

Making the most of Singapore in 48 hours

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By

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I touched down in Singapore on a mission. This glamorous spot had lingered near the top of my travel bucket list for a long time, and my opportunity to visit finally came in the form of a quick two-day stopover.

However, I was worried that 48 hours would be nowhere near enough time to get the best out of Singapore.

It may be just a dot on the world map, but this small nation is brimming with both historical and modern attractions. Would it be enough time to enjoy the country's world-renowned culinary attractions, incredible shopping scene and hidden gems?

I was determined to give it my best shot, and after some research – which included watching *Crazy Rich Asians* half a dozen times – I curated a jam-packed itinerary that I felt gave me a taste of Singapore's alluring highlights.

There is no doubt about it – Singapore is in a league of its own when it comes to extravagance.

And while it is undoubtedly a haven for those seeking the bright lights and Instagram-worthy sites, it is so worth looking beyond the flashy surface and exploring its local culture.

My first stop was the luxurious Clan Hotel. Situated in the heart of Chinatown, and just a stone's throw from Marina Bay, the location for my stay could not have been more perfect.

Standing at 30 storeys, the hotel overlooks the historical Cross Street, one of the oldest streets in Singapore, which was the arrival point for settlers landing in the country in the 1800s.



Lisa's luxurious Grand Premier Room at Singapore's well-situated Clan Hotel.

These streets were once lined with bustling shophouses, while wooden boats known as sampans floated along the water.

However, it has since evolved to become part of Singapore's Central Business District, with towering skyscrapers joining the traditional buildings still standing.

The history of the area inspired the hotel's name – the term Clan is used to describe extended families in Chinese culture.

While the hotel itself oozes modern luxury, it also shows pride in the history of the area and tells the story of its Chinese forefathers in a contemporary setting, with plenty of nods to Chinese culture evident throughout.



The luxurious Clan Hotel's Sky Pool.

On arrival, I was greeted with a traditional Chinese tea ceremony, a custom used in Chinese households when welcoming guests.

The tea was accompanied by a slice of mooncake, a Chinese delicacy made with lotus paste, which was supplied by a local business – one of several the hotel has teamed up with in the area.

As I made my way to my Grand Premier room on the 26th floor, I was entertained in the elevator by a display relaying numerous interesting facts about the local area.

For example, I learned that the oldest building still standing in Singapore is The Arts House, built in 1827, and that during his 2016 visit to the country, former US president Barack Obama referred to Rojak as his favourite local dish.

By the second day, I was quite exhausted from trekking around, and decided to spend most of my day lounging by the hotel's sky pool and hot tub, overlooking the skyline.

My stay included the hotel's Master Series Privileges, which meant that I had my own personal assistant, known as the Clan Keeper, to help me with anything I may have needed during my stay, such as personal shopping, tailoring and clothes pressing.

The service even included having a bubble bath prepared in my room after a long day seeing the sights.

Singapore is often overlooked as just a stopover on the way to another destination.

However, there is so much more to this country than its airport, and 48 hours is just enough time to craft a thrilling visit.