

Singapore Fling

Shop till you quite literally drop into one of Singapore's sleekest new hotels or restaurants

Called the Lion City, after a legendary 11th-Century prince spotted one on this island in the South China Sea, Singapore is now an urban jungle roaring with the sound of brand new casinos and hotels sprouting up around Marina Bay. The city's swankiest new overnight digs can be found nearby on Sentosa Island where nascent luxury brand **Capella** (capellasingapore.com) opened its first Asian address last year. Sir Norman Foster attached two futuristic wings to the 1880s British military hall, matching the colour

of his metalwork to the original building's terra cotta tiles. The 211 room resort feels unexpectedly tranquil despite overlooking one of the world's busiest shipping ports. In the centre of town, **St Regis Singapore** (stregis.com/singapore) delivers attentive butlers, Asia's finest PLOH bed linens and a sleek pool ideal for lounging around.

Shopping is a national sport in Singapore; locals satisfy their craving during the **Great Singapore Sale** (greatsingapore.com.sg), eight frenzied summer weeks from May

into July. Discounts, extended hours at all the top malls and special tourist prices lead up to an organised bargain-hunting challenge with thousands of dollars in cash prizes. The world's top brands maintain multiple outlets along Orchard Road but there are insider treasures to be found here too like bespoke candlemaker **Flaming Queen** (flaming-queen.com) inside the new Mandarin Gallery, homemade aromatic lotions and potions from **Lemongrass House** (lemongrasshouse.com.sg) and Singapore's own stylish frocks and accessories from **Projectshop Blood Brothers** (at 290 Orchard Road). Also worth a wander is Haji Lane, parallel to Arab Street, where

merchants and traders settled during the 1820s. Closet-sized shops like **Pluck** (pluck.com.sg) are exciting incubators for local design talent. Dresses, hand-bags and homewares share this intimate space with a bijou ice cream parlour serving delectable, indigenous flavours like sour sop (a tart fruit) and earl grey with fig.

The locals' other grand passion is food. In Chinatown, alongside dusty shops which seem as though they opened during the last Chinese dynasty, the cheerful **Dim Joy** (dimjoy.com) serves authentic fare thanks to chefs from China's Guangdong Province who hand-knead succulent dumplings all day and night.



FROM TOP:
COLONIAL
BEDROOM AT
CAPELLA; THE BAR
NEXT DOOR



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:
Lighthouse Restaurant
at the Fullerton Hotel;
A chef working hard at
Iggy's; Prosperity Pouch
at Dim Joy; Candles by
Flaming Queen

The first Southeast Asian restaurant to make its way onto international top restaurant lists, **Iggy's** (iggys.com.sg) proves that great food needs only the simplest backdrop. Ever-changing menus feature fusion food like the signature Wagyu burger and amazing pasta dish, sakura ebi cappellini. The 13 counter seats are literally Singapore's most coveted reservations.

Verbal battles are not uncommon among local foodies over which hotel serves the best Sunday brunch. Certainly one

of the most decadent can be found at **The Fullerton** (fullertonhotel.com) which covers a United Nations of culinary options from sushi, Peking duck and Asian noodles to fluffy waffles, European cheeses and chocolate fondue.

Ritz Carlton Singapore (ritzcarlton.com/singapore) offers a serious contender on weekends too, with homemade breads, a cornucopia of exotic fruits and Asian favourites.

The hotel's rooms there, with their iconic round windows above the deep soak bathtubs, are an enduring favourite for Singapore-bound travellers who know to skip July and August, the equatorial island's steamiest months.



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