

Seven must-stay hotels in Singapore

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This article is part of a guide to Singapore from FT Globetrotter

For almost five years, I lived a commuter's life between London and Singapore. In the Lion City I had a house to lay my head in, but work often required me to road-test hotels both new and established, and I was asked by friends often enough for recommendations that I kept my finger on the pulse of who was doing what, where. Now that I'm no longer a local, Singapore's hotels feature more holistically in my experience of the city; based on what I'm travelling for (work, friends, a stopover I need to cram both into), I care about neighbourhood, size, vibe and service. (Ah, service in Singapore. Still occasionally a bit of a blip issue . . .)

The good news is the hotel scene seems to be evolving into something befitting the size and sophistication of Singapore. An Edition, a Mondrian and a Standard are all in the pipeline — youthful brands with high design and reputations for plugging ably into local scenes. And Raffles is set to plant a second Singapore flag on Sentosa Island later this year. So whether you're after a deep-dive into the cocktail-bar scene or a poolside loll followed by a Michelin-starred dinner, there will soon be more choice than ever. Meanwhile, here is a selection from among the city's very best options, for different agendas.

100 Peck Seah Street, Singapore 079333

The USPs: A CBD-meets-Chinatown location; value for money; cool architecture creds.



The biophilic tower of Oasia Hotel Downtown

WOHA is one of Singapore's most laurelled architecture firms, having designed local rapid-transit stations, luxury resorts on Bali and even a university campus in Bangladesh. And the Oasia is one of the most distinctive buildings on the Singapore skyline, thanks to its striking combination of bright-red aluminium mesh cladding and lush green vertical plantings, evidencing a full 21 different species. Three interior "verandas" — entire floors given over to outdoor space — create additional bio-havens (the green "quantum" WOHA has achieved here is tantamount to requirements for 10 whole buildings). This means two outdoor pools, plus a yoga lawn — all many storeys above the city.



One of Oasia's Deluxe rooms, with its "views for days"

Rooms and suites: Nice clean lines and lots of light wood, minimal frippery — the basics you need (a good bed; a wall-mounted TV with lots of channels; a small but serviceable work space; natural light; bathtubs in the Club rooms), and not much you don't. The views-for-days from most of them are a bonus.



Head up to the 27th floor of the tower in which Oasia is housed for Italian at OSO Ristorante

Food and drink: There's all-day simple dining at The Marmalade Pantry, on the hotel's ground floor (think salads and sweet-potato fries, a handful of pastas and fancy sandwiches), which is where hotel guests eat breakfast. OSO Ristorante, while not part of the actual hotel, is a *haute* Italian-leaning venue on the tower's 27th floor. Along with nice sharing plates of cheese and salumi (and caviar, if it's your thing), there's an extensive entrée menu that's very carnivore-friendly.

Gym: Yes — like the rooms, compact and not complicated, but with what you need: treadmills, ellipticals, weights and room for stretching. Weekly yoga classes are complimentary (though first come, first served).

Spa: None, but staff can recommend local day spas for treatments.

Rates: Double, from S\$284 (about £170).