

WHERE **EXPLORERS** MEET.

"Discover how a City in the Garden is rooted in history and heritage. Stroll along the colourful shophouses in Haji Lane. Or trek off the beaten path and walk atop trees at MacRitchie Reservoir. If you're passionate about discovering places, here's where **nature lovers, history buffs, backpackers, city trippers, trekkers, discoverers, sightseers**—meet."

CONTENTS

2 A QUICK GUIDE TO SINGAPORE'S DISTRICTS

5 LITTLE EXPLORERS: SPARKING CREATIVITY

7 LITTLE EXPLORERS: BEING WITH MOTHER NATURE

9 ACTIVITIES TO EXPLORE IN SINGAPORE

10 SCENIC TRAILS TO RUN OR HIKE IN SINGAPORE

11 RUN AND EXPLORE SINGAPORE'S HERITAGE

A QUICK GUIDE TO SINGAPORE'S DISTRICTS

1 ORCHARD

Don't just sightsee, be an explorer. Orchard Road, Asia's most famous shopping street, is home to fashion favourites, specialist stores and loads of other lifestyle choices. Today, **Orchard Road** is flanked by iconic shopping malls, restaurants and hotels, choc-a-bloc with retail, dining and entertainment choice for every taste and budget.

The **Singapore Visitor Centre** is located on Orchard Road just opposite **Orchard Gateway**. Discover more places to explore and get help with ticketing and reservations. Next to the centre is **Emerald Hill Road**, lined with bars and clubs to wind down after a long day of exploration. The east end of Orchard Road leads to the **Bras Basah** and **Fort Canning Park** while the west end of the street is just a stone's throw away from the **Singapore Botanic Gardens**, the city's first and only UNESCO World Heritage Site and a beautiful garden to stop by.

Remember to make a detour to **Dempsey Hill**, one of Singapore's most hip and quaint neighbourhoods, nestled away in lush greenery just minutes from Orchard Road. Here you'll be spoilt for choice for the night's meal with options that include Michelin-starred **Candlenut**, **Dempsey Cookhouse & Bar**, **The Disgruntled Chef**. Or go green and experience **Open Farm Community's** refreshing farm-to-table concept.





2 TIONG BAHRU

Tiong Bahru is the oldest housing estate in Singapore, and when you visit this quaint community, you'll immediately notice an intriguing mix of old and new. While many older residents have lived in the shophouses and flats here for decades, the younger generation flock here for the food, shops, and culture. And as food goes, the choices are abundant. From the sprawling **Tiong Bahru Market** with its famous chwee kueh to the hip **Tiong Bahru Bakery**, there are plenty of options for a good meal in the morning. Fancy a coffee and a quick bite? There are lots of cafés to choose from – **Forty Hands, Flock** and cupcakes specialists **Plain Vanilla** are just a few of them. It's a great place to go for a spot of retail therapy, too. Independent bookstore **BooksActually** stocks plenty of local titles and retro knick-knacks, while **Curated Records** offers a selection of vinyls, from rare vintage LPs to mainstream hits.

3 LITTLE INDIA

Singapore's most colourful district, Little India's bustling streets are a magnet for explorers. From rows of shops exuding the aroma of spices, to fortune-telling tables sprawled along walkways, the precinct has stood as a cultural vanguard of Singapore. Tucked away in its roads, you'll find numerous landmarks of the city's many ethnic and religious groups including the visually stunning **Sri Veeramakaliamman Temple**, **Kampong Kapor Methodist Church**, and the colourful expressions of heritage at the **House of Tan Teng Niah**. Explore Little India's heritage trail along its streets and back alleys, and your eyes will be drawn to extravagant murals showcasing Singapore's colourful past.



When you're done soaking in the sights and sounds, to **Tekka Centre** and experience the bustling hawker and "wet market" on its ground level with a battalion of rainbow-coloured textile and tailor shops up above.



4 KAMPONG GLAM

Some say Kampong Glam really is glam (a local term meaning 'glamorous'). The area has an eclectic blend of history, culture and a super-trendy lifestyle scene. Start from the landmark **Sultan Mosque**, and wander through the many side streets. The grounds of the former 'Istana' ('palace') to Sultan Hussain Mohammed Shah is home to the **Malay Heritage Centre**, where you can get to know Malay history and culture better. Wander the streets and you'll soon uncover **Haji Lane**, a row of multi-label stores, quirky boutiques as well as hip bars and cafes. Or pick up traditional wares such as Persian carpets, kebaya dresses and handmade perfumes from Arab Street and Bussorah Street. The nasi padang (Indonesian dishes flavoured with spices and served with rice) at **Hjh Maimunah** is famous among locals. Café and boutique **Maison Ikkoku** on **Kandahar Street** offers tasty modern grub, and also houses an excellent rooftop cocktail bar.

5 JALAN BESAR, ROCHER, LAVENDER

Now a conserved area, Jalan Besar is home to an eclectic range of eateries, cafés, entertainment venues, and religious sites. It's also a hostel hotspot, and backpackers constantly flock here. Beyond the neon lights of bars and lounges, Jalan Besar is rife with hip cafés that are now calling the neighbourhood's many shophouses home. You can easily spend an entire afternoon hopping from one spot to another such as **Chye Seng Huat Hardware**, all while tucking into hearty brunch plates, classic French pastries and modern takes on local cuisine such as **Non Entrée Desserts**. The district is also making a name for itself as a haven for Third Wave coffee, so you will have plenty of fuel for your trip.



6 BRAS BASAH BUGIS

Bras Basah.Bugis Precinct is where to go for a slice of Singapore's rich heritage, preserved architecture and palpable energy. Head here for fine museums, national monuments and other institutions, such as art schools and the **Central Public Library**. One of Singapore's oldest districts, Bras Basah derived its name from the Malay term for 'wet rice' and Sir Stamford Raffles picked the area to be the European center of Singapore Town. The adjacent Bugis Street, named after the seafaring Bugis people from Indonesia who came here to trade with local merchants, has a less pristine past. You could spend days just soaking in the vibe of this buzzing district.The district is home to museums such as the **National Museum of Singapore**, **The Singapore Art Museum** and **Peranakan Museum**, and national monuments like the **Armenian Church** and **Central Fire Station**, Singapore's oldest fire station. Explore **CHIJMES**, an enclave of restaurants and bars in the middle of the city. The former chapel and school with its green lawns, marble waterfalls, courtyards and neoclassical buildings – harks back to a bygone, more gracious age. A thriving district with a colourful past, it now boasts everything shoppers could ever ask for; malls such as **Bugis+** and **Bugis Junction**, charming boutiques, bustling street markets, and of course, bargains at every corner.

7 THE COLONIAL DISTRICT



Singapore's Colonial District is peppered with reminders of British colonial rule. Together with Bras Basah Bugis district and adjoining into the Civic District, it's the centerpiece of Singapore surrounded by more modern trappings that rise up around it. The district is anchored by **Fort Canning Park**, an iconic hilltop landmark that has witnessed many of Singapore's historical milestones. The hill once sited the palaces of 14th century Malay Kings and served as the Headquarters of the Far East Command Centre and British Army Barracks. Today, Fort Canning Park is a venue for celebrations. Its expansive, sprawling lawns play host to concerts, theatre productions and festivals such as **Shakespeare in the Park**, **Ballet Under the Stars**, and **Films at the Fort**, while weddings, parties and gatherings are a regular sight in the park's venue spaces. Its ancient artefacts are a must-see for history buffs, and its lush greenery and expansive lawns offer a variety of arts, heritage and nature experiences. Down the hill, you can trace Singapore's history through stamps at the Singapore Philatelic Museum before stopping for lunch at the Raffles Hotel. **Raffles Hotel** was the crown of colonial indulgence with a reputation of luxury. It is at this hotel's bar where the legendary Singapore Sling was created.

8 THE CIVIC DISTRICT

The Civic District is where Singapore's historical, architectural and cultural heritage started. Located right at the mouth of the Singapore River, the Civic District is at the heart of the city's past, with key landmarks from prominent historical figures such as Sir Stamford Raffles, the man who founded Singapore, to up-and-coming architectural icons of the 21st century. Among key historical landmarks include **St Andrew's Cathedral**, **National Gallery Singapore** which comprises the historical Supreme Court and City Hall, **Padang**, the **Asian Civilisations Museum**, **The Arts House (Old Parliament House)** and **Victoria Theatre**, overlooking the magnificent **Fullerton Hotel** and **Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay** which locals affectionately call "the durian".





9 THE QUAYS ON SINGAPORE RIVER

Consisting of a trio of **Clarke Quay**, **Robertson Quay** and **Boat Quay**, you can literally walk from the mouth of Singapore River through the river valleys along some of the most pristine walking paths. Shophouses along **Boat Quay** that used to be the centre of trade has now been conserved and adapted for modern use, offering up various bars, pubs and restaurants. Warehouses along **Clarke Quay** are today Iconic dance clubs and live music venues, rooftop bars, creating trendy nightspots for heart-pumping entertainment. Together, both Clarke Quay and Boat Quay is a must-have stop for the city's most lively nightlife spots. As you move further inwards, **Robertson Quay** offers a more quiet respite, with locals often seen running along its banks. The area combines upperclass residential apartments with designer hotels such as **M Social** and **The Warehouse Hotel** with wonderful choices of gastronomic options that would satisfy any foodie.

10 MARINA BAY

The marquee of modern Singapore for everything glitz and glam, Marina Bay has it all. Home to some of Singapore's most iconic structures (think the **Singapore Flyer**, **Marina Bay Sands** and **Gardens by the Bay**), it is the ultimate playground for those seeking to indulge. Treat yourself to a satisfying meal at one of the many celebrity restaurants in Marina Bay Sands or end your night by partying at a trendy rooftop club. With the FORMULA 1® race transforming this glittering waterfront venue into the pulsating heart of the action, there really is no better place to be.



11 CHINATOWN

Singapore's historic Chinatown is a bustling mix of old and new, filled with traditional shops and markets as well as cool stores and cafes. Tea and opera houses, as well as opium dens, were the most popular forms of entertainment back in the olden days, and the **Chinatown Street Market** was where people congregated to shop, eat and socialise. Yet pockets of history remain in Chinatown, along with more modern sights. You could easily spend a few days wandering through these still-narrow streets. Family-run goldsmiths, medicinal halls and teahouses ply their trades next to sleeker neighbours such as hipster bars and lifestyle shops. **Thian Hock Keng temple** at **Telok Ayer Street** is the oldest Chinese temple in Singapore. Right along the same street is the **Masjid Al-Albrar,** one of the earliest mosques in Singapore. Just a few streets away at South Bridge Road is the **Sri Mariamman temple**, the oldest Hindu temple in the country.



Amoy Street Food Centre can boast as a reputable spot to savour some of the city's street-food staples, with not one, two, or three, but four stalls making into the list of 2017 Michelin Bib Gourmand Singapore. How much Bib Gourmand can you taste in one sitting? For trendier tastes, chic restaurants and bars are in **Neil Road**, **Duxton Road** and **Keong Saik Road**, with the latter being named #4 on Lonely Planet must visit places in Asia. If Clarke Quay is the party central of Singapore, then the **Ann Siang Hill** and **Club Street** area is its cool, younger cousin — equally fun and always fully charged with an electrifying atmosphere after dark, a favourite with people in the know of the latest nightlife destinations.

12 DOWNTOWN CORE

The financial heart of Singapore, Downtown Core houses corporate headquarters and financial institutions such as the Singapore Exchange and is home to the Central Business District. It's made out of seven subzones, **Anson, Cecil, Clifford Pier, Maxwell, Phillip, Raffles Place and Tanjong Pagar**. **Tanjong Pagar** is the first area in Singapore to be gazetted under a conservation plan of heritage zones. In recent years, the neighborhood has enjoyed a revival, emerging as the epicenter for today's global traveler as one of the island's most stylish leisure and dining neighborhoods. Among them, **Tras Street** is lined with restaurants, speakeasies and bars for those in the know.

A long-standing landmark in the heart of the Central Business District, **Lau Pa Sat** is a long-standing landmark in the heart of the central business district and has witnessed Singapore's ever-changing landscape, from mudflats to metropolis. The 120-year-old market is a much frequented destination for hawker food amidst soaring arches and Victorian era columns.



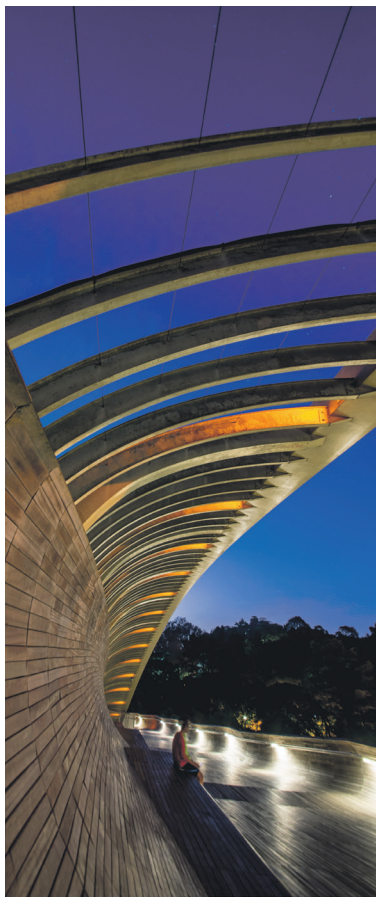
EAST OF SINGAPORE

The beautiful, historic-rich **Joo Chiat/Katong** neighbourhood is often admired for its colourful rows of Peranakan (Straits-born people of Chinese and Malay/ Indonesian heritage) shophouses. What you might not know: this neighbourhood is as loved for its variety of food options as it is for its architecture. Start by making a pit stop at the **328 Katong Laksa** that offers this neighbourhood's most famous signature dish, the Katong Laksa, having competed with Gordon Ramsay in 2013 and won. Stop by **The Intan**, a living museum dedicated to Peranakan culture operated by a lively curator, where by appointment would allow you to immerse into the home of a Peranakan family, complete with artifacts and food shared over stories of heritage. Discover Peranakan culture as you stroll past heritage shophouses, quaint stores and eateries in this charming corner of eastern Singapore.

Historic architecture, cultural diversity, and cult-status eateries are accolades not commonly associated with Singapore's **Geylang** district–which is frequently written off as the island's infamous nightlife zone. But take a stroll through the meandering lanes and bustling back alleys of this unique enclave, and you'll find a buzzing hub filled with colourful shophouses, mosques, temples, bars and more that put Geylang firmly on the explorer's trail. This is as authentic as you can get to local food and culture through hawker centres and illuminated night markets.

14 WEST SINGAPORE

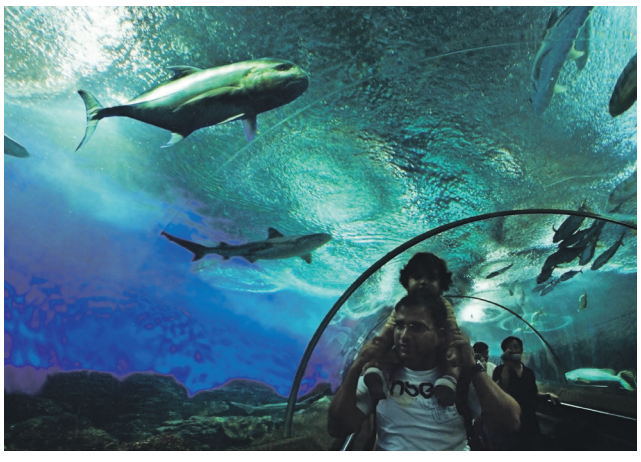
For those who want to get away from – and above – the city and a little closer to nature, the **Southern Ridges** is a great place to explore. As a bonus, you will also get one of the best panoramic views of the city, harbour and the Southern Islands. The Southern Ridges is a 10-kilometre stretch of green open spaces spanning the hills of some of Singapore's most popular parks and gardens, connected by picturesque ridges and pathways. Imagine walking across a bridge 36-metres above the road connecting two hilltops. You can perform this exhilarating high-wire act at **Henderson Waves**, a distinctive wave-like structure consisting of a series of undulating curved 'ribs', also Singapore's highest pedestrian bridge. The Southern Ridges is made up of **Mount Faber Park, Telok Blangah Hill Park, HortPark, Kent Ridge Park** and **Labrador Nature Reserve**. Further west takes you to **Singapore Discovery Centre** and the **Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum**.



15 SENTOSA

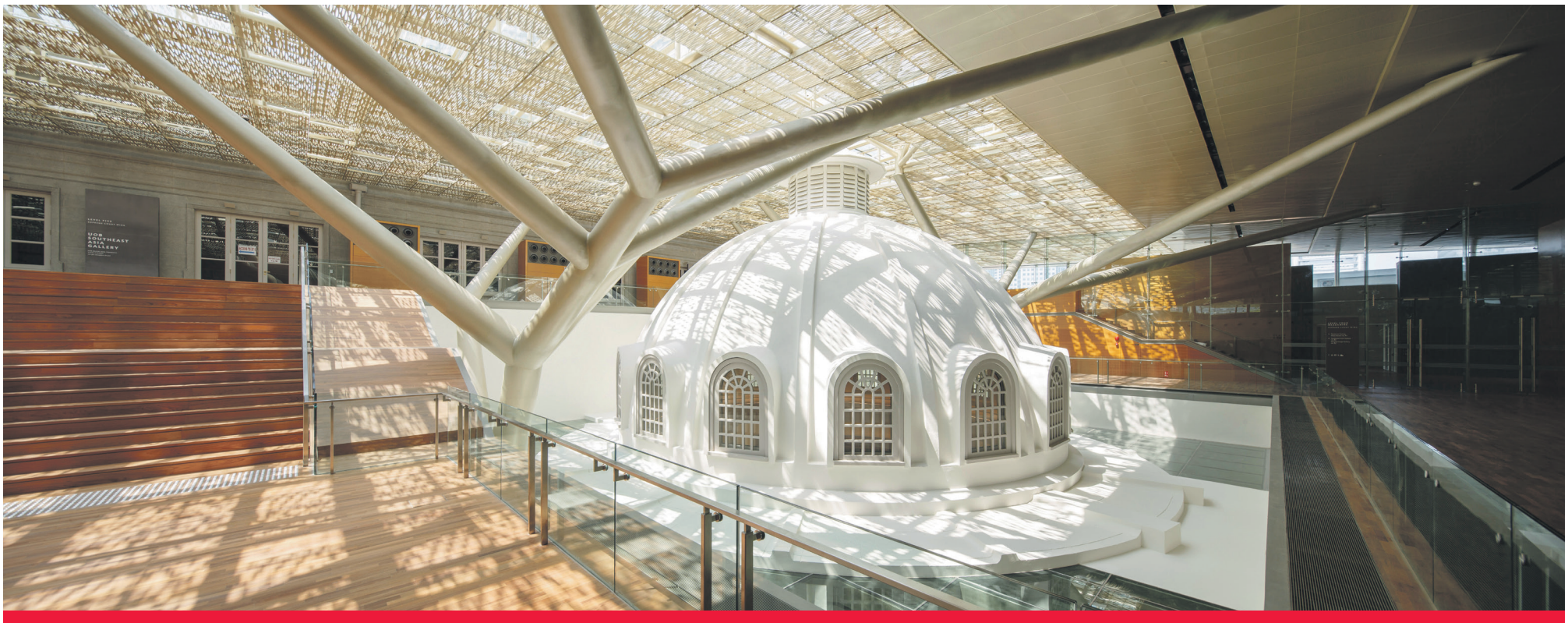
Singapore's favourite playground lies in the southern coast where you'll find all the entertainment you need for all ages on this island, where the fun doesn't cease and boredom retreats. Whether you're in search of thrills and spills or a relaxed beachside afternoon, you will be spoilt for choice at Singapore's favourite leisure destination.

From crowd-pleasing attractions like **Universal Studios Singapore and Adventure Cove Waterpark** to the magical marine world at the **S.E.A Aquarium at Resorts World™ Sentosa**, this bustling island will not disappoint. Beyond the integrated resort, soak up the sun on the 3.2km long beach and the many outdoor facilities. Test your wits at the **Skyline Luge** or your wills at **Mega Adventure** before making a dive at the indoor skydiving wind tunnel at **iFly Singapore**. You can either take the **Singapore Cable** Car for a breaktaking view of the South China Sea or retreat to **Quayside Isle** at **Sentosa Cove** for a much needed respite from the day's adrenaline rush.



LITTLE EXPLORERS: SPARKING CREATIVITY

Childhood is a time of natural creativity and curiosity. While in Singapore, explore some key highlights that gets your child out of the comforts of four walls and engage them with a multitude of sensory experiences that would spark bundles of creative energy.



1 Saint Andrew's Road

Image credits: National Gallery Singapore

1 NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE

is the labour of love transforming the historical Supreme Court building and the City Hall into the largest art museum in Singapore focusing on Southeast Asian art. What sets it apart is the multitude of kid-friendly exhibits and installations including the Keppel Centre that **work to instill art appreciation** at a young age. Exhibitions at the the National Gallery changes by season and is currently showing the **Children's Biennale – until 8 Oct 2017**. The first edition of the Gallery Children's Biennale, a four-month-long festival organised by the Gallery, invites you to discover art in a whole new way. Explore dreams and stories through site-specific installations, interactive artworks and a stimulating line-up of music performances, film showcases and art-inspired programmes designed especially for kids and families.



Image credits: National Gallery Singapore



Image credits: National Gallery Singapore

KEPPEL CENTRE FOR ART EDUCATION AT NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE

The newly refreshed Keppel Centre is an exciting space where art inspires new ways of learning. Visitors can enjoy immersive spaces that encourage imagination, creativity and self-led exploration. The Keppel Centre also provides a lively line-up of programmes for youth, children and families all year round. This creates opportunities for parents to bond with their little ones through the arts and stimulates young minds in meaningful and enjoyable ways.



Image credits: National Gallery Singapore



Image credits: National Gallery Singapore



6 Bayfront Ave

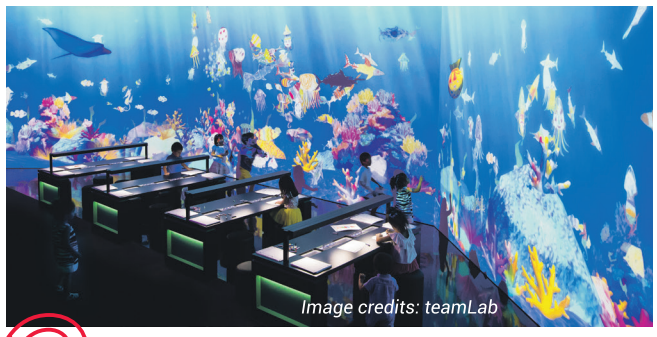


Image credits: teamLab

2 ARTSCIENCE MUSEUM

An intersecting between the disciplines of art and science, the gallery space hosts many exhibitions that will immerse any visitor into a world where the collision of science and wonder becomes artform.

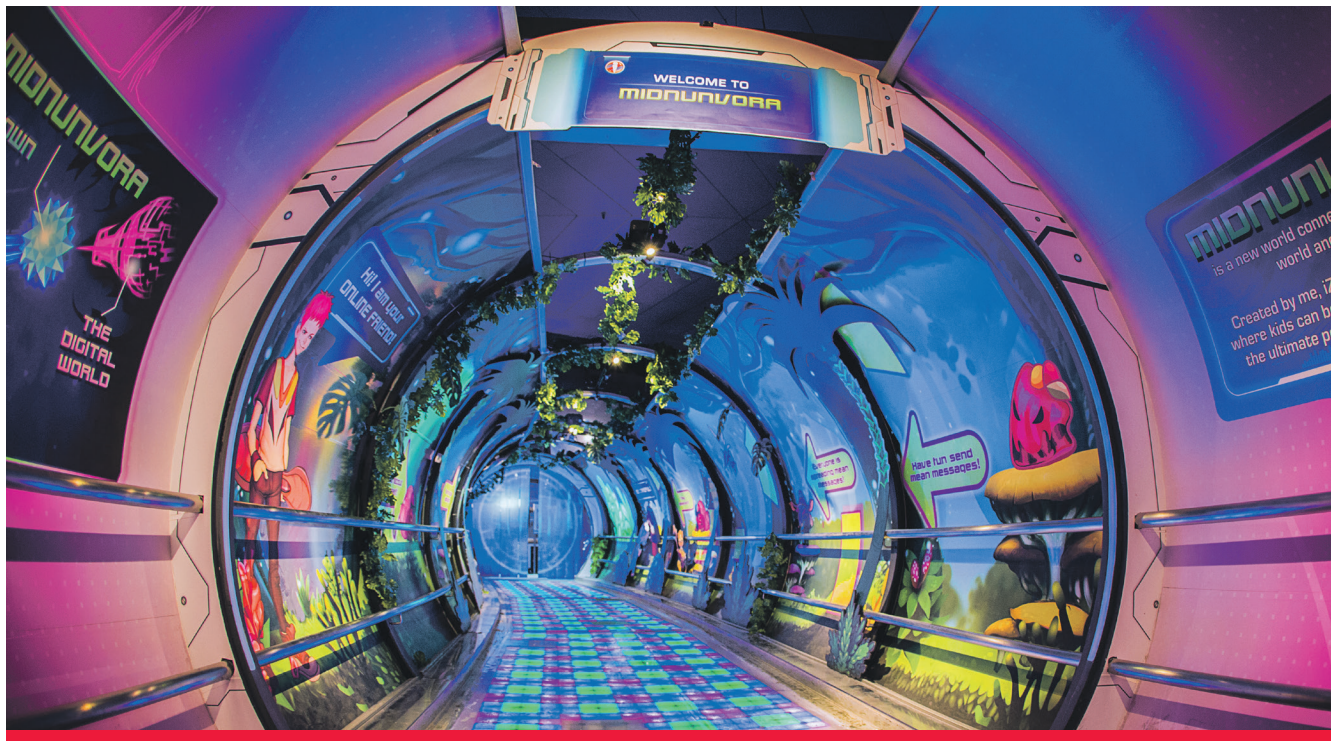
FUTURE WORLD AT ARTSCIENCE MUSEUM

The ArtScience Museum's first-ever permanent exhibition is a world of high-tech, immersive digital art installations. Featuring 15 works by award-winning Japanese art collective teamLab, Future World will be constantly updated with new works over the years. Highlight pieces include 'Crystal Universe', where visitors can enter a room filled with over 170,000 LED lights that change colours, and 'Universe of Water Particles' – an 8-metre-tall digital waterfall whose water particles tumble down logs in accordance with the laws of physics.



3 SCIENCE CENTRE SINGAPORE

The Science Centre is a museum designed to get kids excited over the intriguing world of science. The key to getting kids engaged is the focus on interactive exhibits so that the kids can get really hands-on, immerse themselves into each experiment and enjoy learning through play. It's also home to the Omni-Theatre, a domed cinema equipped with the start-of-the-art IMAX technology.



15 Science Centre Road

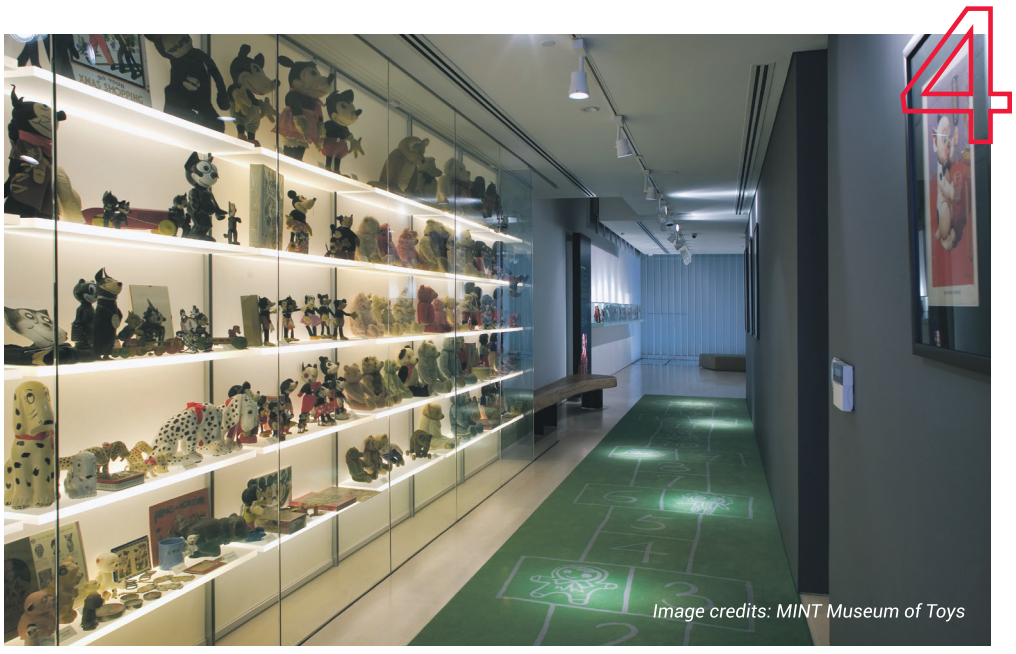


Image credits: MINT Museum of Toys

4 MINT MUSEUM OF TOYS

A small private collection of 50,000 vintage toys is the largest of its kind in South East Asia. It's a smogasboard of wonder for both the young and young at heart as you explore rare and unique toys from more than 40 countries including beloved characters such as as Tintin.

26 Seah Street

5 SINGAPORE SPACE ACADEMY

For those with the eye towards the stars, the Space Academy Singapore conducts space camps for youths age 14-18 with instructors from NASA who'll impart the ins and outs of space travel to budding astronauts. The camps are hands-on an interactive, and young cadets would be enlisted for space missions including building rockets, mini satellites, navigating rovers and completing an unmanned space missions simulations.

sas.space.org.sg

LITTLE EXPLORERS: BEING WITH MOTHER NATURE

Studies have shown that kids who **play outside are smarter, happier, more attentive, and less anxious** than kids who spend more time indoors. While it's unclear how exactly the cognitive functioning and mood improvements occur, there are a few attractions we do know that would get your kid active, moving and outdoors.

1 WILDLIFE RESERVES SINGAPORE

runs the four major wildlife reserve parks in Singapore including the crowd favourite Singapore Zoo. Each parks are leisure attractions providing an experiential learning experience for visitors as they learn more about animals, birds, plants and the environment through sight and sounds, and to gain awareness on the need for conservation of wildlife.

Skip the queue and save 15% when you book online for tickets. You can purchase access to all four parks for S$69/S$49 Child or the ultimate ParkHopper Plus that includes all parks and rides for S$79/S$59 Child.



80 Mandai Lake Road
Image credits: Wildlife Reserves Singapore

SINGAPORE ZOO

For 40 years, the Singapore Zoo has been a delight to visitors who come to experience the lush beautiful settings and to get close to animals who roam freely in open and natural habitats. Some of its highlights is the zoo's free-ranging orang utan habitat. This environment showcases the charismatic apes, which are the Zoo's flagship species, in natural surroundings. Other not-to-be missed highlights include Fragile Forest and Elephants of Asia, both of which offer educational elements such as interpretive signages and discovery stations. Australian Outback and the Great Rift Valley of Ethiopia are other fascinating areas to be discovered where guests are immersed in habitats representing the respective geographical region.



80 Mandai Lake Road
Image credits: Wildlife Reserves Singapore

NIGHT SAFARI

A nocturnal favourite for any explorer, Singapore's Night Safari takes us on a journey through a park after sundown and puts you up close to only nocturnal animals unfettered by cages, roaming in their natural habitats. A large part of the park is designed to bring visitors on a 40-minute tram ride through seven geographic regions, from the Himalayan foothills to the jungles of Southeast Asia. Travel by tram through rainforest, savannah and jungle and delight at a wide range of creatures that only comes alive at night.



Image credits: Wildlife Reserves Singapore

JURONG BIRD PARK

Jurong Bird Park is a haven for birdlife in a busy city. Containing over 600 species of birds in a large park, it features birds from a wide variety of countries and contain key attractions such as the Bird Discovery Centre, African Waterfall Aviary, Lory Loft Aviary, Southeast Asian Birds Aviary, and the award-winning African Wetlands. Your ticket money partly funds their avian hospital and the Breeding and Research Centre to ensure the welfare of birds around the world, so you can feel like you're doing some good while you have a great day out.

2 Jurong Hill



Image credits: Wildlife Reserves Singapore

RIVER SAFARI

River Safari is Asia's first and only river-themed wildlife park, housing the world's largest collection of freshwater animals. River Safari is designed to profile freshwater habitats from iconic rivers of the world such as the Amazon River, Mekong River and River Nile. Stroll along freshwater aquariums, enter walk-through exhibits and embark on the Amazon River Quest rides to learn about the fascinating flora and fauna of river habitats.

80 Mandai Lake Road



Image credits: Gardens by the Bay

2 GARDENS BY THE BAY

Gardens by the Bay is a quick getaway to some serious greenery, a 101-ha horticultural park with two conservatories, the Cloud Forest and the Flower Dome. The cool-moist conservatory that is the Cloud Forest features a 35m-tall mountain covered in plants such as orchids and also sports the world's tallest indoor waterfall. Meanwhile, the Flower Dome replicates a cool-dry climate and houses plants from the Mediterranean region and also a Flower Field, where the displays change regularly.

While tickets are required for entry into the domes, the large three surrounding gardens are open to public to enjoy. The highlight within the Bay South Garden is the Children's Garden filled with adventure trails for children as well as the iconic Supertree Grove. The tree-like structures that dominate the Gardens' landscape that functions as n environment engine for the gardens and lights up at night with music for a show of its own. Get up close to the supertrees by exploring the OCBC skyway between the trees.

18 Marina Gardens Drive



3 PULAU UBIN

Hop on a bumboat at Changi Point Ferry Terminal and head to the neighbouring island of Pulau Ubin. Explore the island on a rented bike, admire abundant wildlife at Chek Jawa Wetlands, and step back in time to spot Singapore's last remaining kampongs (Malay hamlets or villages). If you are hesitant to explore the wild on your own, take a tour with Subaraj Rajathurai, a nature tour evangelist who takes us into the untamed areas of Singapore, to experience the ecosystems that he has fought to preserve.

On Pulau Ubin, make your way to its southeastern hook, which is home to the Chek Jawa Wetlands. A confluence of six natural habitats, ranging from rocky beaches to seagrass lagoons, Chek Jawa is a miniature marvel of contrasting ecosystems that's definitely worth exploring.

from Changi Point Ferry Terminal, 51 Lor Bekukong



Image credits: National Parks Board

4 SINGAPORE BOTANIC GARDEN

Singapore's oldest garden became the country's first and only UNESCO World Heritage Site which makes the Singapore Botanic Garden a highlight visit for any nature lovers. Its sprawling grounds in the heart of the city are ideal for an invigorating jog or a relaxing picnic with family, friends and pets while its dazzling array of over 60,000 plants makes it a nature lover's paradise.

Fancy rubbing shoulders with the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Nelson Mendala and Jackie Chan? National Orchid Garden with a large display of orchids named after visiting dignitaries and celebrities who have contributed significantly to society. Other attractions include historical buildings such as Burkill Hall, EJH Corner House and Holttum Hall as well as beautiful views at the Swan Lake Gazebo and the Bandstand where musical performances can often be enjoyed during regularly scheduled concerts and events.

1 Cluny Road

MEET SUBARAJ RAJATHURAI WILDLIFE CONSULTANT AND NATURE GUIDE

Many of Singapore's nature reserves exist due to the efforts of a few individuals like Subaraj Rajathurai: Self-taught naturalist and veteran wildlife consultant. Over the last 35 years, he campaigned peacefully behind the scenes to preserve some of Singapore's well-loved ecosystems. In 1987, he and three others drafted a proposal to save Sungei Buloh, a mangrove forest in northwest Singapore which was slated for redevelopment by the government. Thanks to their perseverance, the wetland was declared a nature park six years later. In 1992, Subaraj was also part of the research team responsible for saving the 123.8 hectares of forest at Lower Peirce Reservoir.

"You can spend five lifetimes exploring nature, and there would still be more to learn." says Subaraj, who fell in love with the rainforest at the age of 18, during a visit to Bukit Timah Reserve. Singapore's blend of urban landscapes and hidden ecosystems keeps him fighting against rampant urbanisation: *"In Singapore, you can get from a five-star hotel to a rainforest in 20 minutes."*

He believes Singapore is the gateway to Asia, as much as *"it is that gateway for **nature**."*

See Singapore through the eyes of a nature lover:
www.visitsingapore.com/en_my/see-do-singapore/explorers/subaraj-rajathurai.html



ACTIVITIES TO EXPLORE IN SINGAPORE

If you need company while exploring Singapore, here's a list of interesting tours you can check out, ranging from **walking, biking to out of this world tours** such as seeing Singapore on a Vespa!





1 VESPA TOURS BY BETEL BOX BACKPACKERS HOSTEL & TOURS AND SIDEWAYS.SG

Dubbed the world's first vintage Vespa sidecar tour service, jump into one of these charming sidecars for an unforgettable tour. Explore the heritage lanes of Chinatown and Joo Chiat, go on a food and pub trail or view Singapore through a photographer's lens.

fb.com/betelbox *www.sideways.sg*



Image credits: Let's Go! Bike Singapore

2 LET'S GO! BIKE SINGAPORE

The best way to know Singapore? On a bicycle! Ride on sidewalks and quiet little streets that no bus tour can get to. Meander along the Singapore River to see historical landmarks, museums and places of interest. Pause at Singaporeans' favourite hangout: our humble 'coffeeshop' to try local drinks and snacks. Learn how Singapore transformed from a sleepy village into the metropolis it is today.

letsgobikesingapore.com

3 NATIONAL PARKS BOARD

Are you looking to bring your children out for a meaningful learning journey through Singapore's parks and gardens? The National Parks Board organises a variety of different workshops and guided walks in the various parks and gardens with the aim of creating a living learning environment that would enrich children. These include activities around Central Nature Reserve, Pulau Ubin, Fort Canning Park, The Southern Ridges and the Botanic Gardens.

nparks.gov.sg

4 CHINATOWN WALKING TOURS

Operated by The Chinatown Association, there's a walking tour organised on every day of the week that let you immerse yourself with the underbelly of Chinatown. Move your senses with the sights and sounds of hawkers cooking, coffee brewing and locals bargain-hunting even as you taste authentic traditional favourites such as Kopi-O, water cakes and rice rolls in the "Good Morning, Ni Hao" walking tour!

Explore the traditional customs that surround the life of the early Chinese immigrant and discover the reasons behind each practice in the "Passage of Life: Birth, Marriage & Death" walking tour.

Visit Chinatown at sundown in the Nightout @ Chinatown Walking Tour, where the streets come alive! Savour authentic Chinese food and test your bargaining skills at the Street Market. Take a leisure Trishaw Ride down to Clarke Quay and hop onto a Bumboat Cruise along Singapore River.

chinatown.sg

5 TRISHAW EXPEDITION BY TRISHAW UNCLE

Say hello to uncle! Trishaw Uncle pays tribute to all trishaw riders, for providing transport services rain or shine, from the time before cars, buses and trains.

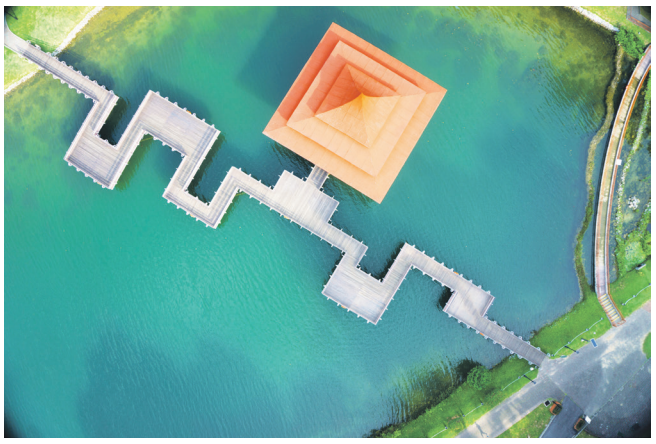
Embark on a trishaw expedition that takes you through the vibrant and bustling streets of Singapore. Expect a range of sights such as the Rex Cinema and Sri Veeramakaliamman Temple and learn more about the various roads such as Selegie Road and Serangoon Road. Tours are available for Little India, Kampong Glam, Chinatown as well the Singapore River.

trishawuncle.com.sg





SCENIC TRAILS TO RUN OR HIKE IN SINGAPORE





MacRitchie Reservoir Park
Panoramic views of the forest and the thrill of walking at 25 metres above ground are all part of the experience when you traverse the TreeTop Walk, a 250-metre-long freestanding suspension bridge. See first-hand the layers of the rainforest, from the ground all the way to the canopy and the emergent layer of trees, when you take on this scenic seven-kilometre-long roundtrip to the bridge. From the carpark at Venus Drive, it's a three- to four-hour hike—do note that the TreeTop Walk only allows access from one direction.

Southern Ridges. Keep your camera on hand when you hike the photogenic ten-kilometre-long network of trails known as the Southern Ridges. The route starts at HarbourFront Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) station and takes you three to five hours to walk through Mount Faber Park, Telok Blangah Hill and HortPark before ending at Kent Ridge Park. Soak in the scenic views of our skyline and the Southern Islands at the peak of Mount Faber Park, which is also where you can take photos with the Merlion sculpture—one of seven that dot the island. For Instagram-worthy pictures, we definitely recommend Henderson Waves, the highest pedestrian bridge in Singapore. The post-modern wood and steel structure's also an ideal venue for a romantic night stroll, as it's majestically illuminated by glowing LED lights from 7pm to 7am.

Relive the footsteps of Malay kings and British governors at **Fort Canning Park.** This area used to be home to Malay royalty, and was also where Sir Stamford Raffles built his first house, which eventually became the place of residence for governors. Connect with history when you explore Fort Canning Service Reservoir to discover landmarks such as the nine-pound cannon that dates back to the 19th century; headstones that mark the site of Singapore's first Christian cemetery; and Fort Gate, a remnant of the fortress that was built on this hill.



The golden hour washing over the city's CBD is a sight to behold. Skyscrapers glimmer and **Marina Bay** glistens—it all makes for a postcard-perfect backdrop for your evening run. The area's proximity to attractions, restaurants and heritage monuments also means there's plenty to do and see after this easy 3.9-kilometre route. Start at the **Merlion Park** next to **One Fullerton** and you'll run past The Fullerton Heritage precinct, across **Marina Bay Sands**. You can cut through the underpass that connects the iconic towers to Gardens by the Bay and whizz pask lakes and conservatories before entering the **Supertree Grove**. End your run with a last dash towards your final stop, the **Marina Barrage** where Singapore's skyline lights up to celebrate the completion of your run goal.



If there's one place in Singapore that's synonymous with outdoor revelry, it's **East Coast Park**, where some seven million locals and tourists flock to for the variety of sporting, entertainment and dining attractions. Along this 15-kiliometre stretch of beach, you'll find hordes of cyclists and roller bladers enjoying the sun and sea breeze, while cable skiing and water sports are on offer for those who prefer wetter pursuits.

Sungai Buloh Wetlands Reserve. Enjoy an up-close look at mud lobsters, tree-climbing crabs and monitor lizards when you stroll along the 500-metre-long boardwalk of the mangrove swamps in Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve. The boardwalk runs parallel to the Wetland Centre. Look to the sky when you head to the Migratory Bird Trail just a short walk away. From behind the five hides, two platforms and the 18-metre-tall Aerie Tower featured along the trail, you can quietly observe migratory birds such as the Common Redshank and Pacific Golden Plover that shack up in this reserve from September to March. Kingfishers, herons and egrets also visit the reserve regularly.

Bukit Timah is an expansive twist of roads and buildings, but within the district are tranquil spots for some quiet. Take a hike up Bukit Timah Hill or, for the adventurous, go off-tangent and explore the jungles of Bukit Timah Nature Reserve by mountain bike or foot.





Punggol is a little far off from the city centre, but you'll be surprised by the options awaiting you on this end of the island. Explore the Punggol Waterway Park by bicycle—there are scores of rental shops around offering hourly rates—or meander the carved paths of Coney Island.

RUN AND EXPLORE SINGAPORE'S HERITAGE

City Hall running trail
Duration: 1 hour
Distance: 3.25 kilometres
Difficulty level: Medium.
There is uphill terrain and a winding route.

A bustling neighbourhood by day, City Hall unwinds when the sun sets and office warriors head home. Take advantage of the almost-bare streets and loosen up your tie as you embark on an after-work run. Among the cluster of tall buildings, the city centre is also a history-rich area, which has witnessed plenty of Singapore's milestones in her road to independence.



Unleash your inner history geek while releasing endorphins on this hour-long, 3.25-kilometre heritage running trail, which takes you around the district to uncover architectural gems and prominent heritage sites from the colonial era.

Start at **Fort Canning Park** and breeze past the white Gothic gates at the entrance to begin the trail. The hilltop garden, formerly known as "Forbidden Hill", was once home to the ancient Malay rulers of the island before the British officials transformed it into a fort in 1860. Warm your muscles up by tackling the sloping terrain to reach the former British army barracks at the top. Get charged up as you come face-to-face with one of the remaining nine-pound cannons that were used in the past. Run along the designated pathway—there are fragments of the fort wall, and a variety of indigenous flora, such as the elephant ear fig tree and ear-pod tree. A visit to the **Battle Box**, an old underground bunker, which functioned as a command centre during the war, will serve as a stark, yet important, reminder of the country's history during World War II.



There are plenty of museums located in close proximity, too, including the **National Museum of Singapore, Singapore Philatelic Museum** and **the Central Fire Station**. Head down Canning Rise towards Coleman Street, and make a quick pit stop at the national stamp museum. The building also operates as a sub-post office, where you can drop off your mail at the only operational colonial postal box left in the country. For a more memorable moment, pose with the bright, red cylinder-shaped postbox and take a selfie.



After taking your souvenir snapshot, make a dash towards the **War Memorial Park** on Beach Road. Located at the centre of the park is the **the Civilian War Memorial**, otherwise recognised as 'The Chopsticks' by locals. The monument honours the thousands of civilians who died during the Japanese Occupation of Singapore, and the four pillars were designed to signify the nation's main ethnic groups: Malay, Chinese, Indian and Eurasian.

Next, travel west in the direction of St Andrew's Road towards **National Gallery Singapore**. Pace yourself so you don't miss the **St Andrew's Cathedral** on your right. It is the country's largest church and oldest place of worship for Anglicans. The institution shows off the intricate designs inspired by early English Gothic architecture, featuring high steeples, wide stained glass windows and a grand nave.

Just a short distance away is the **National Gallery Singapore**. The two buildings that comprise the gallery were formerly occupied by the Supreme Court and City Hall before they were converted into the majestic art landmark you see today. The venue still retains its historic exterior, especially its famous blue dome. Monumental events, such as the surrender of the Japanese forces and Singapore's Merdeka speeches, also took place on the very steps of the building's main entrance.

Take a breather and stop for more photo ops—head up to the **Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Gallery** to get a view of the city's Central Business District (CBD) skyline.

Continue your run towards Empress Place, where you will notice more examples of colonial-era structures in the area. Overlooking the Singapore River is the **Asian Civilisations Museum**, which was once known as the Government Offices. The museum now houses a collection of ancient artefacts that chart the heritage of Asia and Singapore's history as a port city.

A few strides away from the museum stand **The Arts House** and **Victoria Theatre** and Concert Hall. Standing tall and gleaming with pride among them is a bronze statue of Sir Stamford Raffles, the founding father of modern Singapore. Break your momentum and stop for a selfie with the iconic landmark while you're there.



Cut your way through **Esplanade Park**, and be greeted with more tributes to the fallen victims of World War II. Here stands the **Lim Bo Seng Memorial**, a pagoda-looking construction with influences from Chinese National style of architecture. It is also the only national monument that commemorates a notable Singapore war hero. Further down the park, you will see **The Cenotaph**, which features the engraved names of the soldiers who fought during the war-torn period.

Complete your last lap at **Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay**. Apart from being a popular arts hub, the venue is also often identified by its intriguing roof design—many locals draw similarities to the durian. To cool down, venture to its rooftop terrace where you'll be able to do your stretches and take your post-run selfie against a stunning panoramic view of the **Marina Bay Sands**.



End your run by chilling out at the bars and restaurants in the area. For a taste of local street food, pop by **Makansutra Gluttons Bay** and replenish your energy with a generous plate of fried carrot cake accompanied by a tall, cold glass of sugarcane juice. After eating your fill, hang in the area and you might be able to catch a couple of free gigs that's occasionally hosted at the outdoor theatre.

For more interesting trails to explore, go to **visitsingapore.com**