**THE *REVISED & IMPROVED* BENEVOLENT DICTATOR’S GUIDE TO EATING & DRINKING IN SINGAPORE – ICANN52 EDITION[[1]](#footnote-1)**

Welcome to Singapore; and for those who were here for ICANN49 - and perhaps also ICANN41 in 2011- welcome back! In the space of one short year, much has changed on the Singapore dining and drinking scene. Restaurants and bars continue to open and close at a dizzying rate, and it seems like each passing week sees yet another coterie of celebrity chefs moving here to helm yet another new, fashionably sleek, “see and be seen” venue … so it’s a good idea to call to check that the “buzzy” place that you want to visit is still open (and make a reservation ☺).

What (still) hasn’t changed is the oppressive humidity and heat, and the high(er) price of a drink ☹ … Hopefully some of the suggestions below will help you navigate our crowded restaurant and bar scene while you’re here!

I. EATING IN OR NEAR THE CONFERENCE VENUE 3

Where to go for a quick and inexpensive lunch in the mall attached to the venue: 3

Where to go in the venue/mall for a sit-down but not-fancy lunch: 3

Where to go in the venue for a fancy expense-account lunch: 4

BUT: A Cautionary Note about Lunch Crowds at the Venue … 4

Where to go for an inexpensive-to-moderate lunch (or dinner, depending on the establishment and its hours) five to ten minutes’ walk from the venue, listed in order of distance (more or less): 5

Where to go for a nice, moderate to expensive sit-down lunch five to ten minutes’ walk from the venue: 6

Where to go for EXCELLENT dim sum five to ten minutes’ walk from the venue: 6

II. LUNCH OPTIONS FURTHER AFIELD (BUT STILL RELATIVELY CLOSE BY – A LONGISH WALK, SUBWAY STOP OR SHORT CAB RIDE) 6

For more, equally EXCELLENT dim sum choices in classy surroundings: 6

For good value set lunches: 7

III. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED RESTAURANTS FOR DINNER (GROUPED BY CUISINE) 7

(A) CHINESE - 7

(B) VEGETARIAN - 9

(C) JAPANESE – 9

(D) OTHER ASIAN & INDIAN – 9

(E) WESTERN CUISINE - 10

IV. EATING LIKE A “LOCAL” 12

(A) SINGAPORE-STYLE SEAFOOD – 13

(B) PERANAKAN (STRAITS-CHINESE) CUISINE – 13

(C) HAWKER STALLS & STREET FOOD – PERHAPS THE MOST FAMOUS SINGAPORE CUISINE(S) OF ALL 14

(D) TOP SINGAPOREAN FOOD BLOGGERS/REVIEWERS 15

(E) SIMPLE, BASIC, UNPRETENTIOUS HOME-STYLE RESTAURANTS MOSTLY PATRONIZED BY LOCAL FAMILIES 15

V. THE BAR SCENE 16

In or Near the Venue 16

Rooftop Bars with a View 17

Craft Cocktails 17

Other Options 17

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## I. EATING IN OR NEAR THE CONFERENCE VENUE

We’re back at the same location as 2011 and 2013 so you may know already that the venue offers an incredible range of options in all price ranges and spanning a very wide array of cuisines. Here are some suggestions (in no particular order).

***NOTE:*** *Best to book ahead for anywhere listed as a nice sit-down kind of place; several of the cafes and more casual places are also open for breakfast (which will be much cheaper than the hotel buffet ☺)*

### Where to go for a quick and inexpensive lunch in the mall attached to the venue:

* Food court (3rd floor: a wide and tasty selection including local street (hawker) foods, with Korean, Japanese and Indian/Muslim options)
* Basement (dozens of small eateries including Japanese ramen joints, Vietnamese, Thai and Korean options, sandwiches, fast food and more – many are good but if you want ideas, try: [**Nam Nam**](http://namnamnoodlebar.com.sg/)(Vietnamese noodles), [**Thai Express**](http://www.thaiexpress.com.sg/)(Thai noodles and curries), or [**Teahouse the Asian Kitchen**](http://www.theasiankitchen.com.sg/)(simple Chinese – and excellent roast duck). There’s a good selection of pastries at [**Tiong Bahru Bakery**](https://www.facebook.com/tiongbahrubakery), roast chicken at casual café [**Poulet**](http://poulet.com.sg/) and burgers from Japanese chain [**Mos Burger**](http://www.mosburger.com.sg/) or [**The Handburger**](http://www.thehandburger.com/), plus a Subway takeout counter and the usual fast food “suspects”.
* Breakfast/Tea: The basement also has two places serving Singapore’s iconic “kaya” (coconut jam) toast and local coffee, which make for a good breakfast or tea break): [**Ya Kun Kaya Toast**](http://www.yakun.com/singapore.aspx) and [**Toast Box**](http://www.toastbox.com.sg/)(the latter also somewhat unexpectedly serves a pretty good laksa (a spicy coconut milk-based noodle soup) and chicken curry – very popular at lunch time)[[2]](#footnote-2). **Tiong Bahru Bakery** and [**Cedele**](http://www.cedeledepot.com/)are also good options.

### Where to go in the venue/mall for a sit-down but not-fancy lunch:

* [**Menya Musashi**](http://www.menyamusashi.com.sg/)(mall, ground floor – reasonably-priced Japanese ramen)
* [**Salt Tapas**](http://salttapas.com/chef-luke-mangan/)(mall, ground floor – very good small plates with a number of vegetarian selections; owned by Aussie celebrity chef Luke Mangan)
* [**Brodzeit**](http://www.brotzeit.co/find-a-restaurant/singapore.html) (mall, ground floor, across from Salt – German beer and passable sausages, pork knuckle and other hearty German favorites)
* [**Marche Movenpick**](http://www.marche-restaurants.com/en/raffles-city)(mall, ground floor, next to Brodzeit – European bar and bistro)

***NOTE****: for those needing a break from air-conditioning, Salt, Brodzeit and Marche all offer al fresco seating as well, perfect for post-meeting drinks ☺*

* [**Din Tai Fung**](http://www.dintaifung.com.sg/)(mall, basement – branch of the famous Taiwanese dumpling restaurant chain; expect long queues at mealtimes)
* [**Sushi Tei**](http://www.sushitei.com/index/index.aspx)(mall, 3rd floor next to the food court: reliable Japanese favorites from sushi sets to bento boxes)
* [**Cedele**](http://www.cedeledepot.com/) (mall on Fairmont side, 3rd floor – sandwiches, simple pastas, cakes, coffee; also has a small café in the basement)
* [**Prego**](http://www.fairmont.com/singapore/dining/prego/)(Fairmont, ground floor – cavernous and good for groups; Italian with a fairly extensive selection of pizza and pasta)
* [**Asian Market Cafe**](http://www.fairmont.com/singapore/dining/asianmarketcafe/)(Fairmont, 2nd floor – excellent lunch buffet of local and Asian food; very popular and noisy)
* [**Shahi Maharani**](http://www.shahimaharani.com/) (Fairmont, 3rd floor – very good moderate to high-end North Indian)
* [**Szechuan Court**](http://www.swissotel.com/hotels/singapore-stamford/dining/szechuan-court-kitchen/)(Fairmont, 3rd floor – moderate to high end Szechuan & Cantonese cuisine)
* [**Wooloomooloo Steakhouse**](http://www.wooloo-mooloo.com/sg/wooloomooloo-steakhouse.aspx)(Swissotel, 3rd floor – very good steaks from top-grade Australian beef, moderate to expensive)

### Where to go in the venue for a fancy expense-account lunch:

* [**Jaan**](http://www.jaan.com.sg/)(Equinox complex, Swissotel) – very good haute modern French, a stunning view and a pricey but good value (relatively speaking) set lunch
* [**Mikuni**](http://www.fairmont.com/singapore/dining/mikuni/)(Fairmont, 3rd floor) – very good modern Japanese; popular for business lunches

### BUT: A Cautionary Note about Lunch Crowds at the Venue …

***Before you proceed, here are some things to note about eating at the food court, small cafes and basement restaurants, ESPECIALLY if you’re in a rush:***

* They can get very crowded, especially at peak times (lunch and dinner) and weekends
* They’re small and many don’t take reservations (except the fancier places – and of course the more expensive restaurants upstairs), so expect to queue at busy times
* There are plenty of options for cheap and delicious pastries and snacks, from Japanese donuts ([**J Co**](http://www.jcodonuts.com/)) and cream puffs ([**Chewy**](http://www.chewyjunior.com.sg/)) to local pastries and breads ([**Breadtalk**](http://www.breadtalk.com.sg/) and **Cedele Bakery**) and croissants and viennoiserie from **Tiong Bahru Bakery**
* For a quick, takeway coffee fix – there’s [**Starbucks**](http://www.starbucks.com.sg/)on the ground floor (near the entrance to the subway – open 24 hours ☺) or [**Costa Coffee**](http://www.costacoffee.com.sg/index.aspx)(also on the ground floor but not open 24 hours)
* For a sit-down coffee - [**Coffee Club**](http://www.ocoffeeclub.com/)(3rd floor), **Cedele** (café on 3rd floor, bakery in basement), **Tiong Bahru Bakery** (basement), or any of the kaya toast places (note that these last serve local coffee – order a “kopi-o” for black coffee; ordering just “kopi” will get you coffee with condensed milk, which is actually pretty tasty ☺)

### Where to go for an inexpensive-to-moderate lunch (or dinner, depending on the establishment and its hours) five to ten minutes’ walk from the venue, listed in order of distance (more or less):

* [**Chijmes**](http://www.chijmes.com.sg/) – dining/bar/nightlife complex directly across the street (North Bridge Road side) with a number of passable to good choices[[3]](#footnote-3); from Japanese restaurants to a gastropub and several cafes
* Seah Street – **Sin Swee Kee** Chicken Rice (here’s where you can sample the famous Singapore Hainanese chicken rice; it’s the real thing and these folks have been around for decades. There’s the original no-frills restaurant and another simple branch a few doors down.)
* Purvis Street – several good-value choices (including Thai favorite **Yhingthai Palace**), [**Saveur**](http://www.saveur.sg/restaurant) (no-frills no-reservations French bistro, so expect to queue); and **Yet Con** Hainanese Chicken Rice (like Sin Swee Kee on the next street, they’re the real deal – so don’t mind the grime and “olde worlde” fittings ☺)
* Food Court, **Bras Basah Complex** – small cluster of local street food stalls (note – it’s a very basic, no frills open-air food court, i.e. no air-conditioning!)
* **Funan Digilife Centre** – a short (5-7 minutes) walk down North Bridge Road (start at the St Andrew’s Cathedral end, not Raffles Hotel); huge one-stop megamall specializing in computers, software, peripherals and accessories, with a decent, cheap Thai restaurant (**A-Roy Thai**) on the 4th floor, a food court on the 5th and several other cheap and cheerful eateries

### Where to go for a nice, moderate to expensive sit-down lunch five to ten minutes’ walk from the venue:

* [**Halia**](http://www.thehalia.com/)(Raffles Hotel, ground floor; Asian-influenced European menu with a decent set lunch – a branch of the main restaurant in the Botanic Gardens)
* [**Sela**](http://www.restaurantsela.com.sg/) (Seah Street: modern European; good value)
* [**Gunther's**](http://www.gunthers.com.sg/) (Purvis Street; haute modern French, pricey but excellent value set lunch)
* [**Garibaldi**](http://www.garibaldi.com.sg/?width=1399&height=674)(Purvis Street; good high end Italian, excellent value set lunch)
* [**Han**](http://www.han.com.sg/) (Odeon Towers; moderate to high end Japanese (specifically, Osaka cuisine – the specialty here is “kushikatsu”, or deep fried skewers))

### Where to go for EXCELLENT dim sum five to ten minutes’ walk from the venue:

* [**Lei Garden**](http://www.leigarden.hk/eng/)(ground floor of the Chijmes complex across the street; a Singapore branch of the Michelin-starred Hong Kong restaurant)
* [**Wah Lok**](http://carltonhotel.sg/wahlok.html)(Carlton Hotel; very good, longstanding Cantonese restaurant)
* [**Asia Grand**](http://asiagrandrestaurant.weebly.com/about-us.html)(Odeon Towers, adjacent to the Carlton and opposite the Raffles on North Bridge Road; also has good Peking duck)
* [**Man Fu Yuan**](http://www.ihg.com/intercontinental/hotels/gb/en/singapore/sinhb/hoteldetail/about-the-hotel/dining)(Intercontinental Hotel; well, okay, this is more of a 15-20 minute walk … ☺)

## II. LUNCH OPTIONS FURTHER AFIELD (BUT STILL RELATIVELY CLOSE BY – A LONGISH WALK, SUBWAY STOP OR SHORT CAB RIDE)

### For more, equally EXCELLENT dim sum choices in classy surroundings:

* [**Golden Peony**](http://conradhotels3.hilton.com/en/hotels/singapore/conrad-centennial-singapore-SINCICI/amenities/restaurants-golden-peony.html)(the Conrad Hotel)
* [**Jade**](http://www.fullertonhotel.com/dining/diningCategories_2-en.html)(the Fullerton Hotel)
* [**Cherry Garden**](http://www.mandarinoriental.com/singapore/fine-dining/cherry-garden/)(the Mandarin Oriental Hotel)
* [**Jing**](http://www.jing.sg/)(One Fullerton; this is somewhat more modernist in its approach than the others)

### For good value set lunches*[[4]](#footnote-4)*:

* [**La Fiandra**](http://www.lafiandra.com.sg/)(you can walk to this one in the Singapore Art Museum in about 8-10 minutes; it’s a decent Italian trattoria)
* [**Absinthe**](http://www.absinthe.sg/home.html) (Boat Quay riverside in the Central Business District one subway stop away; French)
* [**Royal Mail**](http://www.theroyalmail.sg/index.html)(Ascott Raffles Place, in the Central Business District one subway stop away; modern British)
* [**Otto**](http://www.ottoristorante.com.sg/)(Red Dot Traffic Building, Maxwell Road (two subway stops or a cab ride): modern Italian)
* [**Ember**](http://www.hotel1929.com/dining/)(in a restored shophouse in Chinatown, now a hip hotel (take a cab); modern European)
* [**The Clifford Pier**](http://www.fullertonbayhotel.com/dining/the-clifford-pier) (Fullerton Bay Hotel; while this wouldn’t really count as a “good value set lunch” place, it’s in a beautifully atmospheric and historic location; serves fancied-up local foods which visitors rushed for time may appreciate)

## III. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED RESTAURANTS FOR DINNER (GROUPED BY CUISINE)

### (A) CHINESE[[5]](#footnote-5) -

#### Traditional (listed in increasing distance from the venue):

Singapore boasts a large number of excellent high-end Chinese restaurants (notably Cantonese) that can rival the best in Hong Kong. All the dim sum restaurants listed above as lunch options also serve excellent haute Cantonese cuisine and are highly recommended … so you could do dim sum for lunch and return for a totally different, equally good experience at dinner ☺. Most (though not all) the ones listed here are expensive and suitable for business entertaining or a special occasion.

* [**Grand Shanghai**](http://www.grandshanghai.com/)(Grand Copthorne Waterfront; Shanghainese – lovely 30’s Shanghai setting with live music on some evenings)
* [**Imperial Treasure**](http://www.imperialtreasure.com/en) **@Paragon** (Paragon Shopping Centre in the Orchard area, 5th floor; very good all-around classic Chinese)
* [**Imperial Treasure**](http://www.imperialtreasure.com/en) **@Ngee Ann City** in the Orchard area (4th floor; very good Shanghainese)[[6]](#footnote-6)
* [**Li Bai**](http://www.sheratonsingapore.com/li-bai)(Sheraton Towers hotel, Orchard area; very good Cantonese)
* [**Jade Palace**](http://www.jadepalace.com.sg/)(Forum the Shopping Mall in the Orchard/Tanglin area, basement; very good Cantonese)
* [**Jiang Nan Chun**](http://www.fourseasons.com/singapore/dining/restaurants/jiang_nan_chun/) (Four Seasons Hotel, Orchard/Tanglin area; very good haute Cantonese)
* [**Yan Ting**](http://www.yantingrestaurant.com/) (St Regis Hotel, Orchard/Tanglin area; very good haute Cantonese)
* [**Min Jiang**](http://www.goodwoodparkhotel.com/min-jiang-at-one-north-%2Cdining_viewItem_11-en.html) **@One-North** (Cantonese/Sichuanese; this is the suburban branch, located in a Colonial-era bungalow with lovely Chinese antique furnishings; the original is in the Goodwood Park Hotel in the Orchard Road area – both are good and are famous for their Peking duck)
* [**Prima Tower Revolving Restaurant**](http://www.pfs.com.sg/restaurants/prima_tower) (Beijing cuisine; nowhere near as fancy as the others listed here, but included because its cuisine is unusual for Singapore and it’s located on the top floor of an old grain silo – and yes, it revolves so you get a view of Sentosa and the Singapore docks!)

####  Contemporary Chinese:

* [**Majestic**](http://www.restaurantmajestic.com/)(Majestic Hotel, Chinatown; same chef/owner as Jing at One Fullerton)
* [**Forest**](http://www.rwsentosa.com/language/en-US/ShoppingDining/Dining/DiningForest) (on Sentosa island, in the Resorts World complex; by local celebrity chef Sam Leong)

Peking (Beijing) Duck *(done more in the Hong Kong/Cantonese style, which many in Singapore actually prefer ☺):*

* **Min Jiang** (see above, Traditional Chinese)
* **Imperial Treasure@Paragon** (see above, Traditional Chinese)
* **Asia Grand** (see dim sum listings near the venue)

### (B) VEGETARIAN -

* [**Ling Zhi**](http://www.lingzhivegetarian.com/home.php)(Liat Towers, Orchard Road area - Chinese)
* [**Annalakshmi**](http://www.annalakshmi.com.sg/)(Central Square, River Valley area – Indian)
* [**Joie by Dozo**](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Joie-Restaurant/1500765866845726) (Orchard Central - modern fusion)
* [**Komala Vilas**](http://komalavilas.com.sg/)(various locations, mostly in Little India – cheap and cheerful South Indian)

### (C) JAPANESE –

In addition to the few listed here, which are excellent to exceptional (and expensive), Singapore boasts innumerable good, reasonably-priced Japanese restaurants ranging from tiny izakaya bars and friendly yakiniku places to noisy ramen joints and cheerful sushi takeout cafes.

* [**Ikyu**](http://www.ikyu.com.sg/) (Yong Siak Street, Chinatown area; modern haute Japanese)
* **Han** (see above; Odeon Towers near the venue; Japanese/Osaka, esp. kushikatsu, served omakase-style)
* [**Keyaki**](http://www.panpacific.com/en/hotels-resorts/singapore/marina/stay/dining/keyaki.html) (Pan Pacific Hotel near the venue; high end classic Japanese)
* [**Tenshin**](http://www.tenshin.sg/)(Regent Hotel, Orchard/Tanglin area; best tempura in Singapore)

### (D) OTHER ASIAN & INDIAN –

* [**King's Hotel Penang Buffet**](http://www.millenniumhotels.com.sg/copthornekingssingapore/dining/princess-terrace-cafe.html)(Copthorne King’s Hotel; perennially-popular, unpretentious, family-friendly buffet of favorite dishes from Penang - Malaysia’s “food paradise”)
* [**Muthu's Curry**](http://www.muthuscurry.com/)(various locations; the one on Dempsey Hill is new and probably most accessible to visitors – simple, casual South Indian, known especially for fish head curry)
* [**Tandoor**](http://www.tandoor.com.sg/) (Holiday Inn Orchard City Centre hotel; good North Indian)
* **Shahi Maharani** (Fairmont Hotel in the venue – see above)
* [**Tamarind Hill**](http://www.tamarindrestaurants.com/) (Labrador Park; haute Thai housed in an old Colonial bungalow, tropical setting)
* [**Tambuah Mas**](http://tambuahmas.com.sg/) (Tanglin Shopping Centre; simple restaurant serving good Indonesian food)
* [**Blue Bali**](http://www.bluebali.sg/) (Cluny Road; decent South East Asian – but the real attraction is the lush tropical Balinese garden setting complete with teak daybeds)

### (E) WESTERN CUISINE -

The following listings are mostly for moderate to high-end fine dining establishments; if you’re looking for something more casual and less pricey, there are many cafes, pubs and more casual establishments fairly close to the venue, including in the *China Square/Telok Ayer* area of the Central Business District (one subway stop away).

#### Spanish:

* [**Esquina**](http://esquina.com.sg/) (Jiak Chuan Road, Chinatown; great tapas in a tiny restored Chinese shophouse; by celebrity chef Jason Atherton)
* [**Catalunya**](http://www.catalunya.sg/)(modern Spanish; expensive but in an amazing unique location on Fullerton Bay with an incredible view; helmed by el Bulli alumni)
* [**Ola**](http://www.olarestaurant.sg/)(modern Spanish focused on seafood, Marina Bay Financial Centre; some local foodies say this may be even better than Catalunya ☺)
* [**Una**](http://una.sg/#!home) (tapas/Mediterranean; not downtown but in a lovely location at One Rochester)

#### French:

* [**Le Bistrot du Sommelier**](http://www.lebistrotdusommelier.com/)(Armenian Street; excellent French comfort/bistro food popular with the French expatriate community – get the rillettes ☺)
* [**Saint Pierre**](http://www.saintpierre.com.sg/) (on Sentosa Island; excellent modern French from local celebrity chef Emmanuel Stroobant)
* [**OCF**](http://www.ocf-singapore.com/) (the Arts House by the Singapore river; sophisticated French in a lovely setting)
* [**Brasserie Gavroche**](http://www.brasseriegavroche.com/) (on trendy Tras Street in the Central Business District; very good French brasserie favorites)
* **Absinthe** (on Boat Quay; see above under lunch options)
* [**Mag's Wine Kitchen**](http://www.magswinekitchen.com/index.html) (just off Boat Quay; tiny intimate dining space serving well-executed, good-value French classics)

#### Italian:

* [**The Lighthouse**](http://www.fullertonhotel.com/dining/outlet/the_lighthouse.html) (Fullerton Hotel; impeccable Italian in an elegant, bright space with a spectacular view)
* [**Gattopardo**](http://www.gattopardo.com.sg/) (Tras Street; Italian focused on seafood, lovely setting in an old shophouse)
* **Garibaldi** (Purvis Street; see above under lunch options near the venue)
* [**&sons**](http://www.sons.com.sg/) (China Square; Italian small plates/gastrobar)
* [**Senso**](http://senso.sg/) (Club Street; refined Italian in a quietly elegant but non-stuffy setting)

#### Modern European:

* [**Bacchanalia**](http://www.bacchanalia.asia/) (new, “buzzy” and located in a historic Masonic Lodge on Coleman Street near the venue, helmed by alumni from Heston Blumenthal’s Fat Duck restaurant)
* [**Bistro Soori**](http://www.bistrosoori.com/index.html) (small, minimalist but charming restaurant located in a “trendifying” part of Chinatown)
* [**Dibs**](http://dibs.sg/menu/)(new, pan-Asian, located in a newly-hip area near the Central Business District, helmed by local celebrity chef Leong Khai Git)
* **Sela** (Seah Street; see above under lunch options near the venue)
* [**Gastrosmiths**](http://www.gastrosmiths.com/) (Tan Quee Lan Street in the Beach Road/Arab quarter fairly close to the venue; imaginative menu in a gastropub)

#### Modern Singaporean:

* [**WIld Rocket**](http://www.wildrocket.com.sg/) (the first and still among the best; from local celebrity chef Willyn Low)
* [**Labyrinth**](http://www.labyrinth.com.sg/) (the new kid on the block, and very good; from local celebrity chef LG Han)
* [**Pidgin**](http://www.pidgin.sg/) (more casual than the others but solidly good; from local celebrity chef Adrian Ling)

#### Others Choices Worth a Look for Various Reasons (in no particular order):

* [**Prive Grill**](http://theprivegroup.com.sg/prive.html)(tucked-away private “island” location on Keppel Bay Marina; grilled meats & well-executed Western menu; great for getting away as it also has a nice and relaxed ***Waterfront Bar***, perfect for sunset drinks)
* [**Mezza 9**](http://www.singapore.grand.hyattrestaurants.com/mezza9/)(Grand Hyatt Hotel, Orchard Road area; a sleek modern space with multiple “show kitchens” of various Asian & Western cuisines)
* [**Halia**](http://www.thehalia.com/)@the Botanic Gardens (Asian-influenced modern European; great value weekday set lunches; good relaxed choice esp. for a day off ☺)
* [**Salt Grill & Sky Bar**](http://saltgrill.com/) (ION Orchard; awesome 55th floor panoramic view accompanied by well-executed modern Australian food by celebrity chef Luke Mangan)
* [**Sugarhall**](http://www.sugarhall.sg/) (located near the Club Street bar/restaurant scene; grilled meats and a rum bar, by the folks who run the acclaimed ***Jigger & Pony*** cocktail bar – see the Drink listings below)
* [**Potato Head Folk**](http://www.pttheadfolk.com/) (first overseas venture for successful Balinese beach club Potato Head; burgers, craft cocktails and a rooftop veranda in the hippest part of gentrifying Chinatown)

## IV. EATING LIKE A “LOCAL”

Most of the best food in Singapore isn’t found in fancy restaurants – it’s in old-fashioned open-air (i.e. non-air conditioned) “hawker centers” or no-frills homey family-run restaurants, located mostly in areas off the tourist trail and outside the Central Business District. I’ve listed a number of “street food” locales for the more adventurous or those with more time; and also some recommendations for two unique Singaporean foods – the local seafood and Peranakan cuisine.

### (A) SINGAPORE-STYLE SEAFOOD[[7]](#footnote-7) –

* [**Jumbo Seafood**](http://www.jumboseafood.com.sg/)(various locations nationwide; the one at Dempsey Hill probably has the nicest ambience while Riverside Point boasts a relaxing riverside location near Clarke Quay)
* [**Long Beach Seafood**](http://www.longbeachseafood.com.sg/)(various locations nationwide; the branch at Dempsey has private rooms and is near the Dempsey Hill nightlife hub)
* [**No Signboard Seafood**](http://nosignboardseafood.com/)(various locations nationwide; the one at the Esplanade is most handy to the conference venue as it’s walkable)
* [**Palm Beach Seafood**](http://www.palmbeachseafood.com/)(One Fullerton near the conference venue; walkable and you get a more upscale ambience than in most other places, plus the bonus of a great view)
* [**Red House Seafood**](http://www.redhouseseafood.com/)(various locations nationwide; the one at Robertson Quay has alfresco seating in a relaxed riverside location 20-25 minutes’ walk from the conference venue)
* [**New Ubin Seafood**](http://ubinseafood.com/)(Sin Ming Road; relocated from its original location on a rural island off Singapore; very local, very popular but somewhat out of the way as it’s in the suburbs)

###  (B) PERANAKAN (STRAITS-CHINESE) CUISINE[[8]](#footnote-8) –

* [**Blue Ginger**](http://www.theblueginger.com/)(Tanjong Pagar Road; good food and located in a beautifully-restored old shophouse; recommended for first-time visitors)
* [**True Blue**](http://www.truebluecuisine.com/)(Armenian Street; lovely setting, great ambience and good food but a tad overpriced)
* [**Candlenut**](http://www.candlenut.com.sg/)(in the Dorsett Hotel on New Bridge Road; good but not fancy)
* [**Simply Peranakan**](http://www.esplanade.com/eat_drink_shop/dining/simply_peranakan_cuisine/index.jsp)(the Esplanade; handy to the conference venue)
* [**Violet Oon's Kitchen**](http://violetoonskitchen.com/)(Bukit Timah Road; good as it’s owned by the doyenne of Singapore cooking, located in an affluent suburb)
* [**Chilli Padi**](http://www.chillipadi.com.sg/)and [**Guan Hoe Soon**](http://www.guanhoesoon.com/)(both located in Joo Chiat Place, a suburban residential neighborhood known for its traditional architecture)

### (C) HAWKER STALLS & STREET FOOD – PERHAPS THE MOST FAMOUS SINGAPORE CUISINE(S) OF ALL

These are mostly hawker stalls located in open-air food courts with communal seating; reserve a table with your trusty tissue packet[[9]](#footnote-9) and give your table number to the hawker you’re ordering from. Expect to eat off plastic plates, know that there are no napkins to be had for love or money, dress down and be prepared to sweat … sometimes profusely ☺. In order of distance from the venue -

* [**Gluttons Bay**](http://www.timeoutsingapore.com/restaurants/asian/makansutra-gluttons-bay)(Esplanade; more expensive and with a more upscale look than most because of its bayside setting and central location (walkable from the venue); while it’s generally considered touristy by the locals it’s a great choice for a casual evening – you can cap it off with a lovely stroll around the waterfront)
* **Golden Mile Food Centre** (Beach Road; popular, bustling but simple place in an old building housing army surplus/supplies stores and multiple small shops catering to Thai, Malaysian and other foreign workers)
* [**Hong Lim Food Centre**](http://www.timeoutsingapore.com/restaurants/hawker-centre/hong-lim-market)(on the edge of Chinatown; old, noisy, busy, popular and mostly a daytime place; a few of the most famous hawker stalls in Singapore are located here)
* [**Maxwell Road Food Centre**](http://www.timeoutsingapore.com/restaurants/asian/maxwell-food-centre)(Central Business District location so very crowded at lunch time; boasts one of Singapore’s top chicken rice hawkers (Tian Tian) and a few hard-to-find traditional favorites)
* [**Chinatown Complex Food Centre**](http://www.ghettosingapore.com/chinatown-complex-the-cultural-heartbeat-of-chinatown/)(Chinatown Complex; possibly the largest hawker centre in Singapore with many long-standing hawker favorites; located above a popular daytime “wet market”; noisy and very authentic – and now includes a craft beer stall too ☺)
* [**Chinatown Food Street**](http://www.yoursingapore.com/content/traveller/en/browse/dining/restaurants/chinatown-food-street.html)(Smith Street, Chinatown; newly-renovated pedestrianized alley; lots of tourists but it does have some of Singapore’s most famous foods and favorite hawkers; a good choice for evenings and handy for the Ann Siang/Club Street bars afterwards)
* [**Zion Road Hawker Centre**](http://www.timeoutsingapore.com/restaurants/hawker-centre/zion-riverside-food-centre) (Zion Road; small, very local; has what’s reputedly the best “char kway teow” in Singapore at Stall #18)
* [**Tiong Bahru Market & Food Centre**](http://www.timeoutsingapore.com/restaurants/hawker-centre/tiong-bahru-market)(Tiong Bahru; more stalls open in the day; located in a neighborhood with Singapore’s oldest apartment blocks but rapidly becoming also a hipster enclave)
* [**Old Airport Road Food Centre**](http://www.timeoutsingapore.com/restaurants/hawker-centre/old-airport-road-food-centre)(a firm local favorite; large and diverse array of hawkers; boasts more of Singapore’s favorite/top hawkers than anywhere else; located in the suburbs but accessible by subway)
* [**East Coast Lagoon Food Village**](http://thehalalfoodblog.blogspot.com/2013/11/east-coast-lagoon-fod-village-reopens.html)(relaxed, breezy seaside location; known mostly for its Malay-Muslim food and satay (grilled meat skewers); best at sunset though you may need to go after to avoid the crowds (but note that most stalls close by 10-11 p.m.))
* [**Chomp Chomp**](http://www.timeoutsingapore.com/restaurants/hawker-centre/chomp-chomp-food-centre)(located in Serangoon Gardens (a residential suburb); a favorite with local families)

### (D) TOP SINGAPOREAN FOOD BLOGGERS/REVIEWERS

* <http://ieatishootipost.sg/>
* <http://www.ladyironchef.com>
* <http://sethlui.com>
* <http://danielfooddiary.com/>
* <http://rubbisheatrubbishgrow.com/>
* <http://chubbyhubby.net/>
* <http://www.camemberu.com/>
* <http://www.misstamchiak.com/>

### (E) SIMPLE, BASIC, UNPRETENTIOUS HOME-STYLE RESTAURANTS MOSTLY PATRONIZED BY LOCAL FAMILIES

Most of these restaurants prize good cooking over fancy décor and ambience (which can be non-existent) – so don’t expect to conduct a romantic rendezvous or host a fancy banquet here. These are likely to appeal most to repeat foodie visitors who want an authentic local experience, and who have already “done” the obvious, mainstream places.

* [**Chao Shan**](http://bibikgourmand.blogspot.com/2013/04/chao-shan-cuisine.html)(Beach Road near the venue; homey, authentic Teochew)
* [**Mooi Chin**](http://www.mooichin.com/)(Golden Landmark Hotel near the venue; old-style Hainanese)
* [**Ting Heng Seafood**](http://www.thehoneycombers.com/singapore/2012/09/tiong-bahrus-best-kept-secret.php)(Tiong Poh Road in Tiong Bahru; Chinese-style seafood & “steamboat” (hot pot))
* [**Number 3 Crab Delicacy**](http://www.3crab.com/)(Outram Road near Tiong Bahru; Chinese-style seafood)
* [**Good Chance**](http://goodchancepopiah.com/) (Jalan Silat; in a suburban residential neighborhood; unpretentious; specializing in “popiah” – Southern Chinese spring rolls most commonly served in “do it yourself” style; fun for casual group get-togethers)
* [**Swa Garden**](https://www.facebook.com/swagarden)(Macpherson Road; in the suburbs, old-fashioned and faded, but very good Teochew)
* [**Muthu's Curry**](http://www.muthuscurry.com/)(Race Course Road or Dempsey Hill; Indian; famous for its fish head curry)
* [**Banana Leaf Apolo**](http://www.timeoutsingapore.com/restaurants/indian/banana-leaf-apolo)(Race Course Road; Indian; note that Singapore families are firmly split in their loyalty between Muthu’s and Banana Leaf ☺)
* [**Samy's Curry**](http://www.samyscurry.com/)(Dempsey Road, Indian – for when you don’t feel like trekking to Little India or want to hit the Dempsey Hill scene afterwards)

## V. THE BAR SCENE

### In or Near the Venue

There are several bars in the hotel/venue; the best for sweeping city views (and a pretty good Singapore Sling!) is [**City Space**](http://www.swissotel.com/hotels/singapore-stamford/bars/city-space/)and[**New Asia**](http://www.swissotel.com/hotels/singapore-stamford/bars/new-asia/)on the top two floors of the Equinox complex at the Swissotel. Across the street at the venerable Raffles Hotel are the Colonial-style, relaxed [**Bar and Billiard Room**](http://www.raffles.com/singapore/dining/bar-and-billiard-room/)(try and score one of the tables on the terrace looking out onto the courtyard) and the noisier peanut-strewn [**Long Bar**](http://www.raffles.com/singapore/dining/long-bar/) **[[10]](#footnote-10)**. Also across the street is the [**Chijmes**](http://www.chijmes.com.sg/complex)complex (some parts currently under renovation but businesses remain open), with a constantly changing line-up of bars and nightclubs.

### Rooftop Bars with a View

Near the venue (in Odeon Towers) [**Loof**](http://www.loof.com.sg/)is a whimsical rooftop bar - a good choice for sundowners.

Then there are some truly stunning rooftop bars with terrific views; conveniently, they are all very near the venue:

* [**Orgo**](http://www.orgo.sg/)(the Esplanade)
* [**Prelude**](http://www.boathouse.com.sg/)(the Fullerton Boathouse)
* [**Lantern**](http://thefullertonheritage.com/shopping-dinning/dining/lantern)(the Fullerton Bay Hotel)
* [**Sky on 57**](http://www.justinquek.com/sky57.html)(also a fine dining restaurant by one of Singapore’s own celebrity chefs) and [**Ku De Ta**](http://kudeta.com/singapore/)(both at the Marina Bay Sands – yes, on top of the “boat in the sky”)
* [**1-Altitude**](http://www.1-altitude.com/)(One Raffles Place)

### Craft Cocktails

 The explosion of speakeasy-style bars, interest in classic cocktail culture and an influx of talented mixologists from Australia, Europe and North America continues apace. Here are some particularly notable spots, *definitely* worth visiting if you enjoy craft cocktails:

* Along or near Boat Quay by the river in the Central Business District: [**Ah Sam Cold Drink Stall**](https://www.facebook.com/AhSamColdDrinkStall), [**Bitters and Love**](http://bittersandlove.com/)
* In the Chinatown area (and mostly housed in atmospheric, restored old shophouses): [**Oxwell & Co.**](http://oxwellandco.com/)(Ann Siang Hill), [**The Cufflink Club**](http://thecufflinkclub.com/)(Jiak Chuan Street), [**The Library**](http://www.timeoutsingapore.com/clubs/venues/bars/the-library-47-keong-saik-road)(Keong Saik Road), [**Tippling Club**](http://www.tipplingclub.com/)(Neil Road), and [**28HK**](http://www.timeoutsingapore.com/clubs/venues/bars/28-hongkong-street-singapore) (Hong Kong Street).
* A short walk away (on Amoy Street): [**Jigger & Pony**](http://www.jiggerandpony.com/)and [**Spiffy Dapper**](http://spiffydapper.com/)
* In the trendy Arab Street quarter: [**Maison Ikkoku**](http://www.maison-ikkoku.net/)(Kandahar St) and [**Bar Stories**](http://athousandtales.com/)(Haji Lane)

### Other Options

 The ***Ann Siang Hill/Club Street*** area near Chinatown is a small network of two or three streets of restored shophouses housing various bars and restaurants (including some of the craft cocktail bars listed above). Lots of choices here to please all punters (and it gets pretty packed on evenings and weekends), and two nice wine bar, [**O Batignolles**](http://obatignolles.com/) (Gemmill Lane, just off Club Street – also serves decent French food) and *Le Carillon* (Ann Siang Road) - good spots for after-work chilling out over a glass of wine.

The ***Boat Quay*** riverside stretch in Raffles Place is relaxing and fun for an alfresco drink in the early or late evenings (don’t mind the relatively mild touts trying to get you to dine in one of the seafood restaurants along the same stretch). If you’re not into fancy cocktails at *Ah Sam*, grab a beer from the excellent selections at *Penny Black* along the riverbank, *Harry’s* (right next door) or *Molly Malone’s* (the next street over).

Along ***Mohamad Sultan Road*** (River Valley) and the adjoining ***Robertson Quay*** are more options for both eating and drinking, with ***Clarke Quay*** as the middle link between Robertson and Boat Quays, boasting a good choice of bars, decent restaurants and a popular dance club (*Attica*).

The hip and trendy ***Arab Street*** quarter (centered around Bali Lane/Haji Lane/Kandahar Street) boasts a number of cute boutiques, shisha cafes and unpretentious little restaurants in addition to craft cocktail bars *Maison Ikkoku* and *Bar Stories* – there’s also live jazz, funk or comedy most nights at *Blujaz*.

If you’re in the Orchard Road area and need a relaxed beverage break from the crowd, make your way to ***Emerald Hill***. Walk past the open-air bar fronting Orchard Road and find *Number 5*, *Que Pasa* or *Ice-Cold Beer* – three chilled-out, friendly bars all in a row, each housed in a restored shophouse.

Further out of the Central Business District is the ***Dempsey Hill*** cluster – old Army barracks now converted to antique stores, wine bars, cafes and restaurants (including a number mentioned in this guide). Among other choices, there’s a nice wine bar (*The Wine Company*), a very chilled-out garden bar (*The Green Door*) and two brewhouses - *Red Dot* (near Samy’s/Long Beach Seafood restaurants, closer to the main road) and *Tawandang* (which also serves Thai food in a relaxed setting).

 Beyond Dempsey Hill, ***Holland Village*** is a suburban expatriate neighborhood, with some good cafes, restaurants and bars – *Wala Wala* is a perennial favorite and a no-fuss, relaxed, hangout spot.

1. This is nowhere near a complete list of everything worth trying in Singapore; instead it’s a list I put together based on my and my family’s and friends’ preferences and favorites – so it’s very definitely opinionated and highly subjective ☺. Eager-eyed foodie readers will notice that I don’t actually list some of the best-known, most-hyped restaurants as a result. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The basement also boasts a small but well-stocked ***supermarket***, two ***pharmacies*** and a direct walkway link to the Suntec hotel/mall/convention center area and the Esplanade Theaters. The City Hall ***subway station***/interchange is also here: take the escalator from the lobby outside Starbucks. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. This was converted from a Catholic girls’ school that dates from 1864. It has a lovely courtyard, some nice buildings and historic architectural details (I went to school there, actually ☺) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. There’s also a good selection of restaurants in the **One Fullerton** complex, on Collyer Quay next to the Fullerton Bay Hotel, across from The Fullerton Hotel. Many boast great views, most are moderate to expensive, and choices range from Thai and Japanese to Italian and desserts. Book ahead, especially for lunch. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. These listings are, for the most part, only the more high-end places – for inexpensive, consistently tasty Chinese fare head for any **Crystal Jade**-branded restaurant you see in just about any mall. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Actually, ALL of the Imperial Treasure restaurants are very good. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Singaporeans are fiercely divided in their opinions as to which of these restaurants serves the “best” chili crabs, black pepper crabs, spicy fried “mee goreng” noodles etc. Frankly, they’re all good in their own way … All the restaurants listed have been at it a long time and know what they’re doing. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. This is traditional food you’ll find only in Singapore, Penang and Malacca (the three British Straits Settlements), a unique combination of Malay spices and Chinese home-style cooking. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Here’s the explanation: <http://www.seriouseats.com/2011/09/guide-to-singapore-hawker-center-street-food-where-to-eat.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Both Rafffles bars are actually more enjoyable, for being more lazily laid back, in the late afternoon/early evening when it’s less crowded. You can also book a game of billiards in the Bar & Billiard Room, including on the table where a tiger was reputedly shot during the British colonial era. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)