

TIGER TALES
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singapore

Population: 4,588,600 • Currency: Singapore Dollars (SGD) • Country and city code: +65 • Tourist info: Singapore Tourism Board, Tourism Court, 1 Orchard Spring Lane, tel: +65 6736 2000, website: www.visitsingapore.com

FUN FACT
The flying fox, the largest bat in the world with a wingspan that can be as long as 1.5 metres, is found on Pulau Ubin, an island off mainland Singapore.

OUT & ABOUT

Puccini's Turandot (until 3 September, Esplanade Theatre, www.singaporeopera.com.sg) The Singapore Lyric Opera takes on Puccini's mesmerising unfinished work – the blood-soaked tale of Turandot set in Beijing. The SLO takes audiences on a heart-wrenching journey of love and loss as the Prince of Tartary tries to woo the eponymous Princess Turandot. Puccini's final opera, the performance is sung in Italian with Chinese and English subtitles.

Singapore Biennale 2008 (11 September to 16 November, www.singaporebiennale.org) Get acquainted with Singapore's flourishing art scene at this year's Biennale, featuring 50 artists from over 36 countries and regions. Expect a rigorous schedule of parties, symposiums, tours and exhibitions from a dazzling roster of designers, painters, photographers and installation artists, all of whom produced works on the theme of "Wonder". Also on the agenda is "Showcase: Singapore", an exclusive invitation-only art fair that will take place during the vernissage (preview) from 9-10 September.

Diana Krall (26 September, Marina at Keppel Bay, www.kboasia.com) Jazz songstress Diana Krall will hold an exclusive concert during F1 week. Held at one of Singapore's premier waterfront venues on Keppel Island, the evening promises to be nothing short of glamorous. On the following night, the Grammy-winning pianist



will perform at a private fundraiser for "Caring for Cambodia", where she will share the stage with Japanese saxophonist Chika Asamoto.

Formula 1 SingTel Singapore Grand Prix 2008 (26-28 September, Marina Bay, www.singaporegp.sg) Car buffs and speed demons won't want to miss Formula 1's first street race in Asia and the first ever night race in F1 history. The Marina Bay waterfront will be transformed into a 5.1km-long urban race circuit styled after the Monaco Grand Prix that features state-of-the-art lighting technology.

TOP SHOPS

Strangelets (87 Amoy Street, tel: +65 6222 1456) This diamond-in-the-rough is nestled in Chinatown, and sells oddities and chic lifestyle furnishings from across the globe. Check out clockwork beetles, stunning paper lamps, Xhosa pottery and kitschy fertility dolls from quirky off-

the-wall designers based everywhere from London to Bavaria. Prepare to burn a hole in your pocket.

Thomas Pink (#01-09 Capital Tower, 168 Robinson Road, tel: +65 6738 2989) One of Jermyn Street's finest tailors comes to Singapore with a wide selection of men's and women's clothes and accessories. Though famous for shirts, this London label also offers a slick collection of cufflinks, ties, boxers and small leather goods. For businessmen on the go, we recommend the water- and stain-proof shirts from the Pink Pristine collection.

BEST BITES

Ananda Bhavan Restaurant (95 Syed Alwi Road, tel: +65 6297 9522) For a taste of authentic South Indian cuisine at any time, try the only 24-hour outlet in this chain of four "old world restaurants." Ananda Bhavan boasts more than 70 years of culinary experience, with vegetarian specialities running the gamut from Thosai and nutritious steamed idly to Chapati, Puris and many others.

Oktober Fest (#02-83 Smith Street Market and Food Centre, tel: +65 6226 3148) These stalls may be smack in the middle of Chinatown, but the only thing local about them is the cheap hawker prices. Dig into freshly made schnitzel and other hearty German fare in a thoroughly Singaporean setting. Get there early to beat the lunchtime crowd.

Vintage India (#01-21, 10 Dempsey Hill, tel: +65 6471 3100) Explore the Indian subcontinent dish by dish amid the lush greenery of Dempsey Hill. Curry is the order of the day at this fine dining establishment, which offers everything from Kerala seafood to tender tandoori prawns. After dinner, wander over to Angel's Share (see After Dark) for a drink.

AFTER DARK

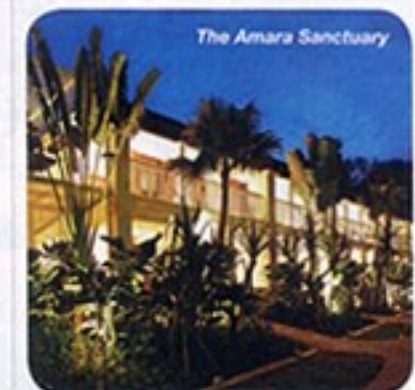
Angel's Share (#01-23 Dempsey Hill, 10 Dempsey Hill, tel: +65 6471 9595) Named after the portion of wine that evaporates from the barrel during the ageing process, this cosy bar has an inviting outdoor set-up lit by flaming torches. With over 700 wines to choose from, you

won't run out of options anytime soon, especially as the bar's elite US-imported PEK Wine Preservation System enables customers to order by the glass from 50 prominent labels.

Ice Cold Beer (9 Emerald Hill Road, tel: +65 6735 9929) If your drinking preferences lean toward hops instead of grapes, Ice Cold Beer houses a revolutionary instant-cooling system that promises you a frosty pint within five to eight minutes. Enjoy a brew in this laid-back refurbished shophouse, along with its unpretentious Top 40 soundtrack and delectable "har cheong" (prawn paste) chicken wings.

SLEEPOVER

Amara Sanctuary Resort, Sentosa (1 Larkhill Road, Sentosa Island) A mere 10 minutes from downtown Singapore, The Amara Sanctuary offers an easy escape from bustling city life. Housed in renovated colonial buildings, the hotel itself is an old architectural beauty, oozing 1930s charm. Pamper yourself with a spa session or arrange a casual game of golf at one of Singapore's many private country clubs. Room rates start from SGD210 (AUD274.40). \$\$\$



Conrad Centennial Singapore (2 Temasek Boulevard) The Conrad Centennial at Marina Bay offers a blend of luxury and convenience in the middle of this shopping paradise. Enjoy complimentary treats such as fresh fruit and gourmet chocolates after a long day of mall mobbing. Room rates start from SGD300 (AUD394.80). \$\$\$

BY ALEXIS ONG

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