

Hotels & Hostels

Want more Sleeping recommendations than we could ever pack into this little ol' book? Craving more detail – including extended reviews and photographs? Want to read reviews by other travellers and be able to post your own? Just make your way over to [lonelyplanet.com/hotels](https://www.lonelyplanet.com/hotels) and check out our thorough list of independent reviews, then reserve your room simply and securely.

SLEEPING

top picks

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SLEEPING

When it comes to accommodation in Singapore, there's good news and bad news. First, the good: despite the fact that you may run into one fully-booked hotel after another during major events, there have never been more hotels in Singapore than there are now. Now the bad: though not exactly across the board, prices have gone up in the last couple of years. Many former budget hotels have crept into the midrange category – sometimes, but not always, accompanied by corresponding improvements. Prices for many midrange and top-end hotels have also gone up, though not in all cases. (Indeed, there are some fine bargains to be found around town, especially through the internet.) While some new budget hotels have opened up (particularly those offering 'transit', or hourly rates), others have been driven out of business by rising property values.

Thanks to the peerless public transport system, it doesn't really matter where you stay in central Singapore. Everywhere is less than half an hour from everywhere else. If you're looking for atmosphere and character, we recommend Chinatown or Little India, both of which harbour most of the budget accommodation and boutique hotels in shophouse conversions. If you don't mind being a bit further out, there is a cluster of new hostels in the Joo Chiat area.

Orchard Rd and its environs are crammed with identikit upmarket hotels (with a few distinctive exceptions), as is the area around Marina Bay, where you'll find the Esplanade complex and Suntec City mall. There are also good options dotted close by the redeveloped quays of the Singapore River.

If you want to experience the grittier side of Singapore outside your hotel room, then Geylang is worth considering; we've found two hotels in that area that are high in cultural interest and low in sleaze. If you want the sea and a beach close at hand, Sentosa's the go, but avoid weekends, when rates and occupancy are higher.

LONGER-TERM RENTALS

For medium- to long-term stays, Singapore has a number of serviced apartments. It is also possible to rent rooms in private flats (check the classified pages of the *Straits Times* for listings). Rents are high, regardless of how near or far from the city centre you are. Note that the prices quoted include all taxes.

Probably the best place to start looking for long-term rental in Singapore is [Singapore Expats](http://www.singaporeexpats.com) (www.singaporeexpats.com), which has detailed information on the different districts, outlines the whole rental procedure and carries an

apartment search engine. The Singapore section of www.craigslist.org is also a good place to look for long-term stays.

SOMERSET BENCOOLEN

Map pp52–3

Serviced Apartments \$\$\$

☎ 6730 1811; www.somerset.com;

51 Bencoolen St; 1-bedroom apt per week from \$2590;

📍 Dhoby Ghaut; 📺 📶

If you're going to live large in Singapore, the Somerset Bencoolen might be the place to do it. Fully furnished service apartments are big and beautiful with floor-

ACTUAL PRICES MAY VARY

In Singapore's midrange and top-end hotels, room rates are about supply and demand, fluctuating daily.

Travellers planning a trip to Singapore need to keep this in mind, especially if you're planning to come here during a major event. Be aware that reservation desk staff in top hotels usually add a casual (and often barely audible) 'plus plus plus' after the rate they quote you. Ignore this at your peril. The three plusses are service charge, government tax and GST, which together amounts to a breezy 16% on top of your bill.

To further complicate matters, Singapore's high-end hotels offer a stunning array of pricing packages, from rooms for a few hundred a night to Bill Gates-class suites costing thousands (with many incremental, ever-fluctuating price levels in between).

All prices quoted in our listings are from the day of our visit; your own price may vary. Don't thank us: that's the invisible hand of capitalism at work.

BOOKING ON THE FLY

If you arrive in Singapore without a hotel booking, don't despair. The efficient [Singapore Hotel Association](http://www.stayinsingapore.com.sg) (www.stayinsingapore.com.sg) has four desks at Changi airport, with two at **Terminal 1** (✈ east wing 10am–11.30pm, west wing 24hr) and two at **Terminal 2** (✈ north wing 7am–11pm, south wing 24hr).

There are dozens of hotels on its lists, ranging from \$37 a night right up to Raffles Hotel at over \$650. There's no charge for the service, and promotional or discounted rates, when available, are passed on to you. You can also book the hotels over the internet on the association's website.

If you've made it as far as Orchard Rd and still don't have a hotel room (and don't fancy sleeping in the park), **Singapore Visitors Centre @ Orchard** (☎ 6738 3729; svorchard2003@yahoo.com; cnr Cairnhill & Orchard Rds; ☎ 9am–6pm) works with local area hotels and can help visitors get bargain rates.

to-ceiling windows offering spectacular views. The rooftop pool is an especially nice touch, as are the guided floor-lights in the lobby, presumably to guide your footsteps when you come home drunk.

PARKLANE SUITES

Map pp74–5 Serviced Apartments \$\$\$
☎ 6730 1811; www.goodwoodparkhotel.com/parklansuits.htm; 22 Scotts Rd; ste per month \$4500–6000; M Orchard; ☎

A real dose of style, these 64 split-level luxury suites are in a separate building next to the Goodwood Park Hotel. Immaculately done out with timber louvres, timber floors, black-slate wall panels, curved ceilings, plus your own balcony. Facilities include two swimming pools, a gym and a launderette.

METRO-Y APARTMENTS

Map pp74–5 Serviced Apartments \$\$
☎ 6839 8100; apt@mymca.org.sg; 58 Stevens Rd; studios per month \$3200; M Orchard; ☎

Next to the Metropolitan Y, Metro-Y has its own swimming pool, gym and washing machines, a bonus at this price and this close to Orchard Rd. The rooms are recently renovated, and all come with compact kitchenettes and cable TV. Larger family-sized suites are also available for varying prices dependent on size.

RESERVATIONS

'Build it and they will come', or so goes the Kevin Costner quote in *Field of Dreams*. In Singapore, the 'it' is lots of hotels, and the 'they', well, that's you. The more hotels that go up, the more travellers (and less hotel rooms) there seem to be. Though most travellers won't have too much of a problem finding a place to stay, Singapore is definitely not the place to just rock up without reservations if

you can help it – especially if you arrive during holidays (like Chinese New Year) or during major sporting events.

So book ahead and online when possible, if not for peace of mind then for the often available (and sometimes substantial) internet discounts. Hotel websites and discount websites like www.asiabesthotels.com, www.hotels.online.com.sg, or www.agoda.com are all good resources.

COLONIAL DISTRICT & THE QUAYS

This sprawling nerve centre of tourist activity contains the widest variety of accommodations, from the cheapest of the cheap no-frills hostels to the priciest luxury hotels. Though precise definition of where this area begins and ends is a bit difficult to pin down, for the purposes of our listings we're including anything close to the Clarke Quay, Dhoby Ghaut, City Hall or Bugis MRT stations, which includes the vast nexus of hotels on and around Bencoolen St.

RAFFLES HOTEL

Map pp52–3 Hotel \$\$\$
☎ 6337 1886; www.raffleshotel.com; 1 Beach Rd; ste from \$650; M City Hall; ☎

Hotels that double as tourist attractions are sometimes a let-down. This one isn't. With its wooden floors, high ceilings, unshakable colonial decor and even its famous Sikh doorman, it stands alongside the Peninsula

PRICE GUIDE

\$\$\$	over \$200 a night
\$\$	\$100–200 a night
\$	under \$100 a night

Hong Kong and the Oriental Bangkok as one of Asia's truly special hotels. Whether you're coming to stay or simply to soak up some air-conditioned elegance, be advised: dress code is in effect, and Raffles' turbaned doorman will not allow those in sleeveless shirts, sandals, or grubby backpacker attire to enter.

FULLERTON HOTEL Map pp52-3 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6733 8388; www.fullertonhotel.com;

1 Fullerton Sq; r from \$400;

📍 Raffles Place; 📺 📶

The Fullerton has the distinction of being both one of Singapore's most magnificent pieces of colonial architecture and the only hotel we've ever heard of that's also a restored post office. The heritage principles involved in the restoration mean some of the Armani-beige rooms overlook the inner atrium. Spend a bit extra to gain access to the hotel's private Straits Club and upgrade to river- or marina-view rooms, all of which are stunning. Though easily as elegant as the famed Raffles, the Fullerton is a bit less restrictive when it comes to welcoming casually dressed tourists.

RITZ-CARLTON

Map pp52-3 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6337 8888; www.ritzcarlton.com/hotels/singapore; 7 Raffles Ave; s/d from \$465/515;

📍 City Hall; 📺 📶

This place was clearly designed with sex in mind, right from the striking entrance dominated by a Frank Stella sculpture. The rooms are an aphrodisiac all on their own, with stunning harbour views from the raised beds and even from the bathrooms, which are located, unusually, on the exterior wall. A must for romantic occasions.

SWISSÔTEL, THE STAMFORD

Map pp52-3 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6338 8585; www.singapore-stamford.swissotel.com; 2 Stamford Rd; r from \$420, executive club from \$550; 📍 City Hall; 📺 📶

More like an indoor town than a hotel, this massive hotel offers all the five-star comfort and amenities that you'd expect for the price, not to mention amazing views, numerous restaurants and bars, and plenty of shopping. Prices include breakfast, and if you get a room on the 57th floor executive club, breakfast (or any meal) will come with endless high-grade coffee, compliments of your room's personal Lavazza espresso machine.

HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL

Map pp52-3 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6338 7600; www.ichotelsgroup.com;

80 Middle Rd; standard r from \$360, shophouse r \$410;

📍 Bugis; 📺 📶

A top-class hotel with impeccable Singaporean style, the most interesting rooms at this hotel are the shophouse rooms, which are done up in a mixture of Peranakan and colonial style down to the wooden floors, oriental rugs and hand-painted lampshades. Less expensive rooms are also lovely, though decorated more along standard five-star lines. Facilities include a fitness centre, a pleasant rooftop pool and several good restaurants.

ORIENTAL SINGAPORE

Map pp52-3 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6338 0066; www.mandarinoriental.com;

5 Raffles Ave, Marina Sq; r from \$410;

📍 City Hall; 📺 📶

The sumptuous rooms here have stunning views, either over Marina Bay and the 'durians' of the Esplanade theatre, or the city skyline. A bonus is the large baths and your own DVD player.

FURAMA RIVERFRONT

Map pp52-3 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6333 8898; www.furama.com;

405 Havelock Rd; s/d/ste from \$400/450/650;

📍 Outram Park; 📺 📶

Occupying the old Novotel building, the Furama is swank in every way, from its stunning indoor waterfall to the hip, modern-art decor in the lobby. Rooms are lovely, offering views of both city and river, and staff are extremely helpful in making your stay a memorable one. Internet discounts are available.

PAN PACIFIC HOTEL

Map pp52-3 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6336 8111; <http://singapore.panpac.com>;

7 Raffles Blvd, Marina Sq; r from \$355;

📍 City Hall; 📺 📶

Taking the prize in the flash lobby stakes, the Pan Pacific soars up 35 storeys. The rooms are decorated in neutral tones and a contemporary style (the business rooms even have ergonomic Aeron desk chairs); those with a balcony and a view are a bit pricier, though worth every penny.

RAFFLES, THE PLAZA

Map pp52–3

International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6339 7777; www.raffles-theplazahotel.com;
80 Bras Basah Rd; r from \$330; **M** City Hall;

It shares the same facilities as its twin Swissôtel, but the rooms here are markedly different in design from the usual flowers-and-magnolia look of many hotels. Stylish and understated, this place is top-notch.

GRAND PLAZA PARKROYAL HOTEL

Map pp52–3

International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6336 3456; www.parkroyalhotels.com;
10 Coleman St; r from \$320; **M** City Hall;

It's won an award for its architecture apparently, and though the rooms are virtually indistinguishable from many other top hotels, there is an in-house spa that will appeal to frazzled shoppers. Look out for dramatic online discounts.

HOTEL RENDEZVOUS

Map pp52–3

International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6336 0220; www.rendezvoushotels.com;
9 Bras Basah Rd; s/d from \$300/330;
M Dhoby Ghaut;

Overlooking Bras Basah Park, the rooms here are a little heavy on the pastel, but well worth it if you can get a discount rate. The interior lobby is quite elegant, and there's an attractive bar next to a cool, imposing courtyard.

NOVOTEL CLARKE QUAY

Map pp52–3

International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6338 3333; www.novotelclarkequay.com.sg;
177A River Valley Rd; s/d from \$300/320;
M Clarke Quay;

The no-nonsense approach you expect from the Novotel chain. No bells or whistles, no surprises or extravagant extras; plain, clean, comfortable and professional.

GRAND COPTHORNE WATERFRONT HOTEL

Map pp52–3

International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6733 0880; <http://millenniumhotels.com>;
392 Havelock Rd; s/d from \$295/325;
 123 from **M** Tiong Bahru;

Of the several hotels clustered at the Robertson Quay end of the river (the closest MRT is Tiong Bahru, but it's not walking within distance), the fanciest is this imposing place. This is the best of the Copthorne group of hotels, with light-filled, comfortable rooms.

GALLERY HOTEL Map pp52–3

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6849 8686; www.galleryhotel.com.sg;
76 Robertson Quay; r incl breakfast from \$320;
M Clarke Quay;

With its primary-colour fixtures and fittings, hi-tech room facility control panels and its gorgeous lap pool, the Gallery Hotel is the crème de la crème of Singapore's boutique hotels. The subdued minimalist lobby is so hip it hurts, and room decorations are sexy without being lewd. Broadband and wireless are free, as is the indoor recreation area. The one drawback to this otherwise excellent hotel is that the construction being carried out next door might not be done until sometime in 2009.

HOLIDAY INN ATRIUM

Map pp52–3

International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6733 0188; www.holiday-inn.com; 317 Outram Rd;
s/d from \$300/350; **M** Outram Park;

This 27-storey dazzler has a charm believably both its age and its chain-hotel pedigree. The interior glass elevators give the atrium a particularly futuristic feel. Rooms are fairly standard, though quite comfortable, making this hotel near the Robertson Quay entertainment district and Great World City shopping centre a good choice.

ALLSON HOTEL

Map pp52–3

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6336 0811; allson.sales@pacific.net.sg;
101 Victoria St; r from \$320; **M** City Hall;

Fitting its location in the museum district, the Allson has an old-fashioned feel, despite its modern exterior. Rooms are tastefully done out with dark wood and leather furniture. There are nonsmoking floors, and facilities include a pool and several restaurants.

RIVER VIEW HOTEL

Map pp52–3

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6732 9922; www.riverview.com.sg;
382 Havelock Rd; s/d from \$220/240;
M Clarke Quay;

Excellent value if one of its generous discounts is on offer, this uninspiring off-white tower opposite Robertson Quay has an excellent riverside location and large comfortable rooms. A free shuttle service runs to Orchard Rd, Suntec City and Chinatown.

HOTEL ROYAL@QUEENS

Map pp52-3

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6725 9988; www.royalqueens.com.sg;12 Queen St; r from \$230; **M** Bugis;

Soft lighting, dark mahogany furnishings, and a smattering of hip wall paintings give this boutique hotel a cool hipster vibe. The best rooms are the ones with the view of St Joseph's cathedral, but all are clean and comfortable. Hotel Royal also has a swimming pool and health centre. Book online for deep discounts.

ROBERTSON QUAY HOTEL

Map pp52-3

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6735 3333; www.robertsonquayhotel.com.sg;15 Merbau Rd; s/d \$150/180; **M** Clarke Quay;

Definitely one of the best value hotels in the area, the Robertson is a circular building that vaguely resembles a medieval castle tower. Rooms, though not large, are well furnished with all the mod-cons you'd hope for at the price; those on the higher floors offer excellent views. Perhaps the loveliest feature of this hotel is the unusual rooftop swimming pool landscaped with large boulders. The Robertson is close to both the Quays and the CBD, making it ideal for business and leisure travellers. Generous internet booking discounts are often available, too.

PARK VIEW HOTEL

Map pp52-3

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6338 8558; www.parkview.com.sg; 81 Beach Rd;s/d \$140/160, deluxe r \$180; **M** Bugis;

Not a bad little midrange hotel, Park View is centrally located to the Bugis shopping area (though where the park is we can't say). Though all rooms have bathtubs, some of the cheaper rooms are windowless. And while breakfast is included, wireless internet costs an additional \$6 per hour, fairly expensive for a hotel of this middle calibre.

BEACH HOTEL Map pp52-3

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6336 7712; www.beachhotel.com.sg;95 Beach Rd, s/d \$135/150, deluxe r \$170; **M** Bugis

Just down the block from the Park View (which views no park) is the Beach Hotel (which has no beach). Rooms, prices and amenities are much the same here as there, though rack-rate at the beach is a few dollars less.

YWCA FORT CANNING LODGE

Map pp52-3

Hotel \$

☎ 6338 4222; reservations@ywcafdodge.org.sg;6 Fort Canning Rd; s/tw from \$99/115, family ste \$180; **M** Dhoby Ghaut;

This is probably the best of the three Ys, boasting large, comfortable rooms complete with wooden floors and a decent range of facilities including a cafe, swimming pool and tennis court. It's sandwiched between busy roads, but it's a short walk from both Orchard Rd and the serenity of Fort Canning Park.

HOTEL BENCOOLEN Map pp52-3

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6336 0822; www.hotelbencoolen.com;

47 Bencoolen St; s/d \$110/120;

M Dhoby Ghaut;

With a rooftop spa, good location and reasonable rates, Hotel Bencoolen is among the better-value places in this area, now brimming over with hotels. Rooms themselves are clean and comfortable, though about as exciting as Al Gore's wardrobe. Rates include breakfast.

YMCA INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

Map pp52-3

Hostel/Hotel \$\$

☎ 6336 6000; www.ymcaih.com.sg; 1 Orchard Rd;dm \$30, s from \$180, family ste \$215; **M** Dhoby Ghaut;

Like the YWCA, this place has large, clean rooms, a handy location and good facilities, including a fitness centre, rooftop swimming pool, squash and badminton courts, and a billiard room. There's also a restaurant, which offers a cheap set meal daily. All rooms have a telephone.

OXFORD HOTEL Map pp52-3

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6332 2222; www.oxfordhotel.com.sg;218 Queen St; s/d \$180/200; **M** Bugis;

Another new medium-sized hotel in the Bencoolen hub. The main selling point of the Oxford is its uniform rooms (all are clean and perfectly serviceable, if somewhat dull) and its central location, pretty much equidistant from the Quays, Little India and the Bugis shopping district.

VICTORIA HOTEL Map pp52-3

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6622 0909; www.santa.com.sg; 87 Victoria St;s/d \$128/168, deluxe r \$208; **M** Bugis;

Popular with businesspeople and casual travellers alike, this hotel offers comfortable rooms furnished with bed, TV, desk

and chair. Single rooms are a bit on the cramped side, but the deluxe rooms feature queen-sized beds and bathtub-equipped bathrooms. There's also a nice little coffeshop downstairs with free wireless.

WATERLOO HOSTEL Map pp52–3 Hotel \$\$

☎ 6336 6555; fax 6336 2160; 4th fl, Catholic Centre Bldg, 55 Waterloo St; s with shared/private bathroom \$80/100, d \$80/120; 🚶 Dhoby Ghaut, City Hall or Bugis

Another victim of the area's change from hostel to upscale, the Waterloo Hostel is a hostel no longer (though the name, oddly enough, remains unchanged) but a hotel instead, having deleted dorm beds in favour of private rooms. The hotel is still clean and well run, with rooms equipped with TVs, fridges and phones. It's within reasonable walking distance of Orchard Rd, the Colonial District and Bugis. Breakfast is included.

SUMMER TAVERN Map pp52–3 Hostel \$

☎ 6535 6601; www.summertavern.com; 31 Carpenter St; dm/s/d \$35/90/180; 🚶 Clarke Quay; 🚶

Still among the most popular hostels in Singapore despite the high price of its dorm beds, Summer Tavern Hostel offers fine dorm beds, medium-sized rooms good for one or two guests, and a fine rooftop beer lounge. Summer Tavern has recently expanded to include a second building across the street, in which you'll find deluxe rooms with queen-sized beds and attached bathrooms. Rooms can be booked online, and rates include breakfast.

AH CHEW HOTEL Map pp52–3 Hostel \$

☎ 6837 0356; 496 North Bridge Rd; rooftop/fan/air-con dm \$8/10/12, r with fan/air-con \$26/30; 🚶 Bugis

Above the Tong Seng Coffee shop, with its frontage facing the restaurant-bar strip on Liang Seah St, this dusty old flophouse has a certain dingy charm and the cheapest, noisiest beds in Singapore. Certain to make your stay a memorable one.

BACKPACKER COZY CORNER GUESTHOUSE Map pp52–3 Guesthouse \$

☎ 6339 6128; www.cozycornerguest.com; 490 North Bridge Rd; dm with fan/air-con \$11/16, d fan/air-con \$33/48; 🚶 Bugis; 🚶

It feels a little like a kindergarten, with its 'museum' and its flags, kitsch reading corner and government-issue paint, but at these rates who's complaining? It's clean, friendly and well located, with free breakfast, free internet and a rooftop lounging area as well.

CHINATOWN & THE CBD

Riding the shophouse restoration wave, Chinatown has some particularly fine midrange tourist hotels; here you'll find everything from elegant old-world charm to funky designer guesthouses, all in proximity to some of Singapore's best eating and nightlife. The area also has a few cheap hostels.

M HOTEL Map pp62–3 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6224 1133; www.mhotel.com.sg; 81 Anson Rd; r from \$380; 🚶 Tanjong Pagar; 🚶

On the southern edge of the CBD, this is a place for Chanel-handbag and Armani-suit business types. It oozes chic, from the flat-screen TVs in the rooms to the neon blues of the bar. The only downside is the location, next to the expressway and a fair way from Singapore's main attractions. Good discounts are available on the website!

NEW MAJESTIC HOTEL Map pp62–3 Boutique Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6511 4700; www.newmajestichotel.com; 31-37 Bukit Pasoh Rd; r from \$350-700; 🚶 Outram Park; 🚶 🚶

The New Majestic offers occupants 30 unique rooms – so unique each room features the artwork of a different artist – done up in a mix of vintage and designer furniture. Among the highlights are the private garden suite, attic rooms with loft beds and 6m-high ceilings, and the fabulous aquarium room, in which the central feature is a glass-encased bathtub. A technophile's paradise, all rooms are fitted with sophisticated high-end gadgetry like LCD TVs, Bose stereos with iPod docks and in-room coffee-makers provided by Nespresso. Undoubtedly the hippest hotel in Singapore, the newly opened New Majestic Hotel is destined to become an icon of cool.

BERJAYA HOTEL SINGAPORE

Map pp62–3

Boutique Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6227 7678; www.berjayaresorts.com;

83 Duxton Rd; r from \$250, ste \$450;

M Tanjong Pagar

If you're looking for a boutique hotel with luxury to spare, this elegant shophouse conversion is one of your best bets – all wooden fixtures and old-world charm. All rooms are beautifully furnished and the suites have an unusual mezzanine bedroom reached by a spiral staircase.

ROYAL PEACOCK HOTEL

Map pp62–3

Boutique Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6223 3522; www.royalpeacockhotel.com;

55 Keong Saik Rd; s/d \$145/165, executive r \$205,

attic s/d \$115/135; M Outram Park

Though the wooden floors are uneven in spots and some of the antique furniture seems frayed around the edges, the Royal Peacock – one of the area's original shophouse-boutique hotels – has stood the test of time fairly well. Attic rooms are the best bargain, if you can live without a window. The lobby and attached restaurant are charming, to say the least.

HOTEL 1929

Map pp62–3

Boutique Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6347 1929; www.hotel1929.com; 50 Keong Saik

Rd; s/d \$210/250; M Outram Park; ☎

Once the most eclectic of Chinatown's boutique hotels, 1929 now takes second place to the nearby New Majestic – though since they're both owned by the same companies, there probably aren't any hard feelings. Still, the 1929 manages to please both style-wise and comfort-wise, with small but wonderfully and uniquely furnished rooms, an outdoor 4th-floor Jacuzzi, complimentary wireless, and all the class you'd expect from one of Singapore's pre-eminent boutique hotels. Discounts available through the website.

CHINATOWN HOTEL

Map pp62–3

Boutique Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6225 5166; www.chinatownhotel.com; 12-16

Teck Lim Rd; s/d/r \$155/175/205; M Outram Park

Though prices have risen dramatically at this one-time budget hotel, overall quality doesn't seem to have kept pace, resulting in budget hotel ambience at a boutique hotel price. Though not a bad place, rooms aren't as nice as the nearby 1929

or the cheaper Tropical next door. Worth a stay if everything else in the neighbourhood is full.

TROPICAL HOTEL Map pp62–3

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6225 6696; fax 6225 6626; 22 Teck Lim Rd;

s/d from \$90/120; M Outram Park

Rooms in this converted shophouse are a bit frayed around the edges, but not wholly lacking in charm. Some singles are without windows and the larger rooms at the front with balconies go for \$100, but they're open to bargaining for longer stays.

SERVICE WORLD BACKPACKERS HOSTEL

Map pp62–3

Hostel \$

☎ 6226 3886; 5 Banda St 02-82; dm \$20;

M Chinatown

Located behind the Buddha Tooth Relic Temple, this is a small family-owned hostel offering little in the way of frills but much in the way of friendliness and a central location. The hostel is in a traditional Singaporean housing development, giving budget travellers a valuable chance to experience life the way that 85% of Singaporeans do. Andrew Yip, who runs Service World with his wife, is an author and photographer who is exceptionally passionate about Singapore's traditional culture and art.

LITTLE INDIA & KAMPONG GLAM

From upmarket swank to low-key boutique hotels and even a few cheap and decent hostels, this area is a traveller's hot spot for tourists of all budget levels. Hotels in this area include those accessible from Boon Kong, Farrer Park and Little India, as well as some closer to Bugis and Lavender MRT stations.

GOLDEN LANDMARK HOTEL

Map p68

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6297 2828; www.goldenlandmark.com.sg;

290 Victoria St; r from \$240; M Bugis; ☎ ☎

One of the few upmarket hotels in the Arab St area, rooms at the Golden Landmark are spacious and well-furnished, featuring full bathtubs and in-room espresso machines. The onion-domed glass elevators in the lobby are a particularly nice touch. Try to

get a room facing the nearby mosque for the most spectacular views.

ALBERT COURT HOTEL

Map p68

Boutique Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6339 3939; www.albertcourt.com.sg; 180 Albert St; standard/deluxe r \$200/220; Little India;

At the southern edge of Little India, this is a splendid, colonial-era boutique hotel in a shophouse redevelopment that now shoots up eight storeys. All rooms have the usual mod cons, and include a choice of fan or air-con. The promotional rates go as low as \$120.

PERAK HOTEL

Map p68

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6299 7733; www.peraklodge.net; 12 Perak Rd; s/d \$174/233; Little India;

A long-time favourite, the newly renovated Perak Hotel (formerly called Perak Lodge) mixes a colonial exterior with an oriental interior complete with Buddha statues and quaint sitting and meditation spaces. Rooms are lovely and well furnished, and rates include free wireless and breakfast.

SUMMER VIEW HOTEL

Map p68

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6338 1122; www.summerviewhotel.com.sg; 173 Bencoolen St; d \$200; Bugis

Clean and comfortable, the rooms here are quite large for a midrange hotel and it's handily located. The MRT is a bit of a hike, so the shuttle service to Orchard Rd and Suntec City might come in useful.

FORTUNA HOTEL

Map p68

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6295 3577; fax 6294 7738; 2 Owen Rd; r from \$125; Farrer Park

Looks more like an office building than a hotel, but the rooms are actually quite appealing – and very large – and staff members are very welcoming. If you can get one of the \$80 promo rates, snap it up.

DICKSON COURT HOTEL

Map p68

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6297 7811; dicksonl@magix.com.sg; 3 Dickson Rd; d from \$120; Little India

Cobbled together from a row of old shophouses, the lobby and courtyard areas of the Dickson Court Hotel have a touch of refinement about them. The rooms are clean, although some of them are small and dark. The hotel has a restaurant and a cafe as well as a broad range of services.

You will almost always find a promotional rate on offer, which can see prices drop to \$89.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA HOTEL

Map p68

Hotel \$

☎ 6338 2394; www.seahotel.com.sg; 190 Waterloo St; standard/superior d \$80/98; Bugis

Next to a couple of the area's most colourful temples on one of Singapore's most bustling, lively pedestrian precincts, this hotel is clean, friendly and good value, though you can barely swing a mouse in the bathrooms. Highly recommended, particularly for its location.

MADRAS HOTEL

Map p68

Hotel \$

☎ 6392 7889; www.madrassingapore.com; 28-32 Madras St; s/d/tr \$95/105/175; Little India;

Simple, clean and reliably hospitable are the main bullet points of the Madras Hotel, which, while offering little in the way of frills, still maintains its reputation as a trustworthy place for travellers on a budget. Madras also offers a discounted price of \$95 for any room checked into after midnight (same check-out time applies). Prices include breakfast.

ASPHODEL INN

Map p68

Hotel \$

☎ 6296 92989; www.asphoinn.com; 80 Race Course Rd; s/d \$85/95; Ferrer Park;

A four-storey converted shophouse on a quiet street in between Little India and Bugis, the Asphodel Inn offers a reasonably priced place to stay for those whose budgets fall between backpacker and boutique. What this establishment lacks in frills it makes up for in cleanliness and quaintness. The location isn't bad either: set across from a row of charming multi-coloured residential homes and a small Chinese temple.

ASPINALS HOTEL

Map p68

Hotel \$

☎ 6392 3944; www.aspinals.com.sg; 83 Syed Alwi Rd; s/d/tr \$85/95/105; Little India;

An inexpensive hotel in that it bridges nicely the budget gap between hostel and boutique hotel, Aspinals is clean, reasonably well furnished, and definitely convenient to all the scent and splendour that little India has to offer.

BROADWAY HOTEL Map p68 Hostel \$\$☎ 6292 4661; www.geocities.com/broadwayhotel;
195 Serangoon Rd; r \$128; **M** Little India

In the heart of Little India, this fairly plain looking but well-maintained hotel seems to attract a mixed crowd of business people and tourists. The Broadway offers free wireless internet, and is close to all the action of the area.

HAISING HOTEL Map p68 Hostel \$☎ 6298 1223; www.haising.com.sg; 37 Jalan Besar;
s/d/f \$50/55/100; **M** Bugis; **Q**

Across from Sim Lim Tower, rooms at this budget hotel are stuffy, charmless and cheap. But the place is reasonably clean, and did we mention it was cheap?

HANGOUT@MT.EMILY Map p68 Hostel \$\$☎ 6438 5588; www.hangouthotels.com;
10A Upper Wilkie Rd; dm/s/d \$40/94/117;
M Little India or Dhoby Ghaut; **Q**

A sleek and trendy boutique hotel set among the leafy glades of Mt Emily, though the walk up the hill is a bit of a drag for those with bags. Hangout is a hybrid hotel-boutique hotel that's not too far from Orchard Rd and Little India. Done out in vibrant colours, with murals by local art students, the unisex and mixed dorms and private rooms are immaculate, as are the bathrooms. It also has a magnificent rooftop terrace, complete with Balinese sculptures, as well as a library, a cafe, free internet and cosy lounging areas. Knock \$10 off the rates for internet bookings. Private room rates include breakfast.

SLEEPY SAM'S Map p68 Hostel \$☎ 9277 4988; www.sleepysams.com; 55 Bussorah St;
dm/s/d \$25/49/79; **M** Bugis; **Q**

With its boutique-hotel ambience, pier-and-beam ceilings, beautiful book-filled common area-cafe and well-furnished dorm rooms, Sleepy Sam's once again comes in as one of the finest hostels in Singapore. It's located just down from the imposing Sultan Mosque on the historical, burgeoning Bussorah St bohemian district, making it a great place to people watch. Sam's also features mixed or female-only dorms, private rooms and free internet.

BUGIS BACKPACKERS Map p68 Hostel \$☎ 6338 5581; 162B Rochor Rd; mixed/female dm
\$26/36, d \$88; **M** Bugis

In the bustling centre of Bugis Village, this clean, functional, appealing hostel (with the usual facilities) is particularly well located to sample the lively night markets and other nocturnal activity in the area – and it's a short walk from Arab St.

INNCROWD Map p68 Hostel \$☎ 6296 9169; www.the-inncrowd.com;
35 Campbell Lane; dm/d/tr \$20/48/68;
M Little India; **Q**

If Sleepy Sam's is avant-garde jazz, then Inn Crowd is more drum-and-bass, attracting a younger, party-hearty crowd. Located in the heart of Little India, the funkily painted hostel has become so popular that it's opened a **second location** (73 Dunlop St) around the corner. The air-con dorms, common bathrooms and kitchens are spotless and there's even a washing machine. Add to that a sun deck, a pub, a minimart, a foosball table, free internet, free breakfast, extremely friendly staff and a branch of the Singapore Visitors Centre, and you may well have the ultimate hostel.

NEW 7TH STOREY HOTEL Map p68 Hostel \$☎ 6337 0251; www.nsshotel.com; 229 Rochor Rd;
dm/s \$19/62 superior/deluxe r \$92/95;
M Bugis; **Q**

Sitting in splendid isolation on a patch of cleared land, this well-run, very friendly place has clean dorms with rather spindly bunks and very good-value private rooms. Other good points include delightful garden patios, close proximity to the **DHL hot-air balloon ride (p156)**, a games room and bike rental.

HIVE Map p68 Hostel \$☎ 6341 5041; www.thehivebackpackers.com;
269A Lavender St; dm/s/d \$20/32/42;
M Boon Keng; **Q**

The Hive's friendliness and cleanliness more than makes up for a slightly inconvenient location. Dorms are fairly standard, lacking in natural light but otherwise fine. There's free breakfast, free internet and a comfortable lounge room.

PRINCE OF WALES BACKPACKER HOSTEL Map p68 Hostel \$☎ 6299 0130; www.pow.com.sg; 101 Dunlop St;
dm \$18, d with fan/air-con \$42/50; **M** Little India
Australian-style pub and hostel, featuring a spit-and-sawdust live-music pub down-

stairs (see p144) with excellent Australian beers and clean dorms upstairs painted in bright oranges and blues. The noise won't suit everyone, but it's a fun place to stay and is deservedly popular. POW is currently running a four-night \$60 special, for those inclined to stay a bit longer.

HAWAII HOSTEL Map p68 Hostel \$

☎ 6338 4187; www.hawaiihostel.com.sg; 2nd fl, 171B Bencoolen St; 4-bed dm \$12, s/d \$28/35;

📍 Bugis

One of the few places in the Bencoolen area that hasn't changed in the last few years; dorm beds, singles and doubles are still cheap and basic in this hostel located on the 2nd floor of an unassuming looking concrete building and as close to the epitome of cheap sleeps as you're likely to find in Singapore.

TREEHOUSE BACKPACKER'S HOSTEL

Map p68 Hostel \$

☎ 6392 5331; www.treehouse.sg; 197 Jalan Besar; dm \$20; 📍 Bugis

A smallish backpackers hostel with two dorm rooms; your host at Treehouse is the heavily tattooed Adrian Neo, who's always happy to advise visitors on what activities the area has to offer. The price includes free internet, breakfast, DIY laundry services, hot and cold showers, bath towels and bedding, and free tattoo advice.

DRAGON INN HOSTEL

Map p68 Hostel \$

☎ 6296 0776; 1 Kelantan Rd; dm \$16;

📍 Bugis; 📍

Looking like a converted warehouse space, this fairly new hostel has 30 beds, free wireless, a barely furnished common area with a TV and chairs, and a communal kitchen. Price includes breakfast.

ORCHARD ROAD

When many think Singapore, they think Orchard Rd; undoubtedly the veritable heart of chic-ness in the Lion City, this area also has some of its poshest hotels. Though there aren't any budget options coming anywhere close to those found in Little India, the area does offer a few midrange hotels worth checking out. This section encompasses hotels served by the Somerset, Orchard and Newton MRT stations.

FOUR SEASONS HOTEL

Map pp74-5 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6734 1110; www.fourseasons.com/singapore; 190 Orchard Blvd; s/d from \$435/475; 📍 Orchard; 📍

In a quiet, tree-lined street just off Orchard Rd, the Four Seasons has a beautiful lobby matched by elegant antique-style rooms. Among its many facilities are air-conditioned tennis courts. Check out its weekend special, which starts at \$248.

SHERATON TOWERS

Map pp74-5 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6737 6888; www.sheraton.com/towersingapore; 39 Scotts Rd; deluxe/executive r \$430/500; 📍 Newton; 📍

Oozes opulence and has all manner of facilities. The rooms are decorated in mossy greens with beautiful pictures of flowers, and the service is efficient and pleasant. The grand lobby is a lovely place for tea.

GOODWOOD PARK HOTEL

Map pp74-5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6730 1811; www.goodwoodparkhotel.com; 22 Scotts Rd; r from \$385; 📍 Orchard; 📍

This historic hotel has an old-fashioned feel but bags of class, from its two swimming pools to the hotel's pet cat roaming the lobby. Nice touches in the rooms include arty black-and-white photos of Singapore, Persian rugs and neatly hidden TVs and minibars. If you have \$3000 to spare, treat yourself to a night in the opulent Brunei suite.

MERITUS MANDARIN SINGAPORE

Map pp74-5 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6737 2200; www.mandarin-singapore.com; 333 Orchard Rd; south-/main-tower r from \$360/400; 📍 Somerset; 📍

An elegant yet informal place. The cheapest rooms are in the south tower, while those in the main tower (the one with the observation lounge and the revolving restaurant Top of the M) are decorated in warm tones with Oriental-themed furniture and fresh orchids in the bathrooms.

REGENT HOTEL

Map pp74-5 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6733 8888; www.regenthotels.com; 1 Cuscaden Rd; r from \$350; 📍 Orchard; 📍

Walking from the far west end of Orchard Rd, this is the first hotel you'll come across

and one of the best. It's a classy operation with all the colourful, spacious rooms arranged around its airy central atrium. There are acres of marble and gorgeous furnishings in the lobby, which is a top place for afternoon tea.

LE MERIDIEN SINGAPORE

Map pp74–5 Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6733 8855; www.lemeridien-singapore.com;
100 Orchard Rd; s/d from \$290/320;
M Somerset; ♿ ♿

The atrium lobby, with its glass-panel elevators and line drawings, is beginning to look dated, but this is still a decent hotel. The rooms are quite pleasant and the Chinese screens on the walls add a distinctive touch.

GRAND HYATT SINGAPORE

Map pp74–5 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6738 1234; <http://singapore.grand.hyatt.com>;
10-12 Scotts Rd; r from \$380; M Orchard; ♿ ♿

Redesigned in 1998 to feng shui principles, this is a very grand place. The lovely rooms, decorated in a soothing lemon colour, have louvred wooden shutters and small patios. An excellent range of facilities is complemented by two tennis courts. Grand Hyatt offers complimentary breakfast and a very liberal check-out policy. For a truly indulgent experience, try the Grand Club rooms, which offer personalised service and use of an exclusive lounge.

SHANGRI-LA HOTEL

Map pp74–5 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6737 3644; www.shangri-la.com/singapore;
22 Orange Grove Rd; Tower wing deluxe r from \$355;
M Orchard; ♿ ♿

This vast, opulent hotel, set in the leafy lanes surrounding the west end of Orchard, boasts a luxurious interior featuring a 15-acre tropical garden and large rooms done out in rich, butterscotch tones with the odd Asian touch. For long-term stayers with plenty of spare cash, there are 127 serviced apartments (at \$7500 a month or \$315 a day) and 55 private apartments.

TRADERS HOTEL

Map pp74–5 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6738 2222; 1A Cuscaden Rd; s/d from \$355/380;
M Orchard; ♿ ♿

Attached to Tanglin Mall, this hotel has stylish, plush rooms, a lovely cloud-shaped outdoor pool and an attractive water wall running the length of its spacious lobby (flowing at peak times only). Traders also has a decent gym and spa on the 4th floor.

HILTON INTERNATIONAL

Map pp74–5 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6737 2233; www.singapore.hilton.com; 581
Orchard Rd; standard r \$290, executive-floor r \$350;
M Orchard; ♿ ♿

At the heart of Orchard Rd is the Hilton. Although nothing spectacular (apart from the distinctive sculpted exterior wall panels), this is a good choice for business

HISTORIC HOTELS

It's not just Raffles that has an illustrious past (see p56). **Goodwood Park Hotel** (p169), dating from 1900 and designed to resemble a Rhine castle, served as the base for the Teutonia Club, a social club for Singapore's German community, until 1914 when it was seized by the government as part of 'enemy property'. In 1918 the building was auctioned off and renamed Club Goodwood Hall, before it morphed again into the Goodwood Park Hotel in 1929, fast becoming one of the finest hotels in Asia.

During WWII it accommodated the Japanese high command, some of whom returned here at the war's end to be tried for war crimes in a tent erected in the hotel grounds. By 1947 the hotel was back in business with a \$2.5-million renovation program bringing it back to its former glory by the early 1960s. Further improvements in the 1970s have left the hotel as it is today.

The **Fullerton Hotel** (p162) occupies the magnificent colonnaded Fullerton Building, named after Robert Fullerton, the first Governor of the Straits Settlements. When it opened in 1928, it was the largest building in Singapore and cost over \$4 million. The General Post Office, which occupied the three floors of the building, was said to have the longest counter (100m) in the world at the time. Above the GPO was the exclusive Singapore Club, in which Governor Sir Shenton Thomas and General Percival discussed surrendering Singapore to the Japanese.

In 1958 a revolving lighthouse beacon was added to the roof; its beams could be seen up to 29km away. By 1996 the GPO had moved out and the entire building underwent a multimillion-dollar renovation and reopened in 2001 to general acclaim, receiving the prestigious Urban Redevelopment Authority Architectural Award the same year.

travellers – executive-floor guests have a buffet breakfast, use of the gym and other benefits included in the room cost. Rates can go much higher.

SINGAPORE MARRIOTT

Map pp74–5

International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6735 5800; www.marriott.com/sindt;
320 Orchard Rd; deluxe/executive r \$280/340;
M Orchard; ☎

With its pagoda-like tower, this is one of the most distinctive buildings along Orchard Rd; it's located on one of Orchard Rd's busiest corners, next to the famous Tang's department store. The rooms are excellent and well decorated and the whole place has a bustling, big-city atmosphere.

ORCHARD PARADE HOTEL

Map pp74–5

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6737 1133; www.orchardparade.com.sg;
1 Tanglin Rd; r from \$310; M Orchard; ☎

Close to the bustle of Orchard Rd yet facing the greenery of Tanglin, the Orchard Parade offers good-sized rooms with huge beds and sofas – the cheapest ones are on the 6th floor (below the outdoor pool and pavilion) and below. There are a couple of good restaurants in the downstairs mall, and even a Starbucks.

ELIZABETH

Map pp74–5

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6738 1188; www.theelizabeth.com.sg;
24 Mount Elizabeth Rd; r from \$290; M Orchard;
☎

In a quiet spot a short walk north of Orchard Rd, the Elizabeth has an exclusive feel, complemented by a wonderful waterfall-side dining room where staff serve excellent wood-fired pizzas at night. The rooms, accessed by external lifts, are warm and welcoming, with William Morris-style print bedspreads. There's a nifty shortcut to Scotts Rd through the lobby of the York Hotel opposite. Recommended.

METROPOLITAN Y

Map pp74–5

Hotel/Hostel \$\$

☎ 6737 7755; www.mymca.org.sg; 60 Stevens Rd;
dm \$45, s/d from \$200/250; M Orchard; ☎

The cheapest rooms have no windows, but they're spacious and well-appointed and the excellent facilities include a gym and pool. It's a good 15-minute walk north of Orchard Rd, but a shuttle bus runs there Monday to Friday. For long-

term visitors (see p161), apartments are also available. Booking online knocks \$20 off the price.

HOTEL GRAND CENTRAL

Map pp74–5

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6737 9944; www.ghihotels.com; 22 Cavenagh Rd;
r from \$140; M Dhoby Ghaut; ☎

One of the few budget options in the Orchard Rd area, Grand Central lives up to its name, being suitably huge (390 rooms) and milling with endless tourist and business traffic. Rooms are tastefully appointed in the earth-tones so popular in Singapore, and all come with LCD TVs and four-star hotel amenities. As for location, if its Orchard Rd living you want at Bugis prices, you've come to the right place.

HOTEL SUPREME

Map pp74–5

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6737 8333; supremeh@starhub.net.sg; 15
Kramat Rd; r from \$150; M Dhoby Ghaut; ☎

Another Orchard Rd-area budget option, the inaptly named Supreme is smaller and, well, less grand than the Grand Central next door, offering smaller rooms for more money. On the plus side, it's quieter, not a bad place in its own right, and still cheaper than most other area hotels.

LLOYD'S INN

Map pp74–5

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6737 7309; www.lloydinn.com; 2 Lloyd Rd;
standard/deluxe r \$100/120; M Somerset

A quick walk south of the Orchard Rd hubbub is where you'll find this spread-out cool California 'motel-style' hotel on a quiet street surrounded by old villas. Rooms are clean, tidy, and fairly spacious, and some have lovely views of Lloyd's interior courtyard bamboo garden. Wireless internet and local calls are free. Bookings are advisable, as the low rates mean the place can fill up fast. Lloyd's is located a stone's throw from the ancestral home of former Prime Minister Lee.

EASTERN SINGAPORE

Far (for Singaporeans) from the maddening crowds, Eastern Singapore is a great place to stay for those seeking a different perspective on the Lion City. One of the main attractions of this exceptionally pleasant part of town is the chance to bookend every day amid the cooling breezes of East Coast Park.

The Eastern Singapore neighbourhood covers a large part of the island of Singapore, everything east of the Kallang MRT station.

GRAND MERCURE ROXY

Map p80

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6344 8000; www.centuryhotels.com; 50 East Coast Rd; s/d from \$230/250; **M** Eunos
This hotel has a great location close to both Katong and the East Coast Park and 9km from the airport (the entrance is on Marine Parade Rd). The contemporary Asian design of the rooms is appealing and it has plenty of facilities. Rates include breakfast.

LION CITY HOTEL

Map p80

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6744 8111; www.lioncityhotel.com.sg; 15 Tanjong Katong Rd; r from \$165; **M** Paya Lebar
One of the best nontransit midrange hotels in the Joo Chiat area, the Lion City is a sight for sore eyes in an area in which many other hotels have gone for the quick 'rooms by the hour' buck. Rooms, though not fancy, are clean and well furnished, and all bathrooms have tubs. Two blocks south of the MRT and 20 minutes from the airport, Lion City is surrounded by excellent eating options, and is a good base from which to explore both eastern and central Singapore.

CHANGI VILLAGE HOTEL

Map pp46-7

International Hotel \$\$

☎ 6379 7111; www.changivillage.com.sg; 1 Netheravon Rd; r \$180-200; **M** 2 from Tanah Merah; **M** **M**

Formerly known as Le Meridian Changi, this plush and stylish gem is located about as far away from the city centre as you can get without crossing the water. The hotel is nestled among some gorgeous gardens, offering superb views (especially at night) across to Malaysia and Pulau Ubin from its rooftop wooden deck (just steps away from its rooftop pool). Close to the Changi Golf Course, the sailing club, beach park, airport and the gentle pace of Changi Village, it's an excellent choice.

COSTA SANDS RESORT (EAST COAST)

Map p80

Chalets \$\$

☎ 6442 7955; www.costasands.com.sg; 1110 East Coast Parkway; 1-/2-storey chalets \$140/170; **M** 12, 14 or 32; **M**

Smack on the beach at East Coast Park, this is a popular spot for Singaporeans to 'escape' for the weekend, offering an

attractive, peaceful (except at weekends!) alternative to the usual city-centre accommodation, especially for travellers with kids. The chalets are comfortable and clean and there are plenty of facilities, from swimming to bike riding and fishing, plus the popular East Coast restaurants and pubs. Transport hassles into the city are the only downside.

HOTEL MALACCA

Map p80

Hotel \$

☎ 6345 7411; www.malacca.com.sg; 97 Still Rd; s/d/f \$89/99/119; **M** Eunos; **M**

Located on a somewhat busy street in the eastern end of the Joo Chiat district, your best bet at the Malacca is a room in the back if its peace and quiet that you're after. Rooms at this three-storey hotel are a decent size, and room service (on-call Chinese and Western dishes) is a nice touch.

FRAGRANCE HOTEL

Map p80

Hotel \$

☎ 6344 9888; www.fragrancehotel.com; 219 Joo Chiat Rd, Katong; s/d Sun-Thu \$58/59, Fri & Sat \$68/69; **M** Paya Lebar

In fierce competition with the Hotel 81 chain for the 'quickest dollar', Fragrance has eight branches, most of them in Geylang, with gaudy names like Pearl and Crystal. The hotels, including this original branch, are attractive and clean enough, but when you consider that they can turn one room around five times a day at \$20 per two hours, you might think twice.

HOTEL 81 JOO CHIAT

Map p80

Hotel \$

☎ 6348 8181; www.hotel81.com.sg/hotels_joochiat.shtml; 305 Joo Chiat Rd, Katong; r Sun-Fri \$49, Sat \$69; **M** Paya Lebar

One of the burgeoning chain of no-nonsense business (and funny business) hotels sprouting up in central Singapore, this one, strung out behind a row of Peranakan shophouses, is among the best-looking, though all branches are identikit inside. It offers specially fitted rooms for the disabled. Check the website for other locations.

GATEWAY HOTEL

Map p80

Boutique Hotel \$

☎ 6342 0988; gwhotel@singnet.com.sg; 60 Joo Chiat Rd, Katong; r \$48-148; **M** Paya Lebar

The Gateway is one of the few boutique hotels in the area. Housed in a vaguely fortlike building with sloping tiled roofs, it offers modern rooms with louvred shutters, though the TV bolted to the ceiling

detracts from the general effect. Ask for a room with a window, even though Joo Chiat Rd can get a little noisy.

JING DONG HOTEL Map p80 Hotel \$

☎ 6842 5828; 33-35 Lorong 12, Geylang Rd; r \$50; Kallang

It'd be difficult to find a hotel better representing the strange dichotomy that is the Geylang district, Singapore's nexus of sleazy and spiritual. Just off to the side of the red-light district's heart, this two-storey hotel sits in the twin pious shadows of a stately mosque on the right and the [Pu Ji Si Buddhist Research Centre \(p77\)](#). Though Jing Dong rents rooms by the hour (as do all hotels in this part of town), the 2nd storey is reserved for more respectable (ie overnight) customers. Rooms are clean and as well furnished as could be expected for \$50.

RUCKSACK Map p80 Hostel \$

☎ 6443 3848; [www.rucksackinn.com](#); 697E East Coast Rd; dm \$30; 12 from Tanah Merah exit 2;

Offering the most expensive dorm beds in town, Rucksack has a cool vibe, a punk mural depicting a party of cubist mutants on the wall, and as much free information pamphlets, maps and what have you as you'll ever need. Located in the quieter eastern end of Joo Chiat, Rucksack has two eight-bed dorms, segregated by sex whenever possible. It's above Genesis Bistro Bar.

BETEL BOX Map p80 Hostel \$

☎ 6247 7340; [www.betelbox.com](#); 200 Joo Chiat Rd; mixed/female dm \$20/22, d \$50; Paya Lebar;

If it's a genuine Singapore experience you're looking for, you've come to the right place. This charming and traditionally furnished hostel is encased by a riot of some of the best local eateries in Joo Chiat and is reasonably near to East Coast Park as well. Betel Box boasts a cosy air-conditioned communal area with TV, DVDs, video games, computers and even a pool table (all of which are notorious for keeping guests in the hostel for too long). It's also equipped with tons of travel guides and a book-exchange corner. Friendly staff offer free tours for guests. If you want to taste a slice of Singapore life, look no further.

FERN LOFT Map p80

Hostel \$

☎ 6444 9066; [www.fernloft.com](#); 693 East Coast Rd; dm \$18; 12 from Tanah Merah exit 2;

Cheaper than Rucksack Hostel next door, but not quite as tidy, Fern Loft has two dorm rooms, one mixed 10-bed dorm and one six-bed female dorm. Connected to the downstairs bar and cafe, patrons are offered a free welcome drink, 50% off meals and 20% off drinks at the bar. It also has a cool rooftop bar, free wireless, airport transport and breakfast. It's above George's Mad Bar & Cafe.

SENTOSA ISLAND

Sentosa, Singapore's island playground, where Singaporeans come to bicycle, rollerblade, and spend the weekend on the beach. You won't find any 'off the beaten track' accommodation here, but you will find a few lovely – nearly rustic – surprises. Sentosa can be reached by monorail, shuttle bus, and even cable-car, all of which leave from the HarbourFront MRT station.

SENTOSA SINGAPORE

Map p100 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6275 0331; [www.beaufort.com.sg](#); 2 Bukit Manis Rd; r from \$290;

A low-rise, elegantly designed five-star resort with a beautiful cliff-top setting. Contemporary furnishings in the rooms, the pleasant [Terrace](#) cafe, the very classy [Cliff \(p137\)](#) seafood restaurant and a garden spa with mud pools, Turkish baths and a curious meditation area make this a splendid choice for its target market. The promotional rate takes the price much over midweek.

SHANGRI-LA'S RASA SENTOSA

Map p100 International Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6275 0100; [www.shangri-la.com/singapore/rasasentosa/en/index.aspx](#); 101 Siloso Rd; hill-/sea-facing r from \$290/320;

Singapore's only beachfront resort is shaped like a bent cruise ship and is ideal for a short family break. The rooms are very well designed to take maximum advantage of the sweeping views and there's a huge swimming pool for guests who don't quite fancy the Singapore Strait waters. Prices include breakfast.

SILOSO BEACH RESORT (SENTOSA)

Map p100

Hotel \$\$\$

☎ 6722 3333; www.silosobeachresort.com; 51 Imbiah Walk; s/d \$190/270; 📍 🚗

The Siloso Beach Resort is the closest thing to a bona-fide jungle resort as you'll find on Sentosa. The concept behind this new resort is simple – rather than removing any of the trees, builders simply designed around them, with some pretty impressive results (several of the rooms are built around glass-encased jungle trees). There's a lovely tropical pool, a waterfall, and beautiful views. Definitely the antidote for antiseptic Singapore!

SIJORI RESORT SENTOSA

Map p100

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6271 2002; www.sjoriresort.com.sg/sentosa.htm; 23 Beach View; r from \$180; 📍

Despite the appealing setting in a colonial-era mansion at the centre of the island, this

is the least fancy of Sentosa's upmarket hotels. The rooms and facilities, including a pool room and video arcade, are not terribly inspiring, but are reasonable value, and rates include breakfast.

COSTA SANDS RESORT (SENTOSA)

Map p100

Hotel \$\$

☎ 6275 1034; www.costasands.com.sg; 30 Imbiah Walk; kampong huts from \$60, r from \$140; 📍 🚗

Reasonable budget choice, with 15 small air-conditioned wooden huts sleeping up to three people and using shared bathrooms. Use of the barbecue pit is \$5 extra. Scoring a room over the weekend can be near impossible unless you book months ahead; during the week it shouldn't be a problem. Its hotel rooms are quite smart and good value. There's a small pool guests can use. Discounts are available online

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