



How to spend two days in Singapore

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This island nation at the southern tip of the Malaysian peninsula has long been a popular stopover or business travel destination for Australians. But stay a little longer and see what the Lion City has to offer, from diverse cultural encounters to fascinating colonial history, world-class shopping and some of the best food in the world. Here's how to spend two days in Singapore.



Day 1

Meet a Singapore icon

9:00

Begin your day at the Raffles Hotel, named after Sir Stamford Raffles, the founder of modern Singapore. Sit down to a sumptuous breakfast in the elegant Tiffin Room or the spectacular Grand Lobby. Pop your head into the historic Long Bar – it was here in 1915 that the country's national drink, the Singapore Sling, was first mixed. The bar is open from midday, so be sure to return for a cocktail later in the day.

Lessons in history

11:00

It's just a 10-minute walk from Raffles to the National Museum of Singapore, where you can dive into the island nation's fascinating history. The museum is a piece of history itself, housed in a grand neo-Palladian building dating back to 1887. The permanent collection covers the colonial period, Japanese occupation and the road to independence, and there's a regular calendar of special exhibitions. Walk down towards the water to see the Raffles Landing Site, where Sir Raffles himself is said to have first come ashore on 28 January, 1819. An impressive statue of him now marks the spot. You can also download the BalikSG app and use your smartphone to follow an immersive augmented reality trail through the island's historic sites.

Lunch with a view

13:00

Boat Quay was once a busy trading port on the bank of the Singapore River and was the site of the first land reclamation program in the 1820s. Today, this vibrant area blends history and modernity – and it's a great place to eat, with food from every corner of the globe. Southbridge serves up oysters and fresh seafood from a gorgeous rooftop looking out over the city.

Shopping or science?

15:00

Singaporeans love two things above all others: eating and shopping. This afternoon, you can join them in the glittering mega malls of Orchard Road, the busy markets on Bugis Street, the chic boutiques in Marina Bay Sands or the neon lit halls of Funan. You'll find everything from high tech gadgets to designer brands, high street labels and handmade local souvenirs.

For something a little more educational, walk along the harbour or jump on the Downtown Line of the MRT and head for the ArtScience Museum, set inside a dramatic lotus shaped building. The eclectic exhibits blend art, science, culture and technology, and feature everything from big data and space exploration to marine biology and Leonardo da Vinci.

Day 2

Get around the Gardens

8:00

Wake up early for a quiet stroll around the Gardens by the Bay, a stunning nature park spanning 101 hectares next to the Marina Reservoir. It's a place of calm within the bustle of this global metropolis. The outdoor gardens, including the futuristic Supertrees and Kingfisher Wetlands, are all open from 5am and other attractions like the Flower Dome and Cloud Forest are open from 9am.

Brunch with the locals

10:00

Singapore is famous for its hawker markets where street stalls serve up incredible food that's tasty, fast and cheap. Catch the MRT to Chinatown and into the Hong Lim Market, one of the city's first hawker centres built in 1978. You should be early enough to beat the crowds, so tuck into steaming plates of char kway teow noodles, crispy curry puffs, chicken satay and much, much more.

Cultural immersion

Singapore is a fascinating mix of Chinese, Malay, Indian and European influences, so spend some time today exploring the unique areas that have shaped the island's character.

Starting in Chinatown, wander the busy streets, check out the traditional shops and visit temples like Sri Mariamman Temple or the ornate Buddha Tooth Relic Temple. If you need a snack, pick up a chwee kueh – a steamed rice cake topped with savoury radish and chilli.

11:00

Kampong Glam (or Gelam) is Singapore's Malay-Muslim quarter and one of the oldest districts on the island. It's evolved into a hip neighbourhood favoured by the young and artistic of Singapore. The narrow streets are lined with brightly coloured shophouses, elaborate mosques, textile and carpet shops, and busy cafes.

Nearby is Little India, a colourful district that's a whirl of sights, sounds and smells. There are many places of worship, including the ornate Sri Veeramakaliamman, a 19th century temple dedicated to the Hindu goddess Kali. There are also many street food stalls serving up fragrant Indian dishes.

Singapore sundowners

As the sun sets, enjoy a leisurely walk along the Singapore River, get a snap of the famous statue at Merlion Park, then continue on past historical landmarks like the Fullerton Hotel, a former General Post Office.

18:00

More than 50 restaurants in Singapore hold at least one coveted Michelin star, so on your final night you might like to splash out on a little fine dining. Candlenut is the first Peranakan restaurant in the world to be awarded a Michelin star and it offers a refined take on the classic Singaporean cuisine that blends Chinese and Malay flavours. Go for the ah-ma-kase set menu and feast on dishes like pig maw soup, blue swimmer crab coconut curry, pork jowl with cincalok and tamarind, and beef short ribs in kapitan curry sauce.



Travel Tips

- Singapore has a great public transport system, including the cheap and efficient MRT (Mass Rapid Transit) network of driverless trains. The SG Tourist Pass is around \$30 and allows unlimited use of public transport for three days.
- Taxis are also plentiful and affordable, though traffic can mean even short journeys take some time. Try to pay with cash as the fees for cards can be exorbitant.
- It's a good idea to have some cash with you at all times in Singapore as street stalls or hawker markets may not take card or may insist on a \$20 minimum spend. You can find ATMs everywhere.
- Save money and get the best food by eating like the locals. There are many cuisines and delicious options at your fingertips at a great price point.
- Like most of South East Asia, lightweight clothes are recommended as you will find it generally hot and humid. Don't forget to pack a light rain jacket as rain can come down heavily and without warning.
- You may need to have your shoulders and knees covered to visit some temples or places of worship.
- In an emergency, dial 995.

