

My Three-Hour Vacation

Making the most of this city-state on limited time (and clothing) **BY LEX COLLEY**

Singapore Swing

It's said you can get anything you want at any time of day in Singapore. I put this theory to the test at 4 A.M. one recent Monday after discovering, just several hours before I was due to make my pitch to the board of a prospective client, that my airline had lost my luggage. If the same ever happens to you, I recommend the robust selection of golf shirts, polyester pants and faux leather shoes at the 24-hour Mustafa Shopping Centre. Otherwise, the following itinerary should suit you just fine.

6 P.M. After the day's meetings end, stroll over to the indoor-outdoor Lau Pa Sat, Mandarin for *festival market*. Hundreds of Chinese, Malay and Indian stall owners will heckle you to compete for your appetite. Of note are the satay skewers, available in nearly every type of meat, and the barbecued crab legs. Adventurous palates should try the pig organ noodles or curried snakehead.

6:45 P.M. No visit to Singapore would be complete without a Singapore Sling at the Raffles Hotel Long Bar, where the frothy pink cocktail was invented in 1915. Sure, it's girly and cheesy, but after giving an (ultimately successful) board presentation while wearing disposable clothing straight out of *Caddyshack*, who cares?

THE FILE Singapore

Lau Pa Sat 18 Raffles Quay.
65-6736-6622


The Long Bar, Raffles Hotel Singapore 1 Beach Road.
65-6337-1886

City Space Bar, Swissotel the Stamford 2 Stamford Road.
65-6338-8585

Insomnia 30 Victoria Street.
65-6338-6883

7:30 P.M. The next round is at City Space Bar on the seventieth floor of Swissotel the Stamford. As you drink in Singapore's best view, sip on a fine wine or cognac — or, better yet, local Tiger beer.

8 P.M. A few blocks away, you'll find yourself standing in the middle of what was, until the 1980s, one of the last cloistered convents in the world — and is now the dining, shopping and entertainment mecca known as Chijmes.

8:15 P.M. One of many bars within the Chijmes, *Insomnia* is popular with an expat crowd drawn by the cover bands playing classic rock (when I was there, Led Zep and the Doors). Living up to the bar's name, the party tends to go all night — but if, like me, you've already been up for 36 hours, you're welcome to stay through "Stairway to Heaven" and then call it a day. 

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Terminally Relaxed If you're stuck in Bangkok for a long layover, why not make a quick side trip to paradise? The Metropolitan Hotel will chauffeur you in a private limo to its **Shambhala Urban Escape** spa, where you can take a dip in the pool, get a massage and enjoy a three-course meal. For just \$200, you'll be the envy of your haggard fellow travelers. metropolitan.como.bz