

# Your Essential Guide to Singapore

Singapore is one of Asia's safest and most organized destinations, but its strict rules and tropical climate mean good preparation is key. Knowing what's allowed, how to move around, and what to expect helps you travel with confidence. Plan smart — and enjoy everything from futuristic gardens to hawker food without surprises.

## Why read this



**Know entry and visa rules before you fly**



**Avoid fines and scams**



**Stay healthy and safe in a tropical climate**



**Manage your budget wisely**



**Enjoy local life with confidence**

# Entry & Documents

1

## Passport Validity

Your passport must be valid for **6+ months** beyond your planned departure date from Singapore. Check this well before booking your flight.

2

## Visa Requirements

**Visa-free entry** for visitors from the Netherlands, UK, and US for short stays. Most nationalities receive a 30 or 90-day social visit pass on arrival.

3

## Prohibited Items

**No chewing gum, vapes, or drugs** – Singapore enforces these rules strictly with heavy fines and potential imprisonment. Leave them at home.

4

## Embassy Registration

**Register with your embassy** upon arrival for travel updates, safety alerts, and emergency assistance during your stay.



Singapore's immigration process is efficient and straightforward. Have your documents ready and declare any restricted items to avoid delays.

# Health & Safety

## Vaccines

**Hepatitis A** is recommended for all travelers. Routine vaccines should be up to date. **No malaria** risk in Singapore, so antimalarials aren't needed.

## Main Risks

**Dengue fever** from mosquitoes is the primary health concern. Use repellent. Petty theft is rare. Traffic fines are strict — always use crosswalks.

## Drinking Water

Tap water is **safe to drink** throughout Singapore. The water quality meets WHO standards, so you can refill bottles anywhere and stay hydrated.

## Emergency Numbers

**Police: 999** for emergencies and crimes.  
**Ambulance: 995** for medical emergencies.  
English is widely spoken by all emergency services.

# Money & Payments



## Currency Basics

The local currency is the **Singapore Dollar (SGD)**. The exchange rate is approximately **USD 1 = SGD 1.3**, though this fluctuates daily.

### Payment Methods

Cards and contactless payments are widely accepted at restaurants, shops, and attractions. However, carry some **cash for hawker centres** and small food stalls.

### Best Payment Cards

**Wise and Revolut** work exceptionally well in Singapore with low fees and competitive exchange rates. Notify your bank before traveling to avoid card blocks.

### Daily Budget

Plan for **S\$70–250+** per day depending on your travel style. Budget travelers can manage on less, while luxury experiences cost significantly more.

ATMs are plentiful throughout the city, especially near MRT stations and shopping areas. Most accept international cards with reasonable withdrawal fees.

# Connectivity



## Tourist SIM & eSIM Options

Three main providers offer tourist plans: **Singtel hi!Tourist**, **StarHub**, and **M1**. All are available at Changi Airport and authorized retailers.



## Data Plans & Pricing

Tourist plans start from **S\$12–30** and typically include **100 GB+ data**, more than enough for navigation, social media, and video calls during your stay.



## International Roaming

EU, UK, and US roaming is **not included** in Singapore plans. Buy a local eSIM before departure or upon arrival for the best rates and coverage.

Free Wi-Fi is available at Changi Airport, shopping malls, and many cafes. The **Wireless@SG** network offers complimentary Wi-Fi at thousands of hotspots across the island, though you'll need to register with a local number.



# Transport & Driving



## MRT & Buses

The **MRT and bus network** is clean, cheap, and fully air-conditioned. Get an EZ-Link card or use contactless payment for seamless travel across the island.



## Ride-Hailing Apps

**Grab and Gojek** are cheaper than traditional taxis and offer transparent pricing. Watch for surge pricing during peak hours and rainy weather.



## Driving in Singapore

Driving is allowed with an **English licence or IDP**. Roads are safe and well-maintained, but fines for violations are strict and expensive.

## Getting Around Tips

- Download the MyTransport.SG app for real-time MRT and bus schedules
- Avoid rush hours (7:30–9:30 AM and 5:30–7:30 PM) when possible
- Taxis are metered and reliable but more expensive than Grab
- Walking is pleasant in the morning and evening when it's cooler



# Customs & Airport Rules

1

## Carry-On Liquids

Liquids, gels, and aerosols must be in containers of **100 ml or less**, placed in a clear plastic bag. This applies to toiletries, perfumes, and beverages.

2

## Electronic Devices

**Power banks** must be carried in hand luggage only, never in checked baggage. Laptops and tablets can be in either, but keep them accessible for security screening.

3

## Strictly Prohibited Items

**No chewing gum, vapes, or pirated items** allowed into Singapore. E-cigarettes and their accessories are completely banned. Penalties include heavy fines and confiscation.

4

## Alcohol & Tobacco

Declare all alcohol at customs. **No duty-free cigarettes** are allowed. If you bring tobacco, you'll pay significant duties even on small quantities.

Singapore's customs regulations are among the strictest in the world. When in doubt, declare items or leave them at home. Changi Airport staff are professional and helpful, so don't hesitate to ask questions if you're unsure about what you're carrying.

# Food & Water

1

## Safe Drinking Water

Tap water is **safe** to drink everywhere in Singapore. You can confidently refill water bottles at restaurants, hotels, and public fountains. The water quality is excellent.

2

## Hawker Centre Food

Eat at busy **hawker centres** for authentic, affordable meals with good hygiene. Look for stalls with long queues – they're popular for a reason. Food is fresh and delicious.

3

## Must-Try Dishes

Don't miss **chicken rice** (Singapore's national dish), **laksa** (spicy coconut noodle soup), and **chilli crab** (sweet, spicy, and messy perfection). Each tells a story of Singapore's diverse culture.

Food safety standards in Singapore are among the highest in the world. The government strictly regulates all food establishments, from high-end restaurants to small hawker stalls. Vegetarian and halal options are widely available, clearly marked, and easy to find throughout the city.



# Culture & Etiquette

## Religious Sites

Dress modestly when visiting temples and mosques. Cover shoulders and knees. **Remove shoes** before entering. Show respect by speaking quietly and asking before taking photos.

## Public Behavior

**Don't litter, chew gum, or smoke** in public areas. These offenses carry significant fines. Designated smoking areas are clearly marked throughout the city.

## Tipping Customs

Tipping is **not expected** in Singapore. Most restaurants include a 10% service charge in the bill. Extra tipping is appreciated but never required or pressured.

## Respect & Authority

**Respect authorities** and follow rules strictly. Police and security staff are professional. Be polite at religious sites, especially during prayer times and ceremonies.

## Social Etiquette Tips

- Queue patiently – Singaporeans take orderly lines seriously
- Stand on the left on escalators, walk on the right
- Keep voices down on public transport
- Use both hands when giving or receiving items from elders



# Travel Timing

## Best Time to Visit

Singapore is a **year-round destination**. The driest months are **February to April**, ideal for outdoor activities and beach visits.

## Ideal Trip Length

**3–5 days** is perfect for experiencing Singapore's highlights without rushing. Add extra days for deeper exploration or day trips to nearby islands.



## Temperature & Climate

**Average temp: 27–33°C** with high humidity. Expect afternoon rain showers year-round. Air conditioning is ubiquitous indoors.

## Time Zone

**GMT+8** (Singapore Standard Time). That's **+8 hours** ahead of London, **+13 hours** ahead of New York, and **-3 hours** behind Sydney.

Pack light, breathable clothing and comfortable walking shoes. Bring a light rain jacket or umbrella for sudden tropical downpours. Layers help when moving between hot outdoors and heavily air-conditioned indoor spaces.



# Top 5 Highlights



## Gardens by the Bay

Explore futuristic **climate-controlled domes** housing plants from around the world. The evening light show at the Supertree Grove is magical and free to watch.



## Marina Bay

Walk along the waterfront for stunning **skyline views**, especially at sunset. The area comes alive in the evening with light shows, restaurants, and vibrant energy.



## Sentosa Island

Singapore's resort island offers **beaches, cable car rides**, and Universal Studios. Perfect for families and anyone seeking entertainment and relaxation.



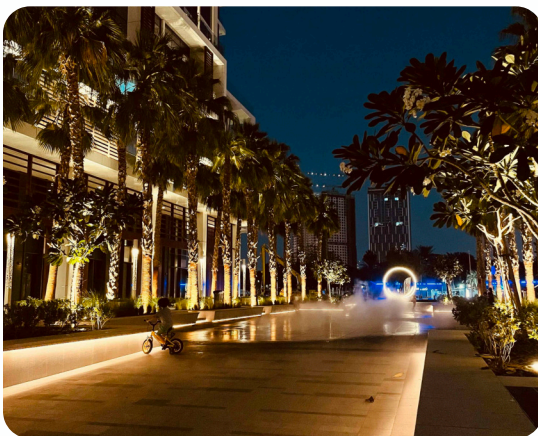
## Singapore Botanic Gardens

A **UNESCO World Heritage Site** featuring the stunning National Orchid Garden. Free entry to most areas, peaceful walking paths, and beautiful tropical greenery.



## Cultural Districts

Explore **Chinatown, Little India, and Kampong Gelam** for authentic food, colorful architecture, and unique shopping. Each district has its own character and charm.



# Useful Travel Apps

## Local Apps



### MyTransport.SG

Essential for navigating Singapore's **public transport system**. Shows live timings, routes, and fare information for MRT trains and buses across the entire network.



### Visit Singapore

Official tourism app with curated **attractions, events**, and local tips. Includes interactive maps, suggested itineraries, and insider recommendations from locals.



### myENV

Check real-time **weather forecasts, air quality** index, and dengue fever alerts. Particularly useful for planning outdoor activities and staying healthy.



### Grab / Gojek

Singapore's leading **ride-hailing and delivery apps**. Book taxis, private cars, or food delivery. More affordable than traditional taxis with transparent pricing.

# General Travel Apps

## Google Maps / Citymapper

**Navigation and route planning** apps that work excellently in Singapore. Both offer real-time public transport information, walking directions, and estimated travel times throughout the city.

## Google Translate

Download language packs for **offline translation**. While English is widely spoken, this helps with Mandarin, Malay, or Tamil signs and conversations in cultural neighborhoods.

## Wise / XE

**Currency conversion and card management** apps. Check live exchange rates, track spending across currencies, and manage your travel money efficiently without excessive fees.

## VPN App

Protect your privacy with **safe browsing on public Wi-Fi** networks. Essential when using hotel, cafe, or airport Wi-Fi to access banking or sensitive information securely.

## Before You Go

Download these apps before departure and set up accounts where needed. Some require phone verification, which is easier to do at home. Check that your phone has sufficient storage space for offline maps and translation packs.

**Pro tip:** Screenshot important confirmations, addresses, and emergency contacts. This ensures you can access critical information even without internet connectivity.

