



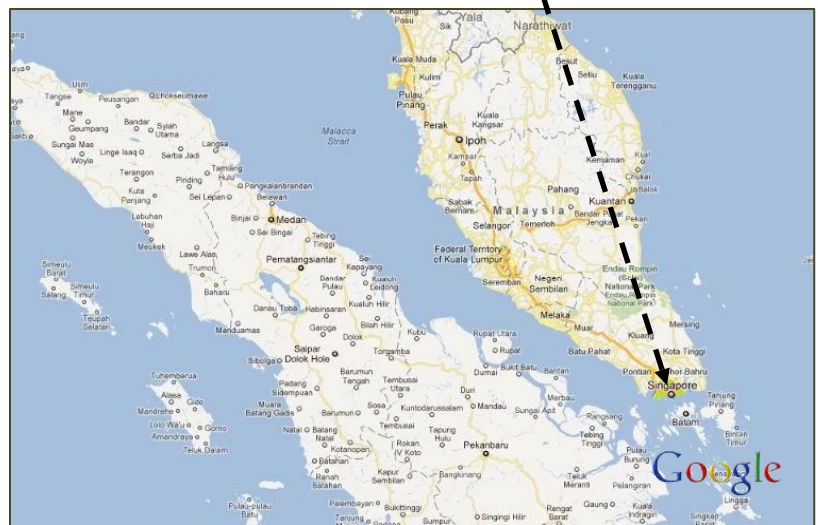
Trekking the Planet

Discovering the Cultural and Natural Significance of the World



Where are we now?

- Darren and Sandy are in Singapore, located at 1° N and 104° E.
- We have traveled approximately 20,559 miles (33,087 kilometers) from our starting point in California.



People and Culture

- The micro-state of Singapore was founded in 1819 by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles. Singapore became a British possession in 1824. It was governed by the British until it was overrun by Japanese troops in 1942 during World War II.
- Singapore was re-occupied by the British at the end of the war and it became self-governing under the British Commonwealth in 1959. It became an independent nation in 1965.
- Singapore has four official languages: English, Mandarin Chinese, Malay and Tamil. About 50% speak Mandarin as their first language, followed by English with about 32% of speakers. The country's national anthem is in Malay, even though only about 15% of the population speaks it as a first language.
- There are several distinct ethnic neighborhoods in Singapore, including Chinatown, Little India and Kampong Glam (Muslim Quarter). Each area contains traditional food and shops.
- Over 2,000 miles (3,200 kilometers) of roads exist in Singapore. However, only one in 10 residents own a car because of high taxes associated with car ownership. Most people use taxis, buses, trains / subways and bikes to get around. There are 25,000 taxis within Singapore.



Little India and Chinatown (sources: Flickr.com / 喫遊趣, Flickr.com /Khalzuri)

Did you know?

With an area of 244 square miles (633 square kilometers), Singapore is one of the 20 smallest countries in the world. It is about 3 ½ times the size of Washington D.C. and has a population of about 5 million, making it the second-most densely populated country in the world after Monaco. Due to this high density, four out of five Singaporeans live in high-rise housing.



sources: Wikipedia.org, Flickr.com/hradcanska

Singapore Harbor

The natural harbor of Singapore is the world's busiest container port in terms of total shipping tonnage. This distinction is partially due to the fact that Singapore itself has little natural resources so these are shipped in and then the finished product is also shipped out.



sources: Wikipedia.org, Flickr.com/besar_bears



Orchid in the Singapore Botanic Gardens (source: [Flickr.com/ Cody Wms](http://Flickr.com/Cody Wms))

Nature and Environment

- Singapore is located only 85 miles (137 kilometers) north of the equator. Because of this location, the average monthly temperatures vary only slightly. The average high temperature in January is 77°F (25°C), while in July it is and 81°F (27°C). Rainfall also is consistent throughout the year, in a range of seven inches (178 millimeters) to 10 inches (250 millimeters), depending on the month.
- There are about 60 islands in the country, with about 120 miles (193 kilometers) of coastline. The city of Singapore is on the south side of Singapore Island. Two-thirds of Singapore Island is less than 50 feet (15 meters) above sea level.
- The botanic gardens are a popular Singapore attraction. There are 3,000 species of tropical and sub tropical plants in an 80 acre (31 hectare) garden. It was founded in the mid 19th century.



Map of Singapore and equator (source: WorldAtlas.com)

Our Plans

- After 20 days at sea we have arrived in Singapore. While at sea our stop in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam was canceled due to Typhoon Pakhar.
- Right before reaching Singapore, we crossed the equator and are now back in the Northern Hemisphere. We will be traveling in the Northern Hemisphere until we reach Brazil at the end of December.
- In Singapore, we will visit the ethnic neighborhoods, as well as the famous botanic gardens. Next, we will move on to Malaysia and Thailand by train.
- Be sure and send any questions that you have about what we will be seeing!

More Information

- <http://www.sbg.org.sg/>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Singapore
- <http://asiasingapore.blogspot.com/2011/01/interesting-facts-about-singapore.html>
- <http://www.yoursingapore.com/content/traveller/en/browse/about-singapore/people-lang-culture.html>
- <http://lifestyle.iloveindia.com/lounge/facts-about-singapore-1470.html>

The Merlion

Regarded as Singapore's city icon, the Merlion is a mythical half-lion, half-fish creature. It was designed in 1964. The bottom is a fish to signify Singapore's dependence on maritime trade and as a port city. The lion top is from a tale of a Malay king who sighted a lion when he first came to Singapore Island. There are five Merlion statues in Singapore.



sources: Infopedia.nl.sg,
[Flickr/com/minghan](https://www.flickr.com/photos/minghan/)

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