



VI. Singapore Facts



SINGAPORE FACTS

○ GENERAL INFORMATION

Singapore, founded as a British trading colony in 1819, declared its independence in 1965. Over the next four decades, Singapore worked hard to overcome numerous hurdles, attaining an average growth rate of 7.5% per annum.

Located right in the heart of Asia, Singapore thrives as a financial and trading hub for the region and beyond. Through global trade linkages and establishments of Free Trade Areas, ties with China, India and the rest of Asia are continually strengthened. Language fluency, coupled with excellent technological and management expertise gives Singapore an edge in accessing this growing region.

Even as Singapore has transformed into a cosmopolitan city state, it has not lost its Asian charms, reflected in its strong multi-cultural society. This is evident in its hospitality, cuisine, arts, and architecture as Singapore continues to evolve, successfully blending the East and West.



Geography

Singapore is an island country in Southeast Asia. It is about 140 kilometres north of the equator and has an area of 639 square kilometres. Singapore is 42 kilometres long and 23 kilometres across at its widest point. About half of the offshore islands of Singapore are uninhabited. Some of them have been developed for recreation and tourism.



Singapore's accessibility by air and sea help consolidate its status as a favourite global convention centre. Singapore's location within South East Asia makes it a favourite tourism destination, as well as a convenient hub for "short-hops" to neighbouring countries.



Singapore has an equatorial climate, which is warm and humid all year round. The temperature averages around 28 degrees Celsius daily, with abundant rainfall during the monsoon seasons from December to March and June to September. In between, the weather is characterized by light and variable surface winds and rain ranging from light showers to thunderstorms.

Population

Singapore has a population of about 4 million, of which one-fifth comprise of non-resident workers and expatriates. The resident population is multiethnic comprising 77% Chinese, 14% Malays, 7.6% Indians and 1.4% are of diverse ethnicity. Singapore enjoys racial harmony and social cohesion, and is one of the most cosmopolitan societies in the world, being home to a sizeable expatriate community.

Language

English is the language of education and is widely spoken throughout Singapore. It unites people of different races and different tongues, and is used in all shops and places of business. That said, it is by no means uncommon to hear conversation being conducted in Mandarin, Malay, Tamil or one of the many dialects. Ask for help or directions in English, though, and they will switch languages in mid-sentence to help you! Being an international tourist destination, Singapore has a fully-developed tourism industry, and this includes professional guides and translators fluent in a variety of foreign languages. An increasing number of Singaporeans are fluent in French, German and Japanese.

Infrastructure and Communications

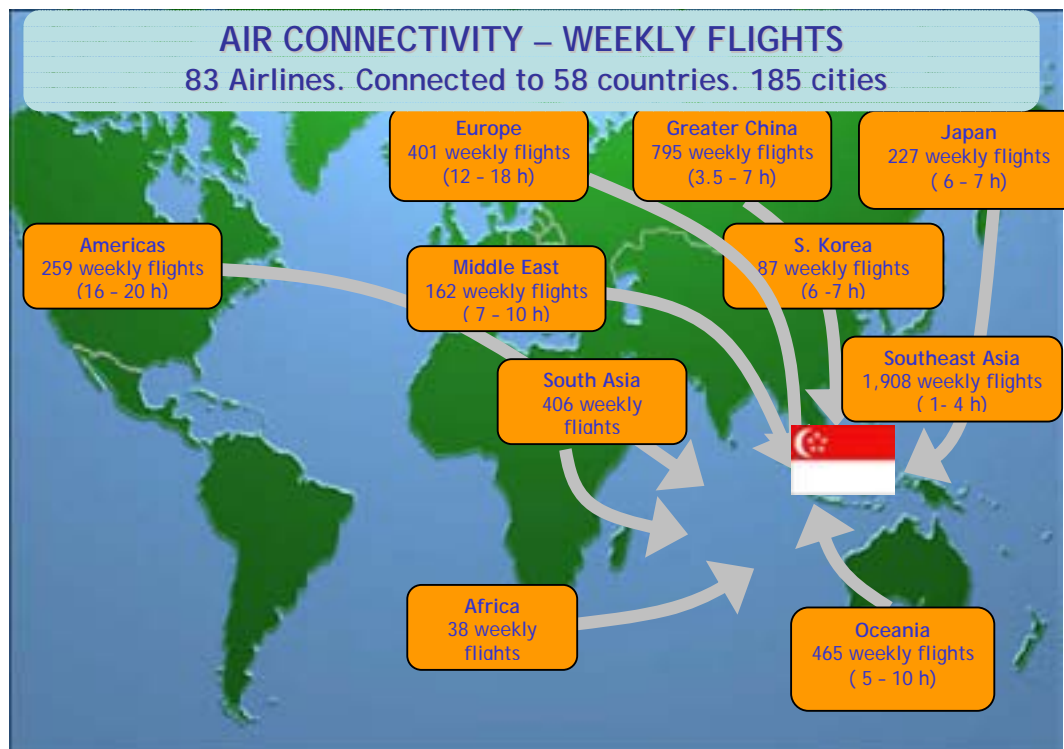
Singapore has a well-developed infrastructure to meet all business needs. The city was ranked 3rd among 61 countries for infrastructure in the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2006. Singapore is also an important telecommunications centre in this region and was ranked 2nd most technologically ready nation in Asia in the Global Competitiveness Report 2006-2007. The first nation-wide broadband information infrastructure in the world is available island wide and Singapore has also established high-speed connectivity to more than 30 countries.



Air Connectivity

Singapore's Changi International Airport is a premier international air hub. A liberal aviation policy, which entails an exchange of traffic rights with other countries, enables airlines to expand connectivity between Singapore and the rest of the world. This has led to Singapore being a crucial point on air traffic routes across the world:

There are more than 80 international airlines operating scheduled services through Singapore to 185 cities in 58 countries worldwide.



The national carrier, Singapore Airlines, together with its code-share partners, flies to 90 cities in 40 countries.

Every week, more than 4,000 scheduled flights provide quick and convenient connections from Singapore to major destinations worldwide.

The Budget Terminal, customized for low cost carriers was completed in March 2006 and is able to handle about 2.7 million passengers per annum. As at 1 March 2007, low cost carriers in Singapore operate 566 weekly flights to 27 cities.



Visa Requirements

Nationals of a large majority of countries do not require visas for social visits of 30 days duration provided they are in possession of recognized valid travel documents, adequate funds and return or onward tickets.

Countries, which require visas for social visits are:

Afghanistan	Georgia **	Lebanon	Russia **	Turkmenistan **
Algeria	India *	Libya	Saudi Arabia	Ukraine **
Armenia **	Iran	Moldova **	Somalia	Uzbekistan **
Azerbaijan **	Iraq	Morocco	Sudan	Yemen
Bangladesh	Jordan	Myanmar *	Syria	
Belarus **	Kazakhstan **	People's Republic of China **	Tajikistan **	
Egypt	Kyrgyzstan **	Pakistan	Tunisia	

**(Except Diplomatic/Official passport holders)*

*** (Except Diplomatic/Official/Service passport holders for a stay of up to 30 days)*

The visa processing time is 3 – 5 days

Exchange Rates

Most banks handle travellers' cheques and change foreign currencies. Passports are required when cashing travellers' cheques and a nominal commission may be charged. Apart from banks and hotels, foreign currencies can also be exchanged at licensed money changers who may offer better exchange rates. Most shopping complexes have a licensed money changer which usually has the sign "Licensed Money Changer" displayed. Visitors are not encouraged to change money with unlicensed money changers. Credit/charge cards are widely accepted.

Other than the Singapore Dollar, the US and Australian Dollars, Yen and British Pound are also accepted in most major shopping centres.

Below is a list of approximate exchange rates for major currencies (accurate as of 6 July 2010)

COUNTRY	CURRENCY	EXCHANGE RATE
EUROPEAN UNION	Euro	1.75
UNITED KINGDOM	Sterling Pound	2.11
UNITED STATES	United States Dollar	1.39
JAPAN	Yen	0.016
INDIA	Rupee	0.03

(Singapore Dollar per 1 unit of foreign currency. Eg. 1 Euro = S\$1.75)

Source: <http://www.xe.com/>



Safety

Singapore is one of the safest cities in the world, where both locals and visitors can walk along the streets late at night without fear. The nation's general economic prosperity and professional, effective police force contribute to the low crime rate, and enable continued success in controlling crime and enhancing personal security.

Over the last 15 years, Singapore's security and emergency response agencies have built up their capabilities to respond to contingencies or threats. These plans are in place and are exercised regularly over the years.

Singapore is globally ranked third in the "protection of personal security and private property" and first in "social cohesion as a priority for the government" by the World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY), published by the International Institute for Management Development. The WCY also identified Singapore as the most politically stable country in Asia. In research done by Mercer Human Resource Consulting in 2008, Singapore was ranked ninth in personal safety among the world's top 50 cities.

City	Ranking
Luxembourg	1
Bern	2
Geneva	2
Helsinki	2
Zurich	2
Vienna	6
Oslo	7
Stockholm	7
Singapore	9

Source: Mercer Human Resource Consulting 2008

Public Transportation



Singapore has a world-class, highly efficient and reliable public transport system, which consists of the mass rapid transit system, bus services and taxis.

Travelling by public transport in Singapore is inexpensive. The operating hours also make travelling convenient and safe throughout the day.



Mode of Transport	Operating Hours	Fare
Mass Rapid Transit (MRT)	5:20am – 12:00am	S\$0.80 – S\$2.00
Buses	6:00am – 12:00am	S\$0.80 – S\$1.70
Taxis	24 hours	\$2.80 onwards

Fares on the MRT and buses can be paid conveniently by means of contactless stored-value tickets, called EZlink cards. These cards can take the form of single-trip tickets (only for use on the MRT), long-term passes and the Singapore Tourist Pass.

Public transport, being the main means of transportation, for most has significantly reduced the problem of traffic congestion in Singapore. Furthermore, Singapore has implemented systems and policies to manage car ownership and usage. Thus, traffic in Singapore is generally smooth-flowing.

Medical Services

Singapore's medical standards, being one of the highest in Asia, have made it the regional centre for medical excellence. Its well-established healthcare system comprises a total of 13 private hospitals, 10 public (government) hospitals and several specialist clinics, each specializing in and catering to different patient needs.



The island network of 18 outpatient polyclinics and some 2,000 private medical practitioner's clinics provides our primary health care services. Each polyclinic is an affordable subsidised one-stop health centre, providing outpatient medical care, follow-up of patients discharged from hospitals, immunisation, health screening and education, investigative facilities and pharmacy services.

Patients are free to choose the providers within the government or private healthcare delivery system and can walk in for a consultation at any private clinic or any government polyclinic. For emergencies, ambulance services are always on standby to take patients to the 24-hour Accident & Emergency Departments located in the government hospitals.



o **WORLD-CLASS CONVENTION FACILITIES**



The meetings infrastructure in Singapore is unparalleled in Asia. A range of super deluxe and three and four star hotels are located in the City Centre. Singapore has networking venues and magnificent and culturally rich social venues which will enhance the overall delegate experience. Furthermore the technologically-advanced environment in Singapore facilitates maximum connectivity and minimum business disruption for all conference attendees.

The Union of International Associations (UIA) ranked Singapore Top Convention City in the World in 2007 and 2008 and the leading convention destination in Asia for the past 26 years. The International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA), based in Amsterdam, ranked Singapore as the world's third Top Convention City in 2007 and number one in Asia. Successful conventions in Singapore are the norm, rather than the exception, as professionals with experience and expertise will ensure that every last detail is meticulously taken care of, every moment skilfully coordinated.



Singapore has hosted many major international conferences, including:

Year	Event	Attendance
2005	117 th international Olympics Committee Meeting	5,000
2006	Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank	12,000
2008	McKinsey Partners Conference	
2009	General Assembly and Congress of the International Federation of Interior Architects/ Interior Designers (IFI)	1,000
2009	2009 Icsid World Design Congress	1,000
2009	ITB Asia 2009	5,000
2009	Singapore International Energy Week	5,000

Singapore has also been selected as host destination for the following events:

Year	Event	Attendance
2010	Western Pacific Congress on Chemotherapy And Infectious Diseases	1,000
2010	13 th International Conference on Emergency Medicine (ICEM)	1,200
2010	RoboCup 2010	3,500



2010	Youth Olympic Games (YOG) 2010	15,000
2010	World Congress on Biomechanics	4,000
2011	20 th World Orchid Conference and Show	1,300
2011	15 th Asia Pacific Retailers Convention & Exhibition 2011 (APRCE)	4,000
2011	World Congress of the International Academy of Oral Oncology	1,000
2010	Singapore International Energy Week 2010	5,000
2011	AeroSpace Supplier eXchange 2011	3,800
2012	International Conference on Commercial Arbitration	1,000
2012	World Conference on Tobacco or Health	3,000
2013	International Congress of Genetics	3,000
2015	World Congress on Cardiac Pacing and Electrophysiology	4,000



After Conference Hours



Uniquely Singapore – “unique” is the word that best captures Singapore - a dynamic, cosmopolitan city-state where different cultures, ethnic groups and religions blend harmoniously. A bridge between the East and the West for centuries, Singapore, located in the heart of fascinating Southeast Asia, continues to embrace tradition and modernity today. Brimming with unbridled energy and bursting with exciting events, the city-state offers countless unique memorable experiences waiting to be discovered.

With such an exciting diversity of ethnic cultures and attractions, there is always something to do in Singapore. The Lion City also offers duty-free shopping, more than 30 tempting local, Asian and international cuisines plus sports galore including a large number of lush golf courses!

Singapore offers exceptional value for money in terms of shopping, dining; entertainment and accommodation. Delegates will enjoy a high quality experience at an affordable price. Furthermore the universal appeal of Singapore, both within Asia and long-haul markets, will ensure maximum delegate attendance at the Conference.

A spectacular array of arts events is offered all year round. Singapore has it all, from the fine art and antique exhibitions, award-winning music and dance extravagances, to cutting-edge drama, film and comedy. Delegates can immerse themselves in the sights and sounds of traditional Chinese opera, embark on a leisurely exploration of Singapore’s arts district, visit museums and check out the various performing arts venues and institutions, including the world class arts complex, The Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay.

