Arguably the most important date in the Hindu calendar is Deepavali, the festival of lights. The public holiday falls in the last quarter of the year, and symbolises light overcoming darkness. Little India comes alive during this festival, with cultural activities and a street parade among highlights. The enclave overflows with decorative clothing and delicacies during this time too.



Singapore's Packed Year



Singapore's arts, entertainment and cultural calendar is packed every year with offerings to suit all ages and tastes, from high-brow art throughout the Biennale, Asian art at the Singapore Arts Festival, culture, international film and global sporting events.

Visitors timing their trip to or through Singapore to coincide with events

Singapore Sales

Shopping fanatics should know all about the Great Singapore Sale—a two-month extravaganza (30 May-27 Jul) where practically all of the country's stores offer discounted goods. Now in its 21st year, the sale also includes events and special dining promotions around the city, from the famous Orchard Road, Marina Bay, Bugis, Chinatown, Little India and Kampong Glam. See greatsingapore.com.sg

Lunar New Year

Chinese New Year, a.k.a the Lunar New Year, is the most significant event in the Chinese calendar, and brings with it a tonne of events, parades and street performances steeped in symbolism in Jan and Feb. Lions and dragons dance in the streets, and families clean their homes to sweep away bad luck, making way for good. The Chinatown precinct is the focal point for Chinese New Year celebrations, says the Singapore Tourism Board, and the best time (if the most busy) to check it out is during the Chinatown Street Light Up—when dancers, fire eaters and dance troupes take over Kreta Ayer Square.

Singapore Events & Festivals

National Day

Singaporeans are fiercely patriotic, and this all boils over during National Day celebrations, culminating with the National Day Parade, which uses the latest Singaporean technology to tell the country's history. Visitors are urged to check out the aerial performances over the Marina Bay platform from the Singapore Flyer.

Have A Brew

Beerfest Asia could be the ideal stopover treat for Kiwis heading to UK/Europe next winter. Held mid-Jun, the festival brings the best micro-brewers from Asia and around the world to Marina Promenade for four days of tastings, brewing workshops and entertainment. See beerfestasia.com



SIN For The Arts

Art fans visiting Singapore, whether on a standalone trip or en route to UK/Europe or Southeast Asia, have a wide choice of events throughout the year, from film to sculpture and photography.

The Singapore Biennale (to 16 Feb) includes exhibitions around the city, and in Jan there's also Singapore Art Week (13-19 Jan). Later in the year is the Singapore Arts Festival (16 May-01 Jun), the Singapore Writers Festival (03-15 Mar), Singapore International Photography Exhibition (Oct) and the World Architecture Festival (01-03 Oct).

... Music & Theatre

Mosaic Music Festival (07-16 Mar) is a showcase of a wide range of musical styles at the Esplanade—Theatres on the Bay, and in May, Shakespeare in the Park (30 Apr-25 May) brings the Bard's plays to life in true Singaporean style. The Singapore Night Festival (23-24, 30-31 Aug) lights up precincts around the city, and in Dec a quiet night in can be spent at one of the many theatres participating in Singapore International Film Festival (02-14 Dec).

around the country, whether they're sporting, arty or cultural, will need to plan their travel in advance in many cases, particularly around Chinese New Year, Ramadan and the Formula One Grand Prix—as hotels and flights fill quickly during these times.

Recommend to your clients some of the following events and festivals, to really immerse themselves in Singapore's vibrant and varied cultures—and get brownie points with them when they return home buzzing about their stay.

... Chingay Parade

The Chingay Parade (pictured), originally celebration of the birth of Chinese deities or the procession of the Goddess of Mercy, is a staple in Singapore during Chinese New Year festivities. In recent years it has evolved into a massive street parade with floats, dancers, musicians, lion and dragon dances. It attracts large crowds of Singaporeans out to celebrate the new year, and in recent years it has evolved to include more than 2000 performers from schools, clubs and cultural institutions—adding samba and a mardi gras feel to festivities. Tickets for the parade are essential and priced from SGD40. See chingay.org.sg

Formula One Grand Prix

Singapore's streets are taken over 19-21 Sep for the Singapore Formula One Grand Prix—fast becoming a fixture of the global GP circuit. Tickets and accommodation for the event sell out quickly, so clients who are keen to check out the action are urged to secure theirs well in advance.