

# SINGAPORE TODAY

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YourSingapore



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## I've Got The Blue Ginger

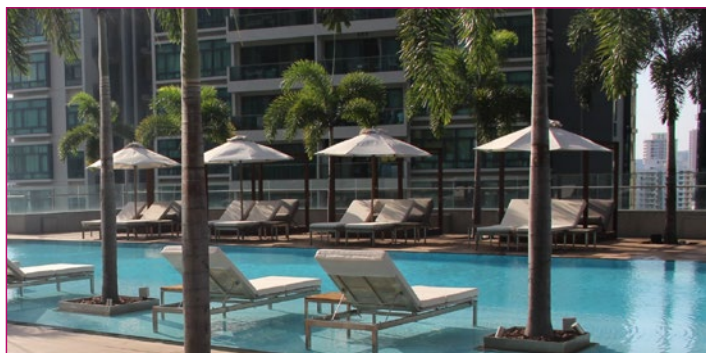
Peranakan culture is the binding of two ethnicities, Straits Chinese and Malay—and its most famous product is by far its cuisine.

For fresh and varied Peranakan delights for lunch to dinner, look no further than Blue Ginger in Tanjong Pagar. A favourite with locals and visitors alike, the restaurant churns out a tangy beef rendang, tamarind soaked prawns and fire hot blachan sambal (not for the faint hearted).

A signature Peranakan dish is Ayam Buah Keluak, chicken cooked with Indonesian black nuts and spices. Cool down with a lime juice or brave a durian chendol dessert—sweet red beans, glutinous rice and pieces of pungent durian. See [theblueginger.com](http://theblueginger.com)

## Skyving Off

For a relaxed meal urge clients to visit Skyve, just minutes from Orchard Rd. It offers tasty, reasonably-priced meals in a stylish setting. One of the highlights of the Snoozy Brunch menu is the truffle scrambled eggs with ciabatta. It is located at: 10 Windstedt Rd, Block E 01-17.



## An Oasia In The City Centre

Singapore's Oasia Hotel is located minutes from shopping belt Orchard Road, and close to the city's business districts.

Designed with both business and leisure travellers in mind, the Far East Hospitality property offers modern rooms with all the mod cons. It has free Wi-Fi and hard-wired internet, to a gym, two eateries and an eighth floor pool and jacuzzi area ideal for retreating from the tropical heat of the day. Importantly, it's just a two-minute walk from the Novena MRT station, connecting the hotel to the city's public transport network. See [stayfareast.com](http://stayfareast.com)



# The Super Gardens



**Singapore prides itself on its greenery, and now that pride is bestowed on the sprawling Gardens by the Bay attraction.**

Spanning 110 hectares of reclaimed land right next to Marina Bay Sands, Gardens by the Bay takes clients to the jungle, rainforest and desert in the space of a few hours. It has two award-winning domes transforming Singapore's tropical heat into cool air ideal for growing plants, trees and succulents of all varieties.

Clients with green thumbs will particularly enjoy the Flower Dome con-

servatory, or visitors can climb into the canopy in the cloud forest to spot orchids growing on precarious ledges. The standout feature of Gardens by the Bay is the Supertree Grove. The man-made structures tower up to 15 storeys high, their metal trusses woven with plant life that will eventually take over completely. There's suspended walkways between some of the trees, giving clients birds-eye views of the Gardens, the Singapore Flyer observation wheel, and Marina Bay Sands.

At night the trees glitter during a laser show—powered by their own solar panels. The whole development is self-sustainable, the conservatories are cooled using power generated on site—and ash from boilers is even used as fertiliser for the millions of plants found there.

Entry to the park is free, and clients can enter the conservatories for SGD28 adults and SGD15 for kids three-12. The Skyway between the Supertrees is SGD5/3.

## ... Garden Dining

There's a plethora of dining options, from IndoChine at the top of the tallest Supertree, to celebrity chef led Pollen; and Satay by the Bay, which serves hawker style fare from SGD3 a dish. Clients can travel there on the MRT, alight at Bayfront and take the overpass from Marina Bay Sands. See [gardensbythebay.com.sg](http://gardensbythebay.com.sg)

## Kampong Cool

Kampong Glam, Singapore's Arab quarter, has entrenched itself as one of the city's most vibrant spots.

A curious mixture of Muslims heading to pray at the Sultan Mosque, backpackers dragging on hookah pipes and hipster locals, there's rows of shops and a vibrant cafe scene to keep visitors occupied for an afternoon.



## ... Shop

Haji Lane's mix of boutiques is continually changing, but one theme remains dominant here—colour is cool. Shops tout acid bright tops, patterned dresses and pants, shoes and accessories that will appeal across generations, as well as both men and women.

Look out for Bamboo Clothing, The Salad Shop and Tokyobike to check out restored vintage bicycles. See [tokyobike.sg](http://tokyobike.sg)

## ... Eat & Drink

While the Blu Jaz cafe remains popular at the top of Haji Lane, a number of new cafe spots have appeared recently. Just a week ago, Dutch inspired I Am... opened at the Sultan Mosque end, an open-air cafe serving hamburgers, cocktails, iced coffees and fresh cakes. Around on Kandahar St is a series of ethnic eateries, from Austrian to Indonesian, and Maison Ikkoku, a cafe ideal for a spot of tea surrounded by locals.



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## To Market To Market

A new addition to the Grandstand, a stalwart of Singaporean culture, Pasarbella is a clutch of gourmet and boutique market stalls selling everything from art and organic veges to New Zealand beef and paella.

An ideal spot to satisfy the cravings of the whole family, Pasarbella has an up-scale food court feel. Thirsty clients can even grab a beer from The Great Beer Experiment to enjoy with their meal.

Staffers know their brews, and there's a good selection of microbrewery beers from around the world—though not from New Zealand, just yet. Getting there: tell the taxi driver to go to 'Turf City', the development's old name. See [theGrandstand.com.sg](http://theGrandstand.com.sg)

## Dine With The Locals

One of Singapore's oldest hawker haunts, the Old Airport Road Food Hall has recently undergone a spruce-up, but the food remains the same—hearty and traditional. Urge clients to wander around and get a feel of what's popular (there's a prawn stall just to the left of the main entrance that always attracts queues). If clients are unsure what to eat—locals will be happy to help, food is a national treasure after all.



# Take Me To The River Safari

Some weird and wonderful creatures call Singapore's newest major attraction home—including the Mississippi Paddlefish (pictured), one of the first to greet visitors to the River Safari.

The strange is balanced by the downright cute (cue giant pandas, red pandas, beavers, a puffer fish and the bumbling manatee) which can be viewed from the rambling boardwalk that makes up the attraction.

Guests start their journey in North America, meeting animals that call the Mississippi home, swinging past the Nile, Mekong, Ganges, Murray and the Yangtze before coming to the Giant Panda enclosure.

Here, clients can book a 15-minute block of time with the park's resident pandas, Kai Kai and Jia Jia, pictured. Time slots are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, urge clients to visit in the morning.

Clients then cross a bridge over a figurative Atlantic Ocean with the sound of the Singapore Zoo's gibbons



## Home Away From Home

For a taste of ex-pat life, steer clients in the direction of Holland Village. As the name suggests, the Dutch were first to set up home here, and now the streets around the Holland Village MRT (on the yellow line) are dotted with shops and restaurants that appeal to Westerners and Singaporeans alike. There's an open-air market (closed on Mon) and food court, plus some home comforts such as pizza and pasta joints, and 2am Dessert from 2100, home to an award-winning dessert chef.



as a backdrop (tell clients to turn and look back for a glimpse of the zoo's orang utans and giraffes) to arrive at the Squirrel Monkey Forest and the Amazon Flooded Forest. This area has resident giant river otters, red-bellied piranha, green anaconda and the graceful manatees.

## ... River Ride Opening

The park's actual river ride main attraction is set to open in Oct—giving clients a glimpse into the delicate Wild Amazonia eco-system, with highlights including jaguar, caribbean flamingo, giant anteaters and scarlet macaws. When the park is completely open, entrance prices will rise from SGD25/SGD16 (kids three-12) to SGD35/SGD23 respectively. See [riversafari.com.sg](http://riversafari.com.sg)

## See SIN For Yourself

Remember if you want to upskill on all things Singapore, or even head up to Singapore yourself, there's a wealth of agent friendly information on the Singapore Tourism Board's new trade portal. To celebrate the launch of the new platform, Singapore Airlines is offering a \$650 self-famil agent's fare, and \$1000 for a companion, valid to 22 Nov. Those levels can be combined with industry accommodation and attraction offers. For details see [yoursingaporeexperience.co.nz](http://yoursingaporeexperience.co.nz)

## Ann Siang Hill Party

By day Ann Siang Hill bustles along, all boutiques, cafes and small business—but by night the district just east of Chinatown attracts expats and Singaporeans keen to party.

Bars and clubs line Ann Siang Hill Road and Club Street (funny that), and the party starts on Wed nights. Thu is generally a night off, says the bar manager at Ding Dong, and it all ramps up again on Fri and Sat—when things get 'pretty fun'.

Ding Dong, a relatively new kid on the block, offers small Asian fusion dishes—think scallops with coconut cream and fennel. The cocktails are tasty too, especially the Little India and the T.G Healing Tonic.



## Namaste Little India

Garlands are pungent in the air, saris are swishing, touters are touting—this is Little India, where everything is 100% 24-carat-good-as-gold thank you very much. Clients weary from shopping at the Mustafa Centre just up the road can retire here for a dosa, hot sweet chai or to try some northern Indian puri—bite-sized and crunchy wafer cups filled with tamarind sauce, potato, spices, yoghurt and veges.

## Event-full SIN

For clients looking for a reason to head to the Lion City, Singapore offers a bumper year-round events calendar. For a full event listing [CLICK HERE](#)



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## Sentosa Explored

Sentosa Island, located just south of the main island of Singapore, offers clients a resort-like experience just 20 mins from central Singapore. The island is home to major attractions including Universal Studios Singapore, the iFly skydiving simulator experience and some beachy areas ideal for relaxing on a stopover or standalone holiday.

## Living The Cove Life

Clients staying on Sentosa can seek a glimpse into the lives of Singapore's rich and famous with a visit to Sentosa Cove, east of Tanjong and home of the new W Sentosa luxury hotel. With its gated community (think SGD20 million homes!), and super-yacht marina, the cove offers a series of waterfront bars and eateries that are still reasonably priced by city standards (around SGD10 for a beer).

## Nuts And Bolts

**Currency:** Singapore dollar, it hovers around parity pretty consistently.

**Power:** Two-pronged 240volt. Although many hotels have built in adapters.

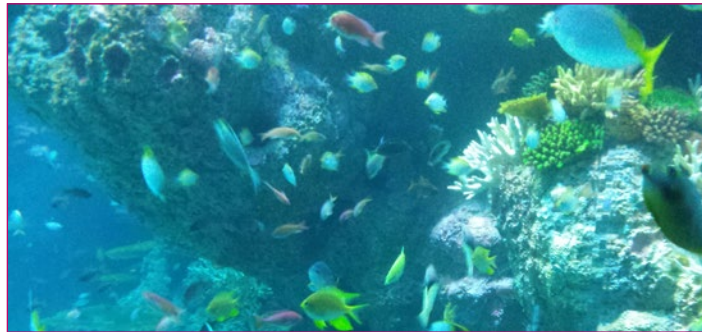


## Lazy Luxury At Tanjong Beach Club

For clients staying on Sentosa itself, the Tanjong Beach Club offers a great mix of ex-pat and local culture mixed with a little lazy luxury. The open breezy bar attracts a diverse weekend crowd, and the restaurant serves up hearty Western food. The cocktails are suitably creative and each month there's a full moon party—a slightly lower key affair than Siloso's parties. See [tanjongbeachclub.com](http://tanjongbeachclub.com)



## Under The SEA



Visitors to the S.E.A Aquarium are drawn beneath the water with a tale of an ill-fated trader voyage to Oman, but they stay for the beautifully cultivated coral reefs, manta rays, illuminated jelly fish and sharks that make up one of Sentosa Island's newest major attractions.

The aquarium also delves into the history of the world's trader routes, which Singapore has played a role in developing over centuries past, with displays from major ports in India, Asia and the Middle East.

Clients have the option of sitting down to an interactive movie experience at the Typhoon Theatre, telling the tale of a merchant sailor over-keen to deliver a present to the Sultan of Oman.

Without giving too much away, this

is how clients are drawn underwater to explore, with huge aquarium after huge aquarium of tropical fish, luminescent corals, massive spider crabs and beautifully patterned moray eels.

A highlight is the Ocean Dome, featuring the world's largest acrylic viewing panel and a school of manta rays amongst the large ocean-going fish. Admission to this must-see aquarium is SGD29 adults and SGD20 for kids. There are also opportunities to interact with some of the wildlife at the aquarium.

## Getting around

There are a few options for getting to Sentosa from the mainland. There's the North East Line on the MRT to VivoCity, and the Sentosa Express over to the island, or the Cable Car from Harbourfront and Mt Faber to Imbiah Lookout. At the Beach Station interchange, the beach trams leave and there's always taxis. Clients can walk over to Sentosa from VivoCity on a covered boardwalk too.

## Design A Journey

Back over on the mainland, fans of architecture and design can explore Singapore on foot with a self-guided walking tour put together by the Red Dot Design Museum. There's a half- or full-day option, taking in lesser-known spots around the city. One Fri a month the museum also hosts MAAD, an evening of local design, art and live music. Museum entry is SGD8/SGD4. Direct clients to 28 Maxwell Rd. See [red-dot.sg](http://red-dot.sg)

## Sentosa Expansion

More family fun is set to come to Sentosa Island in the coming years, including bungy jumping by AJ Hackett, Kidzania (like the one in Dubai) plus an expanded cable car system that will connect Imbiah and Siloso Points with Merlion Plaza.

The bungy jumping experience, set to open later this year, will offer a sky bridge, giant swing and a vertical skywalk abseiling experience. From 2014 Kidzania will let kids explore the world of grown ups, doing jobs and enjoying life as an adult for a while. The expanded cable car network will offer a new way for clients to see the island, and it's set for completion in Q3 2014.

There are also plans to add to the range of hotels on the island as demand from both local and foreign visitors increases to a projected 20 million visitors this year.



## Beach Tour By Segway

Sentosa's three beaches can be explored by Segway with GoGreen tours. After learning the basics of Segway riding, clients can embark on a 30-min or one-hour tour from the company's base at the Beach Station to Palawan or Siloso Beach, or both of these and Tanjong on the longer trip. It's ideal for families with kids older than 10 years and is from SGD38pp, and SGD80pp for the hour. See [segway-sentosa.com.sg](http://segway-sentosa.com.sg)



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## Bien SIN Biennale

Singapore's fourth Biennale (26 Oct-16 Feb 14) will feature the works of more than 80 artists from Asia and around the world, hosted by galleries around Singapore, including the Singapore Art Museum and a number of independent galleries such as those at Gillman Barracks.

Working to a theme—If The World Changed—the artists will explore the changing world through their work, with a distinct Asian feel. Tickets are from SGD10 for adults (SGD5 kids) for entry to all galleries plus one free tour. A smartphone app will be available from 24 Oct. See [singaporebiennale.org](http://singaporebiennale.org)

## Tee Off In SIN

For Singapore-bound golf enthusiasts, there's the Marina Bay Golf Course, the only public course in the country with city views and a four-storey driving range. At night the course is flood-lit to allow for night rounds. Take the MRT to Stadium station. See [mbgc.com.sg](http://mbgc.com.sg)



## Asian Art Trail With Gillman Barracks

Singapore is looking to cement its place in the Asian art trail with Gillman Barracks—a precinct of 15 independent galleries showcasing art from Singapore, Asia and around the world in a series of renovated army barracks on a sprawling piece of land. Contemporary galleries, including the Sundaram Tagore Singapore, celebrate themes including the clash of eastern and western traditions, and host exhibitions from international artists including Annie Leibovitz. To get there on the MRT, head up Alexandra Rd from the Labrador Park station. See [gillmanbarracks.com](http://gillmanbarracks.com)



## Spotlight On Singapore

## Take A Walk On The Southern Ridges



Visitors to Singapore looking for a couple of hours in the great outdoors without having to venture far can immerse themselves in the treetops, bird watching locals and joggers on the Southern Ridges Walks.

The 10km network of raised walkway and bridges connect Mount Faber Park, Telok Blangah Hill Park, Hort-

Park, Kent Ridge Park and Labrador Nature Reserve, and give clients a birds-eye view of the canopy of trees and some of the city's wildlife, including native birds and monkeys. Helpful signs point out different species of plants and birds for those who are interested.

Along the paths are some of the best unobstructed views of Singapore city, the harbour and southern islands, and a highlight is the Henderson Waves bridge (pictured), with its undulating metal panels that offer unique picnic spots.

Clients can meander along the paths from any starting point, and those staying on Sentosa can catch the cable car to Mount Faber Park.

## Far East Plaza

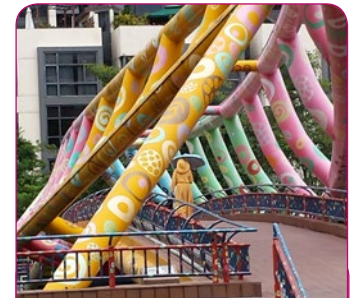
Located just off Orchard Rd on Scotts Rd (the same corner as the Marriott Singapore and opposite the ION Orchard mall), the Far East Plaza is a rabbit-warren mall packed with unique clothing, accessory, shoe and menswear stores—stocking mainly quirky Korean labels and well-priced costume jewellery. Tucked away on the second level is a store selling Singapore-designed clothing with a distinctly Japanese twist, tightly folded silk and fisherman printed cottons—priced from SGD150.

## Wild Rocket

One of Singapore's well known restaurants, Wild Rocket offers a unique twist on some traditional foods, from chili crab linguini to laksa pesto. Located underneath a hotel just down the road from Little India, at a spot called The Hangout, it's a must-visit for clients looking for home comforts mixed with a little local flavour. The laksa pesto followed by lemongrass jelly with calamansi and pomelo juice is a particularly yummy combination. See [wildrocket.com.sg](http://wildrocket.com.sg)

## Spa Rejuvenation

After a day of outdoor activity in Singapore, suggest clients try a spa treatment at one of the city's most respected facilities, Spa Botanica. Its new Herbal Compress Massage treatment (SGD280 for two hours) includes a hot compress of kaffir lime and grapefruit, followed by a deep tissue massage with eucalyptus and ginger that targets pressure points. Getting there: Harbourfront MRT, 2 Bukit Manis Rd. See [spabotanica.com](http://spabotanica.com)



## A Quay Spot

Robertson Quay is at the quieter end of the Singapore River, but still a stones-throw from the buzzing Clarke Quay precinct. There are tapas joints (which are increasing in popularity in SIN, as they are around the world) and a little owner-run cafe called Epicurious. Overlooking a colourful bridge (pictured) the cafe serves Western fare and a tangy lemon iced tea to cool down. It's family friendly, with colouring books for the kids while they wait for food.



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## Changi Village

Clients that have worked up a ravenous hunger pedalling around Pulau Ubin have a few options for a meal. There's the seafood restaurant on the island itself, or they can head back to the mainland by ferry and check out the Changi Village hawker centre—packed with Malay, Singaporean, Indonesian and Chinese vendors serving young men from the military base just up the road. Nasi lemak (a variation of chicken rice with ikanbilis fried fish and chili) and Kaya toast (soft boiled egg with dark soy and white pepper with toast doused in butter and coconut jam) are local faves.



## Changi Chapel

Kiwis visiting Pulau Ubin who have an interest in history must visit the Changi Chapel and Museum. A testament to the endurance of the human spirit during war time, the museum offers a moving and in-depth exploration of Singapore's occupation by Japanese forces during WWII. Entrance is free, but there's an audio tour for SGD8 (SGD4 for kids) that's extremely informative and also includes interviews with survivors of torture and imprisonment at the hands of the feared Kempetai Japanese military police.



## Spotlight On Singapore

## Pulau Ubin: Cycle Singapore's Wild Side



Away from the non-stop cosmopolitan buzz of Singapore lies Pulau Ubin, an island suspended in time that showcases what life on the mainland was like 50 years ago—and best explored by bicycle.

Located off the northeastern coast of the mainland, out past the airport, Pulau Ubin draws visitors into a basic island way of life within a beautiful jungle setting.

There's friendly stray dogs, temples and rows of shacks with bicycles for hire (from around SGD8 for a new-ish bike and helmet), and it's just a 15-minute bumboat ride from the ferry terminal at Changi Village.

Riding around the island is easy. Everything worth checking out in on clearly marked roads and gravel paths,



and within a couple of kilometres of each other, including the Chek Jawa Wetlands, with its boardwalk over the water, as well as lily-pad strewn lakes and a medicinal garden complete with quirkily-dressed scarecrows in the island's interior.

Only around 50 people live on the island, there's no running water and electricity comes from generators to power the little Malay-style houses along the way.

A few years ago there was a proposal to develop the island, as land on Singapore has become more and more scarce. But Singaporeans have recognised the value in preserving its natural state for both visitors and locals alike. Advise clients to check out the brakes and tyres of any bike they're about to hire—most are well-maintained, but it pays to check.

## Walking The Original SIN

The Original Singapore Walks is consistently voted among the country's best tourist offerings. Themed and guided walks are easy to join, just be at a prescribed meeting spot at the right time and clients are off. With a focus on the city's culture, heritage, WWII history or the Singapore River area, there's something for all tastes. Price is from SGD35 for adults and SGD15 for kids seven-15. See [singaporewalks.com](http://singaporewalks.com)

## What's On At ArtScience

The ArtScience Museum at Marina Bay Sands is currently home to three exciting exhibitions. The 50 greatest photographs according to *National Geographic*; Mummy: Secrets Of The Tomb, an exhibition presented in conjunction with the British Museum; and Essential Eames, an exploration of the life of influential designers Charles and Ray Eames. See [marinabay Sands.com](http://marinabay Sands.com)



## TWG Tea at MBS

Balance out a day in the sun with a cuppa at one of Singapore's top tea emporiums—TWG Tea. With more than 450 varieties and blends of tea available, plus a myriad of tea-infused savouries and sweet treats to choose from, an empty stomach is a must to make the most of this experience. The Singapore Breakfast blend is a particularly tasty option, especially when paired with macarons and scones with clotted cream and tea jam. There are eight outlets across Singapore, including two at Marina Bay Sands and one at ION Orchard.



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