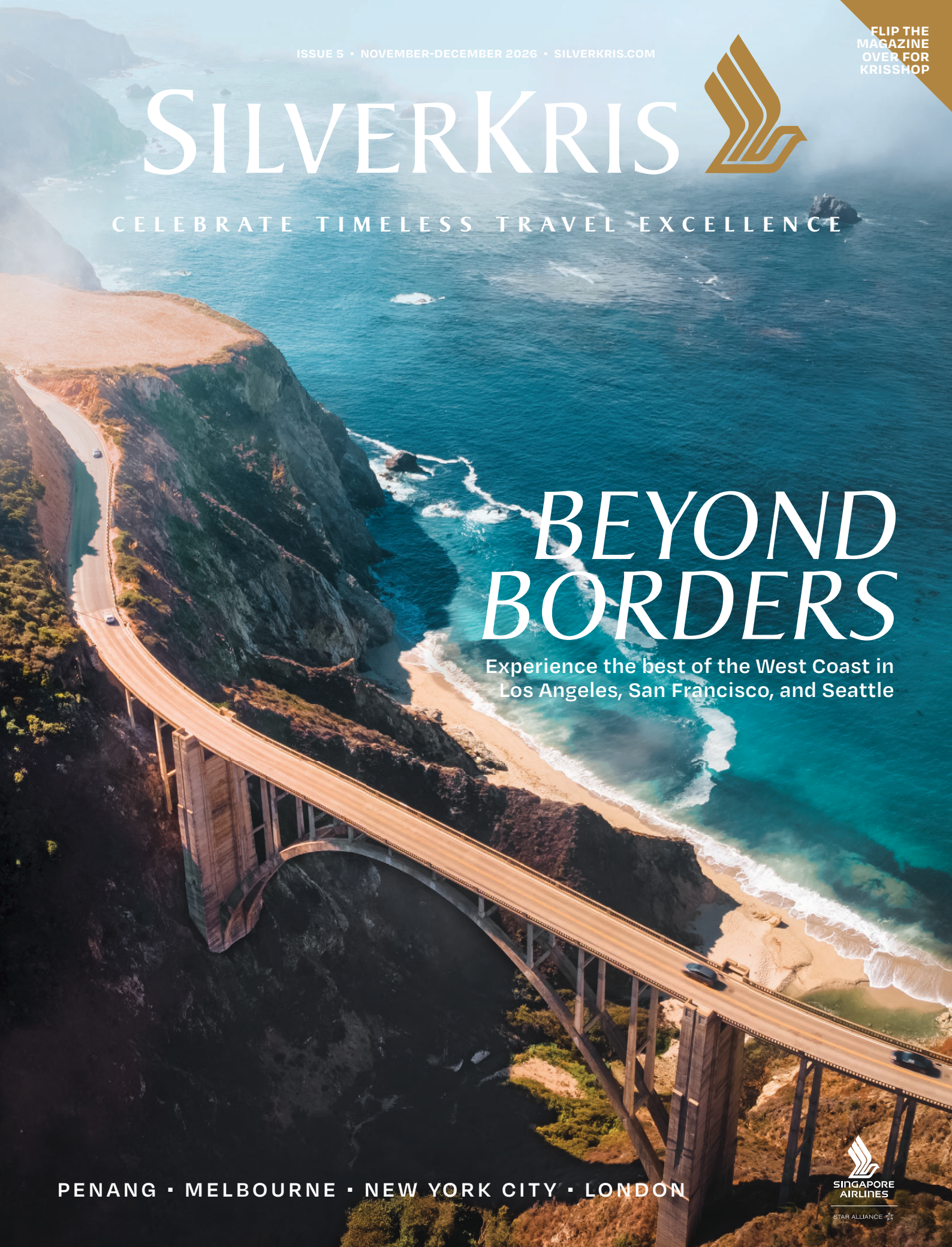
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CONTENTS

NOVEMBER–DECEMBER 2026



41

COVER STORY

A creative revival is sweeping through the West Coast cities of San Francisco and Los Angeles

IMAGE GELOY CONCEPCION

06

MAKING HISTORY
The milestones that shaped Singapore Airlines this year

22

NICK OF TIME
How five Singapore Airlines cabin crew members saved a man's life

38

BEYOND THE CABIN
An insider's guide to Seattle's best attractions

Experience

MERRY CHRISTMAS 10
The best cities around the world to celebrate the holiday season

FROM PAST TO PRESENT 18
Stay at one of Penang's new luxury heritage hotels

Encounter

SYDNEY'S WILD SIDE 26
What to see and do near the new Western Sydney International Airport

CAREER TAKEOFF 31
Singapore fashion label In Good Company on growing with intention

Explore

FIVE SENSES 52
Immerse yourself in the energy of New York City

THE EXCHANGE RATE 58
London vs New York City across four lifestyle experiences

Editor's note



There's plenty to see and do in New York City, no matter the season

'Tis the season for long-haul travel. As the year ends, Singapore Airlines (SIA) is introducing a series of updates to the journey, starting on the ground with an elevated pre-departure experience for Suites and First Class customers (page 14).

From November 2026, the changes continue on board with new cabin products, the next-generation *KrisWorld* in-flight entertainment system and high-speed Wi-Fi, enhancements to SIA's food and beverage programme, and new amenity kits (page 6).

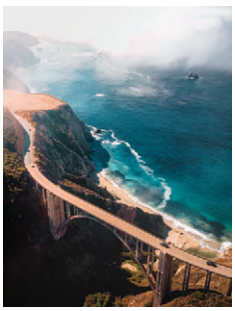
With the holidays approaching, you might also be thinking about where your next journey will take you. For a big year-end trip, our cover story (page 41) explores the US West Coast, delving into the colourful cities of San Francisco and Los Angeles, with a detour north to Seattle.

And if you're ending the year with a bang, we pit London against New York City to help you decide where to ring in the new year (page 58).

No matter where you are, here's to ending the year on a high – and to the adventures still to come.

Chelsia Tan

Editor



On the cover

Take a road trip along Big Sur, a spectacular stretch of California's coast between San Francisco and Los Angeles. Photo by Brandon dela Cruz

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INSIDE

Where to spend Christmas

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Moments that took us further

Beyond the miles, a journey is defined by the moments in between. Here are some milestones this year that have kept Singapore Airlines world class

Over the years, Singapore Airlines (SIA) has worked to redefine travel – in the air and on the ground – while widening the horizons of where its customers can go.

New destinations have joined its network, partnerships have enabled greater connectivity, while its lounges, rewards programme and digital platforms have evolved alongside the changing ways we travel.

Now, with the introduction of its First Class Concierge service at Changi Airport, the airport experience is receiving a more considered touch.

These are some of the milestones that have shaped the SIA experience – plus a glimpse of where the journey is heading next.





↑

A more seamless ground experience

For Suites and First Class customers, the journey through Changi Airport is taking on a more personal touch.

Since August 2026, SIA has been progressively rolling out a new First Class Concierge service at Changi Airport Terminals 2 and 3, providing dedicated support at key touch points of the airport.

Customers are met and escorted by a personal concierge, accompanied through expedited security screening and, where available, whisked by buggy between the First Class lounge and their departure or arrival gate.

Those departing from gates A1 to A5 at Changi Airport Terminal 3 can also use the Premium Security Screening Lane for a faster, more seamless experience.

The First Class Concierge service at Changi Airport Terminals 2 and 3 ensures a smoother travel experience from lounge to gate.



IMAGES DAVID TERRAZAS (MADRID), SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX (F1), SHUTTERSTOCK (CHANGI AIRPORT)

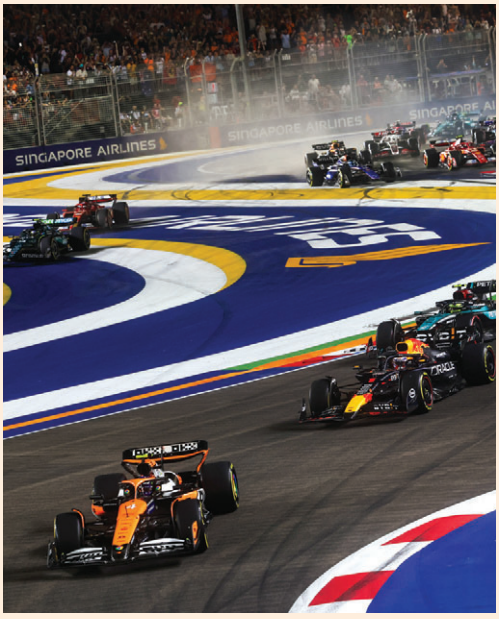


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The world gets a little closer

SIA continues to expand its network. Services to Hangzhou were launched in June 2026, while those for Madrid via Barcelona and Western Sydney International Airport will commence in October and November respectively. New services to Riyadh will follow next March.

Through Scoot, the wider SIA Group network has continued its expansion in the region, with Scoot serving 84 destinations as of Sept 1, 2026. New routes launched in 2026 include Palembang, Chiang Rai, Medan, Tokyo (Haneda), Belitung, Pontianak, and Guiyang.



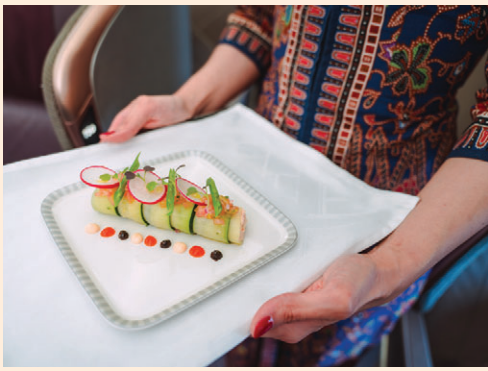
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Beyond the flight

The SIA experience has increasingly extended well beyond the aircraft.

SilverKris.com was refreshed with an interactive destination map, smarter filters and richer visuals, while KrisFlyer launched its latest brand campaign, and held its third edition of the KrisFlyer Fest in Singapore, where members enjoyed exclusive perks and discounts from Kris+, KrisShop and Pelago.

The airline has also continued to be part of Singapore's biggest moments, from the FORMULA 1 SINGAPORE AIRLINES SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX to Singapore's National Day celebrations, while the annual Time to Fly sale offers another nudge towards the next adventure.



↑

An exploration of flavours

The journey has also been about bringing destinations closer through experiences on board. Among the highlights was SIA's collaboration with Barcelona-based Michelin-starred chef Nandu Jubany, who brought elements of Catalan cuisine to the airline's dining programme, offering travellers a taste of Spain in the skies.



←

The lounge experience gets an upgrade

SIA is investing S$45 million to transform its SilverKris and KrisFlyer Gold lounges at Changi Airport Terminal 2, increasing the lounges' overall space and seating capacity by 50 per cent, alongside upgraded facilities, signature elements from SIA's flagship lounges at Terminal 3, as well as enhanced food and beverage offerings.

The first phase opened in November 2025 with the First Class SilverKris Lounge, offering customers a brand new space with increased capacity, higher ceilings and floor-to-ceiling windows. The Business Class lounge, due to open fully by mid-2027, will offer more space and new facilities such as rest areas, productivity pods, and a full-service bar.

KrisFlyer Gold Lounge guests can also look forward to changes, with the lounge undergoing renovation, together with the Business Class lounge.

The refresh extends overseas as well, with a new SilverKris Lounge taking shape in Melbourne, slated to open in December 2026.

SIA will unveil a new travel experience in November 2026, with enhanced food and beverage offerings and new amenity kits. New cabin products, the next-generation *KrisWorld*, and high-speed Wi-Fi will follow in 2027.



↑

Greater connectivity

A journey can become more expansive when airlines partner together. Throughout 2026, SIA has deepened partnerships with Air India, Malaysia Airlines, Air China and Air New Zealand, offering customers seamless connectivity, greater flexibility, and more travel options.

Through closer coordination of schedules, fares, codeshares, loyalty benefits and more, the network continues to evolve – making the spaces between its nodes easier to cross.


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Christmas around the world

Across countries, Christmas takes many forms – from festive lights and mulled wine in historic squares to rooftop dinners and celebrations on tropical shores. For travellers planning a year-end escape, these four destinations offer distinctive ways to celebrate the season

STORY ____ *Audrey Ng*



IMAGE **SHUTTERSTOCK**

→

Melbourne

Dance, dine and celebrate outdoors

In Melbourne, Christmas means long evenings, warm weather and the easy-going pace of an Australian summer. Festivities spill outdoors across parks, riverside promenades, rooftop bars and public squares.

Celebrate at Federation Square: Start at Federation Square, which transforms into a festive hub with decorations, family activities and seasonal events. Then stroll to Southbank or South Wharf for waterfront dining and drinks as the city lights come on.

Sing along at Carols by Candlelight: On Christmas Eve, join thousands at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl for Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight, a beloved Melbourne tradition of music under the stars.

Hit the laneways and markets: Explore the cafés, boutiques and street art around Flinders Lane, or browse the independent shops of Fitzroy. From Dec 13, head to the National Gallery of Victoria for the NGV Triennial 2026, a major showcase of contemporary art, design and architecture.

Make time for the iconic Queen Victoria Market, too, where stalls brim with fresh produce, gourmet treats, local specialities and souvenirs.

Party away: Make the most of Melbourne's long summer evenings with a packed calendar of concerts and music festivals. Catch international acts such as Harry Styles and Guns N' Roses in the city, or venture further into regional Victoria for festivals such as Meredith Music Festival and the New Year's Eve favourite Beyond the Valley.



Vision Australia's Carols by Candlelight

In Melbourne, Christmas means long evenings, warm weather and the easy-going pace of an Australian summer

→

Maldives

Beach barbecues, island escapes and ocean adventures

For those who prefer turquoise waters and white-sand beaches to snow-covered piazzas, the Maldives offers a tropical take on Christmas – think overwater villas, crystal-clear lagoons, and festive celebrations far from the bustle of city life.

Celebrate Christmas on the beach: Resorts like JOALI Maldives embrace the season with stunning Christmas decor, festive dinners, children's activities, and New Year's Eve celebrations beneath the stars.

Reset by the ocean: Start with breakfast overlooking the sea, then swim, escape to an uninhabited island, or unwind with a spa treatment or wellness session.

Explore above and below water: Snorkel with colourful marine life, look out for whale sharks, manta rays and dolphins, or kayak and paddleboard across the lagoons. Come sunset, cruise aboard a traditional *dhoni* (multi-purpose watercraft). Divers can venture deeper into the Maldives' spectacular reefs and channels, while a visit to a local island offers a glimpse of Maldivian life beyond the resorts.



JOALI Maldives

↓

Munich

Christmas markets, palaces and beer halls

Munich takes on a gentler charm during Christmas. At the heart of the festivities is the Christkindlmarkt at Marienplatz, the city's classic Christmas market set against the neo-Gothic New Town Hall. Browse stalls filled with ornaments, candles, woodcrafts and festive sweets as Advent music drifts from the Rathaus balcony.

Discover Bavarian Christmas traditions: A short walk away, the Kripperlmarkt celebrates Munich's centuries-old nativity tradition with carved figures, cribs and decorative pieces crafted for elaborate Christmas scenes. The English Garden also gets into the festive spirit with a Christmas market, while families can hop aboard the Christkindl Tram for a musical ride through the old town.

Feast on Bavarian favourites: Between markets, warm up in a traditional beer hall such as Hofbräuhaus or Augustiner, Munich's oldest brewery, over hearty Bavarian fare and freshly poured beer.

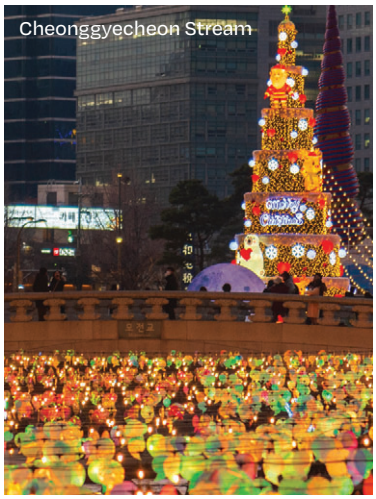
Step into Munich's royal past: Explore the Munich Residence, the lavish former seat of Bavaria's rulers, or venture to Nymphenburg Palace, particularly atmospheric when its sprawling grounds are dusted with frost. Back in the old town, climb the tower of St. Peter's Church for sweeping views over Marienplatz, or visit the Frauenkirche, whose twin domes define Munich's skyline.



Kripperlmarkt



Hofbräuhaus



Cheonggyecheon Stream

↑

Seoul

Festive lights, shopping and winter cafés

Vibrant and aglow with Christmas lights, Seoul brings a distinctly modern energy to the festive season. Despite December's sub-zero temperatures, the city buzzes with dazzling light displays, lively shopping districts and seasonal events.

See Seoul in lights: Come Christmas, Cheonggyecheon Stream transforms into one of Seoul's most atmospheric winter walks, with lanterns and light installations turning the waterway into a glittering spectacle. Nearby, Gwanghwamun and City Hall offer easy access to Christmas markets, public squares and seasonal displays.

Shop the Christmas spectacle: For an extravagant dose of Christmas cheer, head to Seoul's department stores. Around Myeongdong, flagships such as Shinsegae and Lotte transform their façades and interiors with elaborate displays, while seasonal pop-ups offer gifts and festive treats.

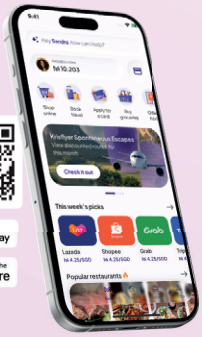
Cosy up with winter flavours: Seoul's café culture comes alive in winter. In Seongsu, Ikseon-dong and Hannam, design-led cafés offer cosy retreats with seasonal drinks and pastries. As night falls, head to N Seoul Tower for sweeping views of the sparkling skyline, before warming up over Korean barbecue, hotpot or *samgyetang*.

For more information on Singapore Airlines' flights to Melbourne, Maldives, Munich and Seoul, visit singaporeair.com.

IMAGES COURTESY OF JOALI MALDIVES; BERND RÖMMELT/MÜNCHEN TOURISMUS (KRIPPERLMARKT); SHUTTERSTOCK

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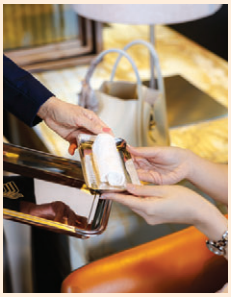
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Effortlessly First Class

A premium travel experience with Singapore Airlines begins on the ground

The old adage "It's not the destination, but the journey that matters" still rings true.

For Singapore Airlines (SIA) Suites and First Class customers flying from Changi Airport, however, the journey begins before they even leave the ground. From the moment they reach the airport, SIA has elevated every stage of the pre-departure experience, creating a seamless transition from kerbside to take-off.

From the First Class Concierge Service at check-in to the quiet comforts that await beyond, each touchpoint has been considered to make the journey to the aircraft feel every bit as refined as the experience on board.

Seamless journeys

A warm welcome awaits Suites and First Class customers the moment they arrive kerbside at Changi Airport for their SIA flight. With the Airline's porter service taking care of their luggage, they can proceed hassle-free to the First Class check-in reception, where they are greeted with a refreshing, chilled hand towel.

After check-in, customers will be escorted to immigration and the SilverKris Lounge. They may also enjoy complimentary buggy transfers, subject to availability, to the departure gates.

Customers departing from gates A1 to A5 at Changi Airport Terminal 3 may use the Premium Security Screening Lane* for a faster and more seamless security screening process. For customers departing from other gates, dedicated assistance is provided to help them through security clearance. With a concierge on hand, the check-in experience is efficient and effortless.

"For a seamless and stress-free travel journey, the concierge service provides end-to-end assistance for all Suites and First Class customers departing from, transiting through and arriving in Singapore," says Yeoh Phee Teik, Senior Vice President Customer Experience.

The concierge service is also extended to customers travelling on other airlines who have a connecting SIA Suites and First Class flight through Singapore, with the goal of making it a smooth journey for every eligible SIA customer.

Elevated upgrades

Arriving at the airport early is always worthwhile – not just →

Clockwise from main image Complimentary buggy transfers, personalised service and upgraded lounges are just some of the new features available to SIA Suites and First Class customers



for peace of mind, but to make the most of the SilverKris lounges and The Private Room before departure. Customers can enjoy the lounges for up to 24 hours before their flight time.

Improvements have been made to enhance the experience at these lounges.

From Oct 28, 2026, the First Class SilverKris Lounge (FSKL) will introduce full-service dining alongside the existing buffet line, offering customers greater choice in how they dine, while The Private Room continues to offer its personalised dining service.

Together, these enhancements are designed to give customers a more elevated experience the moment they settle into the lounge.

The full-service dining in the FSKL will be complemented by staff trained in mixology and barista skills to provide a more personalised dining and beverage experience, and better meet customers' expectations.

"A dedicated training programme was developed to equip staff with the skills needed to deliver the new premium experience," explains Ooi Chuin Ling, Senior Vice President Customer Services and Operations.

The dining experience has also been elevated across FSKL and Business Class SilverKris Lounge (JSKL), as well as KrisFlyer Gold Lounge (KFGL). There is a refreshed à la carte menu featuring new dishes, including child-friendly meals, inspired by Singapore's renowned culinary diversity.

A redesigned dining experience also means more offerings, with refreshed bread and live stations in FSKL, and a reorganised buffet spread in JSKL that makes it easier for customers to navigate the selection.

Gluten-free bread and desserts are available at the FSKL, along with traditional butter toast and eggs. These are also available at The Private Room.

From top
The First Class SilverKris Lounge elevates the dining experience with the introduction of full-service dining, alongside its existing buffet selection

Extended bar and barista hours – from 5am to 2am – give more travellers the chance to enjoy the refreshed drinks menu at FSKL and JSKL, featuring new cocktails alongside a selection of wellness beverages.

There's plenty to enjoy – and that's all before the flight even takes off. Transiting Suites and First Class customers can also enjoy the lounge experience at Changi Airport, with the First Class Concierge Service providing personalised assistance during their transit, including guidance to the lounge and support with their onward journey.

That's not all. SIA has made sure to bookend journeys on a similarly luxurious and smooth note when one returns to Singapore. Arriving Suites and First Class customers at Changi Airport will receive a warm welcome from a concierge, who will escort them to baggage claim and assist with their onward journey once they have collected their bags.

With thoughtful service and seamless hospitality at every touchpoint, SIA offers the assurance that every stage of the journey is truly first class.

The Premium Security Screening Lane will be available daily from 8.30am to 12.30pm, and from 9pm to 1am. This service is also extended to Solitaire PPS Club members.

"A dedicated training programme was developed to equip staff with the skills needed to deliver the new premium experience"



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From cherished gatherings and milestone celebrations to quiet meals shared over tea, these moments and memories have shaped the restaurant's journey and become part of its story.

Today, its heritage continues across two distinctive dining destinations — from the cultural charm of Kampong Glam at PARKROYAL on Beach Road to the panoramic views of Singapore from 60 storeys above at TOP of UOB Plaza.

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Rooted in luxury

The latest generation of hotels in Penang is breathing new life into historic buildings, transforming them into stylish stays that draw inspiration from their past

STORY _____ *Chelsia Tan*



1926 Heritage Hotel Penang

Tour George Town's historic civic and waterfront districts in a classic Jaguar Mark II with the hotel's 1926 Centennial Local Discovery Series.

A nod to Penang's colonial past

1926 Heritage Hotel Penang, @1926heritagehotelpg

Once the living quarters of British immigration officers in Penang in the 1920s, this cluster of 24 two-storey houses – located in the former colonial administrative hub of Jalan Burma – has begun a new life as a 78-room boutique hotel within a beautifully restored compound.

Its refurbishment was led by design studio Office Of_, which took a restrained, conservation-led approach, retaining the wooden spiral staircase, timber doors, verandahs, utilitarian façade and mature heritage trees that have come to define the property. Vibrant impressionist works by Penang-born artist Koay Shao Peng, depicting everyday scenes of the city, line a seemingly endless corridor awash in warm, amber light.

We recommend dining at Root House by Gen, the hotel's signature restaurant by celebrity chef Johnson Wong.

Inspired by traditional recipes from Penang's Chinese community, dishes such as wok-fried lotus root with black garlic and jungle black garlic chicken soup are nourishing choices that offer a welcome pick-me-up after a long day of travel.

The Blue Mansion's next chapter

Cheong Fatt Tze – The Qing Suites, @theqingsuites

The team behind the iconic Blue Mansion has transformed its former servants' quarters into an intimate enclave of 13 luxury suites, complete with a spa inspired by Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM).

Cheong Fatt Tze – The Qing Suites occupies a row of five shophouses built in 1904, directly across from the Blue Mansion on Lebuh Leith. While the façade is a striking cobalt blue reminiscent of the Blue Mansion, the interiors are light, →



The Qing Courtyard

Make time for a wellness session with the TCM-trained practitioners at Virtue TCM. Following a consultation, treatments may include a combination of gua sha, cupping and acupuncture.

airy and modern, with subtle Art Deco influences.

The open-air courtyard is undoubtedly the property's pièce de résistance. A handsome marble-topped bar anchors the space, framed by soaring arches and lush greenery. The rooms are spacious and decked in wood finishings, tempting one to linger.

Breakfast is a made-to-order affair, with choices such as coconut pancakes with kaya and Chantilly cream, and ginseng chicken congee. Be sure to order the herbal duck somen noodles, slow simmered to perfection.

Keeping clan heritage alive

Soori Penang, @sooripenang

A desire to share a part of his clan heritage inspired award-winning Singaporean architect-turned-hotelier Soo K Chan to bring the latest chapter of his exclusive Soori hospitality brand to Penang.

Located in the heart of the Khoo Kongsi compound in George Town, Soori Penang occupies a row of 15 restored shophouses that once served as clan residences for members of the Khoo family. Although the luxury boutique hotel sits along a bustling thoroughfare, its one-bedroom suites are tucked away in a private alcove with 24-hour security.

The interiors are light, airy and modern, with subtle Art Deco influences

Less is more at Soori Penang, where Chan has designed the long, cavernous space around elements inspired by the Khoo clan temple next door.

Stone lions and a wall ornament symbolising good fortune are among the discreet details woven into the interiors, while the gentle trickle of water from a small fountain in the light-filled courtyard adds a soothing touch. Byredo bath products and state-of-the-art fixtures provide the finishing touches to the hotel's understated sense of luxury.

Singapore Airlines flies to Penang 35 times a week.

Explore the history of Khoo Kongsi on a walking tour with hotel manager Azman, uncovering the clan's culture and legacy across Southeast Asia.



Clan House Suite Internal Courtyard at Soori Penang

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ENCOUNTER

MEET THE PEOPLE AND THEIR INSPIRING TRAVEL STORIES



Everyday heroes

Cabin crew among those recognised at the annual Singapore Airlines CEO Service Excellence Awards for saving a passenger's life on board a flight

INSIDE

New gateway

Bookmark these attractions near Western Sydney International Airport

Story time

Get to know the owner of Singapore's smallest bookstore and library

Cut above the rest

Singapore fashion label In Good Company on the secret to success

Festival of lights

One writer reflects on the traditions and memories that make Deepavali special



From left
Flight Stewardess Caitlyn Teng, Leading Stewardess Jolene Lim, Inflight Manager Kueh Joo Tong, Chief Stewardess Serene Koh, and Leading Steward Idris Abu

Five Singapore Airlines (SIA) cabin crew members – Inflight Manager Kueh Joo Tong, Chief Stewardess Serene Koh, Leading Steward Idris Abu, Leading Stewardess Jolene Lim, and Flight Stewardess Caitlyn Teng – were recognised at the Singapore Airlines CEO Service Excellence Awards in August for their quick thinking and extraordinary service on board a flight from Barcelona.

On Oct 13, 2025, an elderly customer on an SIA flight from Barcelona to Singapore suddenly lost consciousness and slumped in his seat, just as the aircraft was preparing for take-off. Serene was alerted and found the 71-year-old unresponsive, with no detectable breathing or pulse.

"I was shocked," she told *The Straits Times*.

"The first thing that came to my mind was to quickly get a response from him, to check if he had a spontaneous pulse and breathing."

Despite the shock, the 48-year-old, who has worked at SIA for 26 years, immediately sprang into action. Together with Idris, she moved the elderly man onto the floor and began administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), while Joo Tong quickly retrieved essential medical equipment, including an automated external defibrillator (AED).

Other cabin crew members reassured his wife and kept those on board calm, while protecting his privacy. They also identified two doctors and two trained first-aiders among the customers, who stepped in to assist.

Serene and one of the doctors took turns performing CPR. After a gruelling 20 minutes and two shocks from the AED, the man's pulse finally returned.

He later underwent surgery to have a stent inserted into a blocked artery and, after a month of recovery in Barcelona, was able to return home to Sydney.

Being recognised at the Singapore Airlines CEO Service Excellence Awards was a meaningful honour for Serene and her fellow crew members. But for the team, their actions that day ultimately came down to something fundamental to their roles: ensuring the safety and well-being of their customers.

"It's somebody's grandfather, somebody's father," Joo Tong said in an interview with *Mothership*. "We were happy that we were able to help."

What to do in an emergency

ALERT THE CREW
Notify cabin crew immediately.

FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS
Stay calm and give responders space.

OFFER YOUR EXPERTISE
If medically trained, let the crew know.

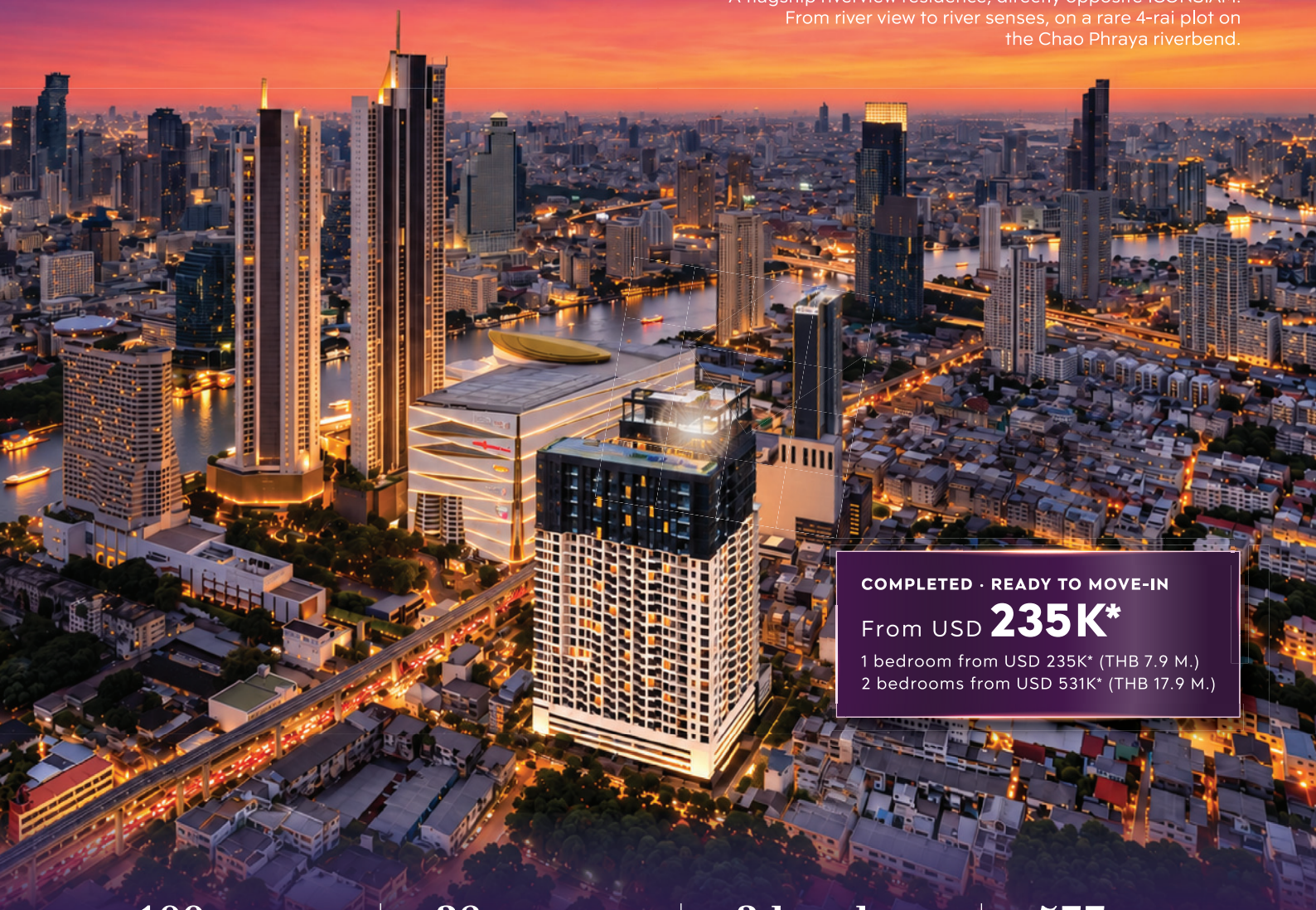
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Floor plans, prices and viewing appointments

Project’s name Rhythm Charoennakhon Iconic. Project Details: 29- storey, 577 residential units and 1 commercial unit. Land owner and project developer: AP ME 20 Co., Ltd. Company registration number 0105562169842 Company Address: 170/57 18th Fl. Ocean Tower 1, Ratchadapisek Rd., Khongtoey Bangkok 10110. Chief Executive Officer: Mr. Anuphong Assavabhokhin. Registered capital of the company: THB 100,000,000. Project’s location: Charoennakhon Road, Khlong Ton Sai Sub-District, Khlong San District, Bangkok. Land tittle deed numbers: 909, 954, 1477, 1648-1653, 1969, 1983, 3990, 4784-4786, 5716, 5717, 7923, 8800-8802, 13370 Khlong Ton Sai Sub-District, Khlong Ton Sai (Bang Sai Kai Nue) Khlong San District, Khlong San District (Bang Lamphu Lang) , Bangkok. Project’s area (as stated in the title deeds submitted for Building Permit): 4 rais 0 ngan 86.4 square wah. (1,686.4 square wah) Common property areas: approximately 23,576 square meters. The lands and condominium buildings have been mortgaged with Bank of Ayudhya Public Company Limited. Registered as a condominium on August 27, 2026, Registration No. 4/2026.

* All the information and images shown are for representation of the project concept and for advertising purpose only. Kindly seek further details at the sales office prior to reaching a decision.

Europe by river with Trafalgar

The Danube, the Rhine and the Seine will have you falling for their timeless charm





Often, it's the locals you meet, an aged cathedral or the wonder of somewhere new that makes a trip memorable.

For nearly 80 years, Trafalgar has created such moments across Europe by land. Now, it is bringing that expertise to the water, with river cruises along three famed rivers and curated excursions guided by its Local Specialists.

The Danube

Aboard Trafalgar Reverie, catching the sunset or savouring regional food is only a hint of what lies ahead from Budapest to Passau.

The Danube greets you with hospitality that unfolds slowly. It's in the glass poured by the Saahs family at Weingut Nikolaihof, Austria's oldest wine estate. It's in the way Bratislava brings its medieval history to life through Trafalgar's MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experiences. And it's in a chocolatey slice of Sachertorte, Vienna's way of sending you off. By the time Passau comes into view, you'll have stories of your own to tell.



The Rhine

Trafalgar Verity carries you past centuries of scenery, from Strasbourg's picturesque old town to the romantic Middle Rhine Gorge and UNESCO-listed Cologne Cathedral.

En route from Basel to Amsterdam, enjoy lunch at the Bohrers' farm as part of Trafalgar's Be My Guest experience. At Weinessiggut Doktorenhof, a German family-owned vinegar house, taste a craft handed down through generations.

Time the cruise right, and Amsterdam greets you with Keukenhof's tulip fields in spring. A fitting tribute to a river that's spent the journey subtly sharing its allure.

The Seine

Think Seine, think Paris. But how familiar are you with the river once the Eiffel Tower is behind you? Trafalgar Dreamer, sailing from 2027, answers that question.

Beyond the City of Love, the countryside opens up. In true Trafalgar's Be My Guest spirit, a cider-making family welcomes you for a farm-grown lunch. Normandy also holds Claude Monet's beloved garden at Giverny and the historic D-Day beaches.

It's easy to see why Europe is impossible to resist, and falling for its charm has never been easier with Trafalgar.

Clockwise from top left: Paris views from a French Window Stateroom aboard Trafalgar Dreamer; Farm-to-table dining inspired by the region; Trafalgar Dreamer cruises along the Seine in Paris

Scan the QR code to find out more about Trafalgar.
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Reveal | Retreat | Renew

Get closer to nature in Western Sydney

Beyond Sydney's iconic harbour and beaches, Western Sydney offers a vibrant mix of cultures, rich history and spectacular natural beauty – now more accessible with Singapore Airlines' new daily non-stop flights to Western Sydney International Airport from Nov 23, 2026

STORY *Catherine Boucher*

IMAGE **DESTINATION NSW**

Reveal

Lean into learning about Australia's story, spanning over 65,000 years of Indigenous history and beyond. Set within sprawling gardens on the banks of the Nepean River, **Penrith Regional Gallery** houses works by local Indigenous artists. Combine a gallery visit with a stroll along the 6.4km bridge-to-bridge section of the **Great River Loop** walk, taking in the interpretive signs that vividly explain the region's deep past.

Australia's second oldest city, Parramatta, seamlessly blends its heritage with a modern cityscape. Explore every nook and cranny at **Elizabeth Farm**, the country's oldest surviving European building, and imagine the colonial life of early arrivals. This wealthy homestead stands in stark contrast to the **Parramatta Female Factory**, Australia's only remaining female convict building. Guided tours offer a sobering insight into the 200 women and children who once lived within the thick sandstone walls.

Round out your history lesson with a visit to historic **Old Government House**, the oldest surviving public building in the country, situated in the beautiful World Heritage-listed **Parramatta Park**.



Elizabeth Farm



Blue Mountains Stargazing

Retreat

Leave the urban energy behind and head for the hills. Feel the temperature drop as you ascend into the Blue Mountains, where the eucalyptus-scented air instantly calms the senses. Only 30 minutes by car from the Western Sydney International Airport, it is one of only two cities in the world wholly enclosed within a World Heritage landscape of ancient escarpments and waterfalls.

Scenic World is the ultimate destination to enjoy the best of the Blue Mountains' iconic views. Capture the Three Sisters' distinctive rock formation from all angles, before descending to the rainforest floor via the world's steepest railway.

For those chasing more nature, make tracks for **Darwins Walk**, named in honour of English naturalist Charles Darwin, who walked the trail in 1836. The recently updated path is easily accessed by public transport from the local train station.

Set behind an unassuming facade on the main street in Blackheath, **Aqua Ignis Bathhouse** is the perfect pit stop after a day on your feet. Its two ice plunge pools will reinvigorate the senses – just what's needed before ending the night admiring the skies with an astronomer at **Blue Mountains Stargazing**.

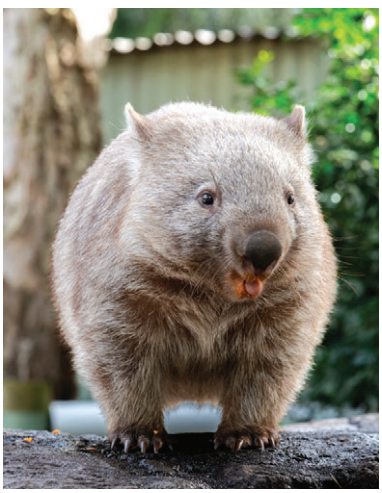
Renew

Descending from the misty mountains back to the sun-drenched plains, Western Sydney offers some of the best animal experiences in the city. Reconnect with the natural world through immersive wildlife encounters that will lift your spirits and renew your sense of wonder.

Featherdale Sydney Wildlife Park is home to over 2,000 Australian native animals. Simply wander and be wowed, or book ahead for an immersive experience: Help keepers feed koalas, snap a selfie with a quokka, or take a behind-the-scenes tour of the reptile pavilion.

Or head to **Sydney Zoo**, where safari-style open enclosures replace cages, offering a clear view of the animals and native wildlife. Home to Australia's largest reptile and nocturnal house, the zoo is a fitting finale to an unforgettable journey through Western Sydney.

Daily non-stop flights between Singapore and the new Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport start on Nov 23, 2026.



Featherdale Sydney Wildlife Park

IMAGES KATHERINE LU/MUSEUMS OF HISTORY NSW (ELIZABETH FARM); DESTINATION NSW (BLUE MOUNTAINS STARGAZING); COURTESY OF FEATHERDALE SYDNEY WILDLIFE PARK


THE
CALILE
Brisbane, Australia



BOOK STOP

Tucked away in an ageing complex in Chinatown is a charming independent library, where visitors can pause for coffee and linger over vintage picture books

STORY _____ *Chelsia Tan*
PHOTOGRAPHY _____ *Juliana Tan*

May Lin Au Yong, the sole proprietor of independent library and bookstore Eliko Picture Books & Collectibles, begins her morning at 9am with an hour of heavy lifting, moving furniture and knick-knacks in and out of her tiny 65 sq ft unit on the ground floor of Chinatown Complex. The process repeats itself when she closes up shop at 4.30pm.

Her stall of curios is an anomaly among the shops peddling clothing, souvenirs, jewellery and religious artefacts, most of which are manned by seniors. Eliko, a portmanteau of the names of her nephew and brothers, often draws curious stares from passers-by.

"I've been asked why I'm here, so it's not a natural fit. I think if you think about where a natural fit would be for this shop, it would be Joo Chiat, Katong, Tiong Bahru – somewhere with a more affluent crowd, probably," says the 48-year-old, who works as a part-time lecturer in documentary making.

The former business journalist and TV producer, who studied economics and politics in university, started this passion project after the birth of her nephew, Eli, in 2021. Then inspired by the idea of new beginnings, May Lin decided to challenge herself by building a personal library of picture books.

"I didn't grow up with picture books, so it wasn't as though I had a sentimental bond with them. I grew up reading Enid Blyton, Nancy Drew, Roald Dahl and so on," she shares. "But while I was doing my master's in 2008, I came across two picture books that were very different."

One was Olivier Dunrea's *Ollie the Stomper*, a charming story about a petulant gosling that still makes her smile today. The other was Shaun Tan's *The Arrival*, a wordless migrant story whose intricate pencil illustrations explore displacement, identity, hope and belonging.

"That afternoon made me realise that picture books aren't just for children, and I wanted to explore the genre further," adds May Lin.

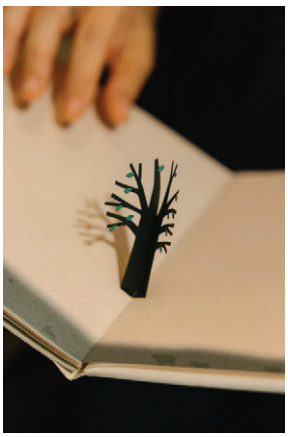
That discovery sparked her interest in collecting picture books, with her collection growing to about 50 titles by the time she started Eliko. The library was first located at Pearl's Hill Terrace in 2021, before moving to Chinatown Complex in April 2025.

"Eliko is modelled after the comic cafés we have here, where you pay to spend time reading the books," she explains. "I wanted a way to actually share the books I collect."

To browse the picture books, customers pay an $8 fee, which allows them to settle in with a cup of coffee and read at the stall.

May Lin sources many of the books herself during her travels, recently hauling 140 titles home from Japan in five bags weighing a combined 80kg. "And I was staying in a hostel with no lift, so four of those bags had to make their way either up the staircase or be left downstairs for those few days," she recalls with bemusement.





"That's the joy of hunting for older books... It's about being able to delight in the craftsmanship of these books"

Keeping Eliko running comes at a cost. May Lin estimates that the library sets her back about $1,000 a month, including rent, utilities and other operating expenses. She has also invested about $15,000 in building a collection that now includes around 600 books.

"What funds this is that I moved back home to my parents' place. I'm staying in the storeroom. My bedroom is half this size. I have no place for books," she reveals.

Among her favourite titles are a pop-up book by the late Japanese artist Katsumi Komagata and *The Arrival*. Neither is for sale, though May Lin admits she may eventually have to part with them to make room for new additions.

Other books are easier to let go of. A handful are available for sale, with most priced between $25 and $30, while older titles can go up to $100. The oldest in her collection is a Beatrix Potter series printed in 1905.

"I think that's the joy of hunting for older books. The paper is different. The colour is different. It's really vibrant – the way the ink sits on the paper," she shares. "It's about being able to delight in the craftsmanship of these books as well."

For May Lin, running an independent library is hardly about turning a profit.

"Obviously, no one goes into the bookselling business for money. It is a difficult business. It is an existential business," she says. "But I think being able to see people enjoy the space is satisfying."

#01-079 Chinatown Complex, 335 Smith Street. For opening hours, visit Instagram (@eliko.sg) for updates.

"GROWTH HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT CHANGING WITHOUT LOSING OURSELVES"

More than 10 years on, Singapore fashion label In Good Company is expanding its footprint, while proving that growth can be both ambitious and intentional

STORY ____ *Audrey Ng*





IMAGE **COURTESY OF IN GOOD COMPANY**

From left Creative director Sven Tan, managing director Jaclyn Teo, operations director Julene Aw, and head of design Kane Tan of Singapore fashion brand In Good Company (IGC)



In Good Company's (IGC) latest flagship store in Singapore's trendy Joo Chiat neighbourhood is more than just a place to shop.

Housed in a three-storey heritage shophouse, the space brings together the fashion label's own collections with a curated selection of local and international brands.

Having shut down nearly all its stores and pivoted its retail approach during the Covid-19 pandemic, IGC has weathered some tough times in a market increasingly shaped by fast fashion and e-commerce. This year marks a new chapter for the home-grown label, with the opening of two brick-and-mortar stores, including one in Kuala Lumpur, as well as a revamp of its original boutique at Ion Orchard.

"We've learnt that resilience is rarely one big decision. It is mostly the small, consistent decisions to keep showing up, adapt and keep moving forward," says co-founder and managing director Jaclyn Teo.

That approach has shaped the way that the brand has grown and evolved since its beginning.

2013-2015: THE EARLY YEARS

In Good Company began as an e-commerce womenswear business founded by Jaclyn, Julene Aw, Sven Tan and Kane Tan. The four were former colleagues at Alldressedup, a Singapore fashion label that shuttered in 2012.

In the early years, their priority was to build an independent fashion business from the ground up. With limited resources and a prevailing perception that home-grown brands might not be taken as seriously as international names, the founders focused on what they could control: design integrity, strong relationships and consistency.



This spread from bottom left IGC launched its second brick-and-mortar store in a Joo Chiat shophouse; the co-founders of IGC; the brand's new store features a small cafe selling tea and wagashi

At the time, few brands in Singapore offered minimalist, well-tailored ready-to-wear garments for women – a gap IGC quickly filled with its quiet luxury aesthetic, overseen by creative director Sven and head of design Kane.

Rooted in quality fabrics and contemporary design, the label is known for modern silhouettes and reinvented classics that are timeless, wearable and versatile.

IGC established its first physical presence in 2014 at Tangs at Tang Plaza, alongside other multi-label stockists in Singapore.

As its following grew, Ion Orchard offered the label a pop-up space that eventually became a permanent lease. Its first standalone store opened there in 2015 – a "defining moment" that reflected growing confidence that a home-grown label could hold its own alongside international names on Singapore's premier shopping belt.

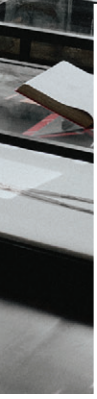
Having a space of its own also gave IGC greater room to experiment, paving the way for collaborations, and the integration of lifestyle, food and other experiences alongside fashion.

2016-2025: BUILDING THE BRAND

The next decade brought further growth, with IGC expanding its reach through overseas retailers in cities such as Manila, Bangkok and Hong Kong. Today, the label continues to be stocked at Kapok in Hong Kong.

IMAGES LAURYN ISHAK (SHOPHOUSE EXTERIOR), COURTESY OF IN GOOD COMPANY (STORE INTERIOR, PORTRAIT)







> “Every market has its own texture and rhythm, so we’re interested in how the brand can become meaningful in each place”

Community has also remained central to the brand’s ethos. Its collaboration with Plain Vanilla at the Ion Orchard store was an early example of how IGC sought to create a space where shoppers could gather, while providing a platform for fellow independent local brands.

In 2025, to mark the 10th anniversary of its flagship store, IGC staged its first runway show.

Featuring more dramatic and expressive pieces than its typically understated designs, the collection comprised 70 looks, and took six months to put together.

“I wanted the show to be a memorable reflection of what IGC has contributed to Singapore’s art and creative scene over the years, while demonstrating that home-grown brands have the qualities and vision to succeed on an international scale,” says Kane.

2026 AND BEYOND: INTENTIONAL GROWTH

Over the years, while IGC has faced pressure to scale, the brand has also turned down opportunities that would have compromised its way of working.

Among them were numerous requests to design corporate uniforms, which the team declined because it lacked the resources to take them on without stretching the business too thin.

Instead, the brand remains focused on the experiences it creates for its customers – its Joo Chiat flagship embodies this philosophy. Designed to feel lived-in, the space retains many of the shophouse’s original features, including its spiral staircase and exposed brick walls. Muted shades of white, grey and brown add to its warm, understated atmosphere.

The store also carries a curated selection of homeware, wellness, beauty, and other design and lifestyle products. On the first floor, Miura, a tea and wagashi stand, creates an inviting spot for customers to linger.

Regional expansion is also on the horizon. In April 2026, IGC opened its first overseas boutique at Parkson Elite in Pavilion Kuala Lumpur, giving the label an opportunity to connect with a growing community of consumers interested in independent and emerging brands.

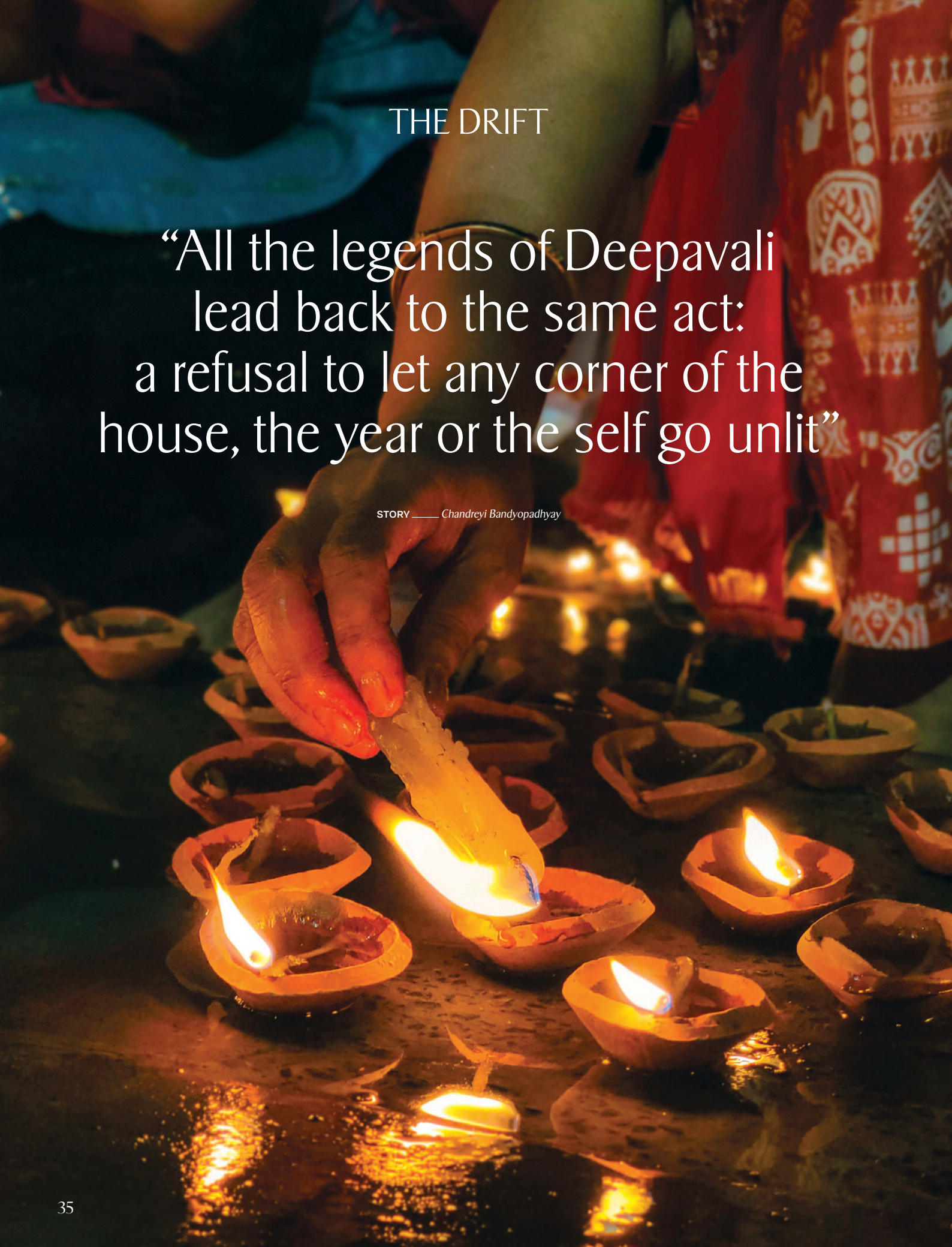
“For us, KL is as much about listening and learning as it is about expansion. We want to grow at a pace that allows us to build something meaningful, rather than simply open another door,” says Jaclyn.

That means resisting the temptation to replicate the same formula in every market.

“Every market has its own texture and rhythm, so we’re interested in how the brand can become meaningful in each place, rather than simply replicating what we’ve done before,” she adds.

“For us, growth has always been about changing without losing ourselves. The ambition is to keep evolving, while still feeling, unmistakably, like IGC.”





“All the legends of Deepavali lead back to the same act: a refusal to let any corner of the house, the year or the self go unlit”

STORY —— *Chandreyi Bandyopadhyay*



The story of good versus evil is eternal, as is the festival of lights. Growing up, I thought Deepavali – Sanskrit for "a row of lights" – belonged solely to the Indian subcontinent.

Then I began travelling during the Deepavali festive season, watching India's cities glow like clusters of fireflies from the sky. I soon realised that this halo of light stretched far beyond India – from the Middle East to Southeast Asia and even Europe, wherever the Indian diaspora had put down roots.

Memories of Deepavali carry a particular melancholy. I see my seven-year-old self in a hurry-free childhood, holding a sparkler at arm's length while my grandfather calls from the doorway for me to be careful – a doorway I no longer walk through. The brave dog at my feet now lives among the stars. That house is no longer mine to visit; no one lives there anymore. The family I once burst crackers with has become a story I may one day tell my own children.

But Deepavali doesn't seek permission before returning. It comes every year, whether or not I am ready to face what it remembers.

In my hometown in West Bengal, the festival arrives as Kali Puja. While much of India lights lamps in honour of other deities, Bengal turns its attention to its fiercest goddess – dark and unbound, garlanded with skulls, her tongue out in shame after realising she is standing on her husband's chest.

Elsewhere, the stories shift: to Rama's homecoming after his victory in Lanka, or to the churning of the ocean of milk, from which Lakshmi emerged to bestow prosperity. But it is Kali – wading through demons and refusing gentleness on her path towards light – who feels truest to me now.

Clockwise from opposite
Deepavali, a Hindu celebration, is known as "a row of lights"; Lakshmi idols on display for sale ahead of the Lakshmi Puja festival; customers shop for gold jewellery during Dhanteras

The night before is Bhoot Chaturdashi, our own version of Halloween, when spirits are said to roam. Fourteen diyas, one for each forefather, are placed at doorways and on windowsills, leaving no dark corner for a wandering ghost. Fourteen kinds of leafy greens are also prepared in a bitter dish called choddo shaak, traditionally eaten to ward off what the light cannot reach.

In Mumbai, Deepavali arrives with a sense of opulence. Accountants close their ledgers and open new ones in Lakshmi's name, while gold is bought the day before, on Dhanteras. Families gather around card tables, playing rummy and teen patti into the night.

Legend has it that Parvati once played dice with Shiva on Deepavali and declared that those who gamble on the festival would prosper throughout the year, while those who abstain risk returning as a donkey. Money changes hands amid sweets and laughter. Beneath it all lies the same enduring hope: Let this year be brighter than the last.

Further north, Deepavali marks Rama's return to Ayodhya, with lamps lit to guide a king home. Down south, Lakshmi takes centre stage again, bringing her own language of prosperity. The celebration now stretches far beyond India – to Singapore, Thailand and even Dubai, where skylines come alive with dazzling light displays.

I no longer light firecrackers, having traded them for hand-drawn rangoli and lamps that I light without much thought for which god they are meant for. Every year, in whatever city I find myself, a small flame at my doorway does what it has always done: show me a better path through life. Deepavali survives distance, different gods and even a childhood home whose door you can no longer knock on.

All the legends of Deepavali lead back to the same act: a refusal to let any corner of the house, the year or the self go unlit. I don't know which story is true. What I do know is that everywhere around me, people are doing exactly what I am doing: striking a match, watching it catch, and believing that the dark never gets the last word.



For more information on Singapore Airlines' flights to India, visit singaporeair.com.

IMAGES SUBHODIP DAS (MAIN); SHUTTERSTOCK (INSETS)



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EXPLORE

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Each issue, we spotlight one region, making it easier to uncover hidden gems beyond the usual tourist trail



BEYOND THE CABIN · BEYOND THE CABIN ·

Only in Seattle

Cabin crew member Abdul Rauf tours the Emerald City's cultural attractions

INSIDE

West Side Story

California's storied neighbourhoods are buzzing with fresh creative energy. See what's new on the West Coast

New York City

Discover the Big Apple's many sides, from the lights of Times Square to the wetlands of Jamaica Bay

The Exchange

London or New York? We compare two iconic cities to ring in the New Year



Seattle – also known as the Emerald City – is famous for landmarks such as the Space Needle, Pike Place Market and the Fremont Troll. But few people realise that this vibrant city in the Pacific Northwest is also the birthplace of many things, including grunge music and, of course, Starbucks.

This cultural cachet is what draws Singapore Airlines cabin crew member Abdul Rauf to its shores. "My favourite thing about Seattle is its culture. Its heritage is preserved through its museums, historic sites and vibrant neighbourhoods, making it an engaging and rewarding destination for history enthusiasts," he shares.



Visit a historic coffee store

It could well be said that Seattle is the epicentre of modern coffee culture – at least, in the United States. After all, the world's first Starbucks store opened at 2000 Western Avenue in 1971, before it relocated to its current Pike Place Market location in 1976.

Join the snaking queues for a latte or a cold brew, then explore Pike Place Market – one of the oldest public markets in America – with your coffee in hand.

"What's so interesting about the market, you might ask? How about witnessing the spectacle of fishmongers tossing huge fish in the air? This is a tradition in the market, attracting amused onlookers and photographers," Rauf says.

Immerse yourself in grunge music

Seattle is synonymous with grunge music. "The rise of the city's grunge movement from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s was a defining moment in musical history," Rauf notes.

Today, fans can visit iconic music venues such as Central Saloon, which hosted Nirvana's first Seattle show in 1988, and the Moore Theatre, where Alice in Chains and Mad Season once performed. Rauf also recommends stopping by Easy Street Records, where Pearl Jam played a surprise 16-song set in 2005.

"The store is well-known for its extensive selection of vinyl records, CDs, DVDs and music memorabilia. It also showcases live performances from both emerging and established artists, playing a pivotal role in the city's music scene," he says.

Previous page
The Museum of Flight is the largest independent air and space museum in the world

Above
Rauf recommends exploring attractions such as Pike Place Market

Discover the history of flight

Technically, Seattle is not the birthplace of aviation – that title belongs to Ohio, where the famous Wright brothers lived and worked. However, the city is home to the Museum of Flight (bookable through Pelago), the largest independent air and space museum in the world.

"As a cabin crew member, I'm also an aviation geek. The museum offers a captivating journey through the world of flight, enabling visitors to understand and value the achievements of aviation pioneers," Rauf shares.

"My favourite part is its extensive collection of over 150 aircraft and spacecraft, ranging from military jets to experimental planes."

Explore Seattle's roots

Learn more about Seattle's own rich heritage in the Pioneer Square district. This was where the city's founders settled in 1852, creating a downtown area where business and industry thrived.

"Pioneer Square's distinctive charm lies in its architecture. Romanesque Revival, Italianate and Beaux-Arts styles can be seen on and within its buildings, many of which were reconstructed after the Great Seattle Fire of 1889," Rauf says.

There's plenty going on beneath Pioneer Square's sidewalks too. After the fire, the city was rebuilt on top of the ruins, and the streets were elevated by as much as 35 feet (10.7m) to address sanitation and flooding issues. This resulted in a network of subterranean passageways known as the Seattle Underground.

Take a guided tour of this atmospheric labyrinth and delve deep – quite literally – into Seattle's fascinating history.

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WEST COAST REVIVAL

From San Francisco to Los Angeles, explore neighbourhoods shaped by counterculture, music and art, where a new generation of creatives and independent businesses is bringing fresh energy to the streets

STORY _____ *Laura Kiniry*
PHOTOGRAPHY _____ *Geloy Concepcion and Matthew Scott*


Halfway to the Stars
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ONE WAY
City Sightseeing

It's an overcast July afternoon in San Francisco, and a hop-on, hop-off tour bus is rolling through the city's Haight-Ashbury district.

The double-decker is heading west, passing a boutique clothing store brimming with cargo miniskirts and futuristic denim jackets, and a nostalgia-fuelled candy shop stocked with Japanese Kitkats and Swedish gummies.

When it reaches the corner of Haight and Masonic streets, a woman dressed in colourful tie-dye begins waving enthusiastically at passengers from outside a vibrantly painted storefront covered in hearts, butterflies and portraits of musicians Jimi Hendrix and Jerry Garcia.

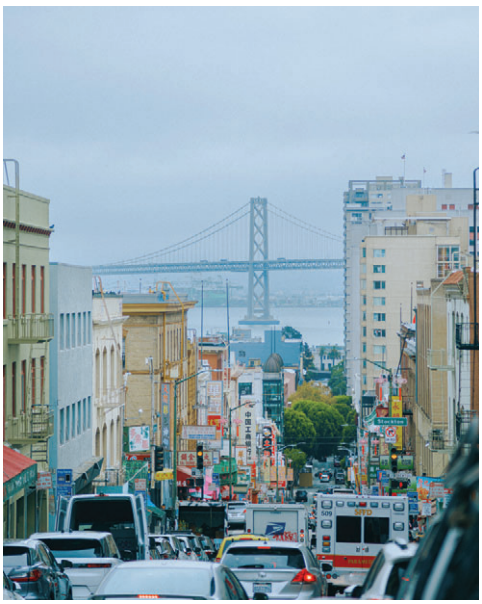
"Have a great trip!" she calls out. "Enjoy the journey!"

"It's our way of welcoming them to the neighbourhood," says Sunshine Powers, a native San Franciscan and owner of Love on Haight, a one-of-a-kind tie-dye emporium that is as bright and lively as the 46-year-old herself.

The gesture may be small, but it speaks to something larger happening in "the Haight", as locals call it. Nearly six decades after the neighbourhood became synonymous with the counterculture movement, residents like Sunshine are finding new ways to carry its spirit of creativity, community and individuality forward.

It's a story playing out elsewhere in San Francisco and Los Angeles too, as neighbourhoods draw on their distinct cultural and historic identities to reinvigorate their communities.

From SF's the Haight and North Beach to LA's Downtown Arts District, we meet the residents and business owners embracing the past while shaping what comes next.





From left
San Francisco is a city that never stops; its creative energy is on display at stores like Love on Haight; owner Sunshine Powers is an iconic figure in Haight-Ashbury

San Francisco

Where creative legacies live on in Haight-Ashbury and North Beach

Haight-Ashbury: A counterculture hub

In the 1960s, the Haight emerged as an epicentre of the counterculture revolution – a sweeping movement rooted in free expression, social causes and non-conformity.

The first free healthcare clinic in the US opened its doors here in 1967, the same year Huckleberry House, the country's first shelter for homeless and runaway youth, was established in the neighbourhood. It's a "give back" ethos that has defined the Haight for more than half a century.

Sunshine first visited the neighbourhood in the early '90s. It was the first place, she says, where she felt, as a teenager, that it was okay to be different. She took full ownership of what is now Love on Haight in 2017.

In the years since, Sunshine has transformed the legacy business into an artist collective showcasing tie-dyed – and non-tie-dyed – wearable works by more than 200 artists from around the world, alongside its own kaleidoscopic clothing line.

More than a storefront, Love on Haight has been at the forefront of bringing The Haight's collective spirit and creativity back to the fore.

That takes many forms, from co-hosting neighbourhood events – such as a flatbed truck concert earlier this year honouring the Grateful Dead, the iconic "cosmic Americana" jam band synonymous with the area – to donating a portion of shop sales to Taking It to the Streets, a local nonprofit supporting unhoused youth.



According to the Haight Ashbury Merchants Association, more than 20 new businesses have moved into the neighbourhood since 2021. Those that have stuck around are putting down roots, rebuilding a sense of community that harks back to the Haight's "Summer of Love" days. They're also well worth visiting, says Sunshine.

Among them is The Mellow, a hybrid plant shop, café and barbershop by day that transforms into a jazz and cocktail bar by night. There's also Kimono Dave, a tiny storefront filled with handmade festival outerwear, and Sandy's Muffulettas, which serves New Orleans-style Italian American sandwiches. Sandy's began as a pandemic-era apartment window pop-up before finding a permanent brick-and-mortar home.

Elsewhere in the neighbourhood, the newly rechristened DeLuxe – a live music institution – reopened in June 2026 after a three-year closure, bringing jazz, deep blues and rockabilly back to the Haight seven nights a week.

The Haight's alternative spirit is also on full display at the Counterculture Museum, located diagonally across from the famous Haight and Ashbury street sign marking the heart of the neighbourhood's 1967 counterculture movement.

The museum explores civil rights history through original records, rare photographs and other artefacts. Its free-to-enter bookstore stocks related publications, including author David Talbot's *Season of the Witch*, a definitive account of San Francisco's history.

Despite the changes the Haight has undergone since its counterculture heyday, its ideals of artistic expression and personal authenticity endure, says Sunshine.

"What happened in the Haight almost 60 years ago shaped who we are as a country," says Sunshine. "Hopefully, what we're doing in the neighbourhood now will shape the next 60 years just as much."

Clockwise from bottom left
Musician Anthony Arya; The Saloon, San Francisco's oldest bar; a quintessential diner experience at Mo's Grill; neighbourhood bar and eatery Belle Cora; one of San Francisco's colourful residents



North Beach: A new generation finds its rhythm

Across San Francisco, other neighbourhoods are finding new energy as a younger generation draws on the communities and creative movements that came before them. About 5km northeast of the Haight, North Beach is experiencing a revival of its own.

Indie musician Anthony Arya, 23, grew up in San Francisco and spent his weekends in North Beach, a downtown neighbourhood known for its Italian restaurants, historic alleyways, and deep literary and musical roots.

The singer-songwriter – and former *The Voice* contestant – began his musical career busking outside Caffe Trieste, a corner coffee house and city institution that has remained cash-only since opening in 1956.

"There are a few regular customers that are always hanging out there," says Anthony. "You're not quite sure what they do by day, but they always have interesting tales to tell."

For Anthony, North Beach has a distinct European feel. It's a community where friends stay up late playing Canasta, a rummy-style card game, while the legacy of Beat writers such as Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, who once roamed its streets, continues to shape its literary and musical scenes. Some of Anthony's favourite stops include Mo's Grill for burgers. "It's a diner experience, but it's a classic," he says.

His top spot for people-watching? Belle Cora, a cosy bar and eatery serving shared plates beneath a canopy of wispy willow trees.

"We've got music of all sorts," says Anthony, who honed his skills sitting in with local performers such as The North Beach Django, a jazz trio specialising in high-speed swing and melodic acoustic guitar, and playing at landmark venues such as southern-style Tupelo, and The Saloon, a circa-1861 establishment and the city's oldest bar.

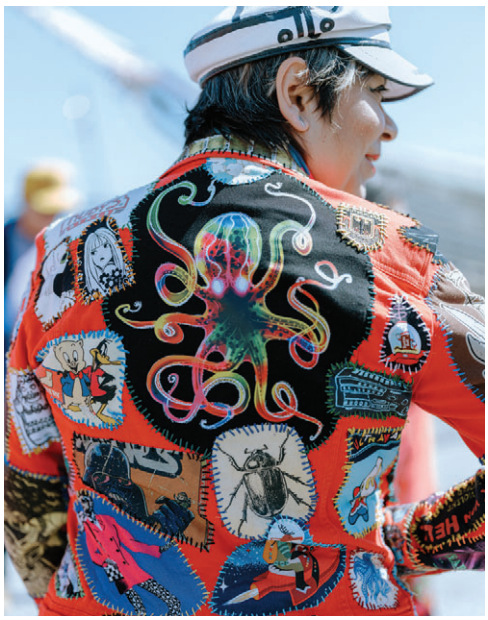
"It ranges from the neighbourhood's blues and jazz roots to a growing pop and indie scene that's indicative of the community's younger generation."

These days, Anthony is helping to nurture that next generation through San Francisco Unplugged, a curated acoustic music series held on the second Saturday of each month. It takes place at Paname Nightclub, located along the neighbourhood's historic Broadway corridor. A legendary 20th-century entertainment hub, Broadway was once home to iconic venues such as The Stone, a regular stop for the Jerry Garcia Band.

"San Francisco hosted the psychedelic rock of the '60s, the punk scene of the '80s, and the blues revival of the '90s," says Anthony. "In the years to come, I see my generation of musicians sharing [our] love of indie and folk rock."







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"In the years to come, I see my generation of musicians sharing [our] love of indie and folk rock"





From left
An art exhibition at Hauser & Wirth; Los Angeles native Wilda Lynn Garrett

IMAGE COURTESY OF FLORA YUKHNOVICH, HAUSER & WIRTH (GALLERY INTERIOR)





Los Angeles

Creativity in constant evolution

Downtown Arts District: Where old spaces find new life

San Francisco isn't the only California city where storied neighbourhoods are finding new relevance. Some 600km south, Los Angeles offers another take on reinvention, with former industrial spaces in its Downtown Arts District finding new life as galleries, restaurants and creative hubs.

"When I first visited LA's Downtown Arts District, it wasn't a destination by any means," says fifth-generation Los Angeles resident Wilda Lynn Garrett.

Today, the graphic designer, trained jazz singer and founder of Hidden LA – an online community dedicated to exploring the city beyond its stereotypes – describes the neighbourhood as a mix of boxy new high-rises, and repurposed warehouses and factories.

These former industrial buildings now house everything from a neon art studio to sprawling advertising spaces, while open-air murals and ever-changing graffiti bring colour to the streets.

Back in the '90s, the Arts District was gritty, she says. "Now, there are patio restaurants with lights and umbrellas."





Situated on the eastern edge of Downtown LA, between the LA River and Little Tokyo, the Arts District began as agricultural land, before the arrival of major rail lines transformed the area into a freight and manufacturing hub. From the 1920s through the 1950s, it was a centre of industrial and wartime production. By the time Lynn discovered the area as a design student in the 1990s, however, artists had begun taking over largely abandoned properties, and turning them into places to live and work.

"A lot of artists just snuck in there and began creating these huge paintings that wouldn't fit in a regular apartment," says Lynn.

While that artistic spirit endures, today's Arts District is increasingly defined by high-end galleries and expensive lofts, alongside a community of working artists still trying to make a living. Through these changes, one defining characteristic has persisted: the neighbourhood's penchant for adaptive reuse. Take Hauser & Wirth, a contemporary and modern art gallery complex spanning more than 100,000 sq ft within a restored 19th-century flour mill.

Free to enter, the communal hub features ever-changing exhibitions beneath dramatic skylights and arched truss ceilings, an onsite bookstore stocked with titles on photography, architecture and film, and a farm-to-table restaurant, Manuela.

The modern American eatery sources ingredients from its own 800 sq ft garden, located across a public courtyard from the main dining room. It even has its own chicken coop – a fitting nod to the Arts District's agricultural roots.

There's also ROW DTLA, a former produce distribution centre turned creative hub that's home to boutique shops, as well as eateries serving everything from raw oysters to doughnuts and dumplings.

Clockwise from top left Art Share LA, a nonprofit supporting artists in Los Angeles; farm-to-table restaurant Manuela; artworks on display at Art Share LA



IMAGES ELLI LAUREN (MANUELA), SHUTTERSTOCK (SIDEBAR)



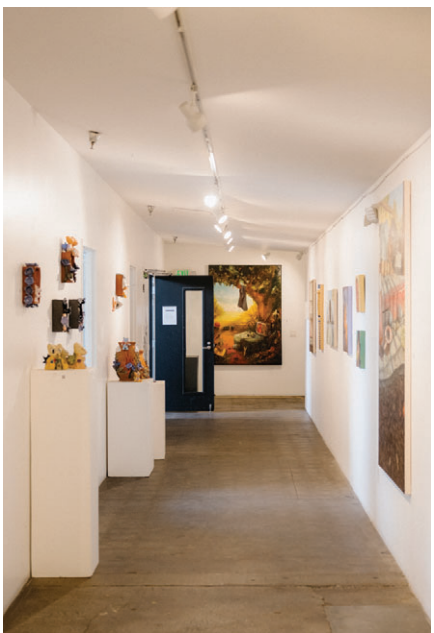
"What makes the neighbourhood worth discovering is seeing all those layers of Los Angeles history and change in one place"

Lynn, however, says it's Art Share LA – a nonprofit dedicated to creating equitable access to opportunities for artists across Los Angeles – that best embodies the community at the heart of the district.

In the end, Lynn would love to see the neighbourhood's excellent use of adaptive reuse continue to be a part of its future.

"The old industrial buildings are a huge part of what makes the Arts District distinctive," she says. "What makes the neighbourhood worth discovering is seeing all those layers of Los Angeles history and change in one place."

Singapore Airlines operates 14 flights a week to San Francisco, 17 to Los Angeles, and five to Seattle.



Round off your West Coast itinerary

With Singapore Airlines serving San Francisco, Los Angeles and Seattle, why not turn your trip into a wider West Coast itinerary?



Known for its maritime roots and Nordic heritage, Seattle's **Ballard** neighbourhood is also home to live music venues, a historic district lined with independent stores and boutiques, and a thriving community of makers and artisans.

Stop by **La Marea Marisqueria** for dry-aged bluefin tuna tostadas and fresh crudos, then browse **Venue Ballard** for Washington-made finds, from vegan leather backpacks to wood-panel acrylic paintings. Ballard's walkable brewery district, meanwhile, is home to more than a dozen taprooms.

For something quirkier, head to **Fremont**, Seattle's self-proclaimed "Center of the Universe", where offbeat landmarks are part of the neighbourhood's appeal. Seek out the **Fremont Troll** (pictured above), an enormous sculpture tucked beneath the Aurora Bridge, and one of more than 50 public artworks dotted around the area.

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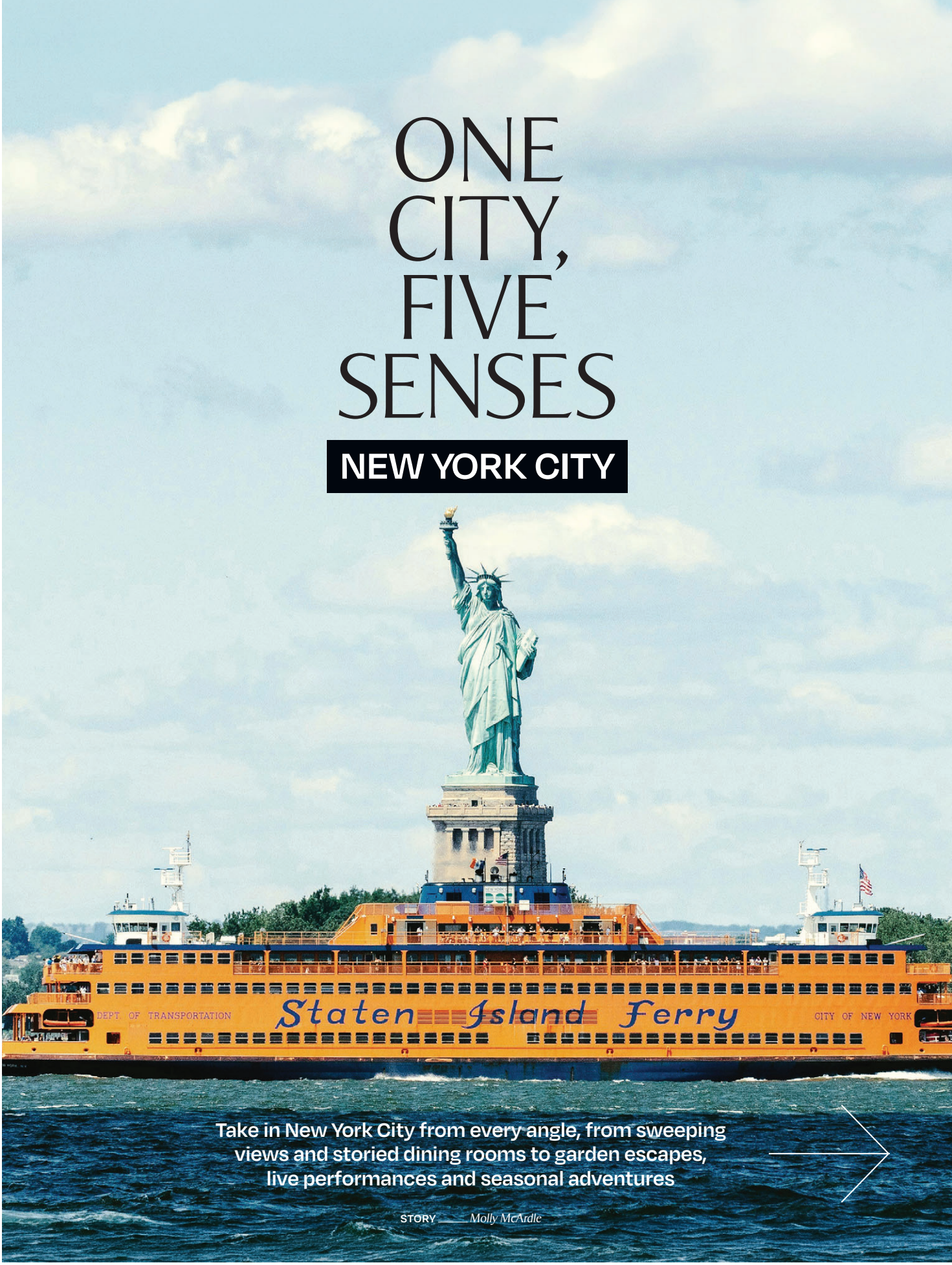


IMAGE **AVI WERDE / UNSPLASH**

Take in New York City from every angle, from sweeping views and storied dining rooms to garden escapes, live performances and seasonal adventures

STORY *Molly McArdle*

There are countless ways to experience New York City, from the lights of Times Square to the marshy wetlands of Jamaica Bay. Across them, there's always something to see. In America's largest and densest city, free yourself from checklists and follow where your curiosity takes you instead.



1



SOUND

↑ The Metropolitan Museum of Art tops many visitors' lists for its encyclopedic collection. It's also an underrated performance venue: Look for events held in the galleries, such as site-responsive dance at the Temple of Dendur or a reverberating, eight-hour work of music by composer and Radiohead alum Jonny Greenwood – played on a nearly 200-year-old organ – in the Arms and Armor Court.

In the winter, soak up the interwoven voices of medieval polyphony in The Met Cloisters' 12th-century Fuentidueña Chapel, located in the museum's northern Manhattan offshoot. In the summer, there's no venue as charming (or well-programmed) as the amphitheatre at Little Island, a lovely folly of a park that sprouts out into the Hudson River from Chelsea.

2

SIGHT

↑ Height is one way to get a sense of New York City's scale, and anyone who heads to one of the city's main observation decks – Empire State, Top of the Rock, Edge at Hudson Yards – will not leave disappointed.

Seeing Manhattan by water is even better: The free, municipal-orange Staten Island Ferry offers both visitors and commuters a leisurely drive-by of the Statue of Liberty. Boat trips to Governors Island, a former Coast Guard base that is slowly morphing into one of the city's greatest parks, and Ellis Island, the foremost place to explore America's immigration story, both offer their own takes on Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn.

But no view is as all-encompassing as The Panorama of the City of New York, a scale model of the entire city housed in the Queens Museum. The Panorama debuted as part of the 1964-65 World's Fair, while the museum itself is housed in a building from the 1939-40 World's Fair.



3

TASTE

↓ Polyglot Queens is New York City's most delicious borough, but nothing quite beats Manhattan's East Village in terms of "pure restaurant energy". Fun and sophisticated Bar Snack is a superlative place to start or end a night with a daiquiri and spice bag. Superiority Burger continues to hold it down for best-in-class burger and fries.

At Kabawa, chef Paul Carmichael serves up a tasting menu that also feels like a party. Time travel to the New York City of yesteryear with all-night pierogi at Veselka, old-school Italian pastries at Veniero's, and tiny glasses of ale at McSorley's, where the floor is still covered in sawdust.





4

SMELL

← No matter the season, you can take the Metro-North up from Grand Central to the New York Botanical Garden for a whiff of something special. Its 250 acres of green space are an oasis of fresh air in a city sometimes lacking it.

Lilacs and roses, when they are in bloom, perfume the air with their floral scent. And once every five or so years, visitors may catch the Amorphophallus titanum – better known as the corpse flower for its distinctive odour of rotting meat – in bloom.



5

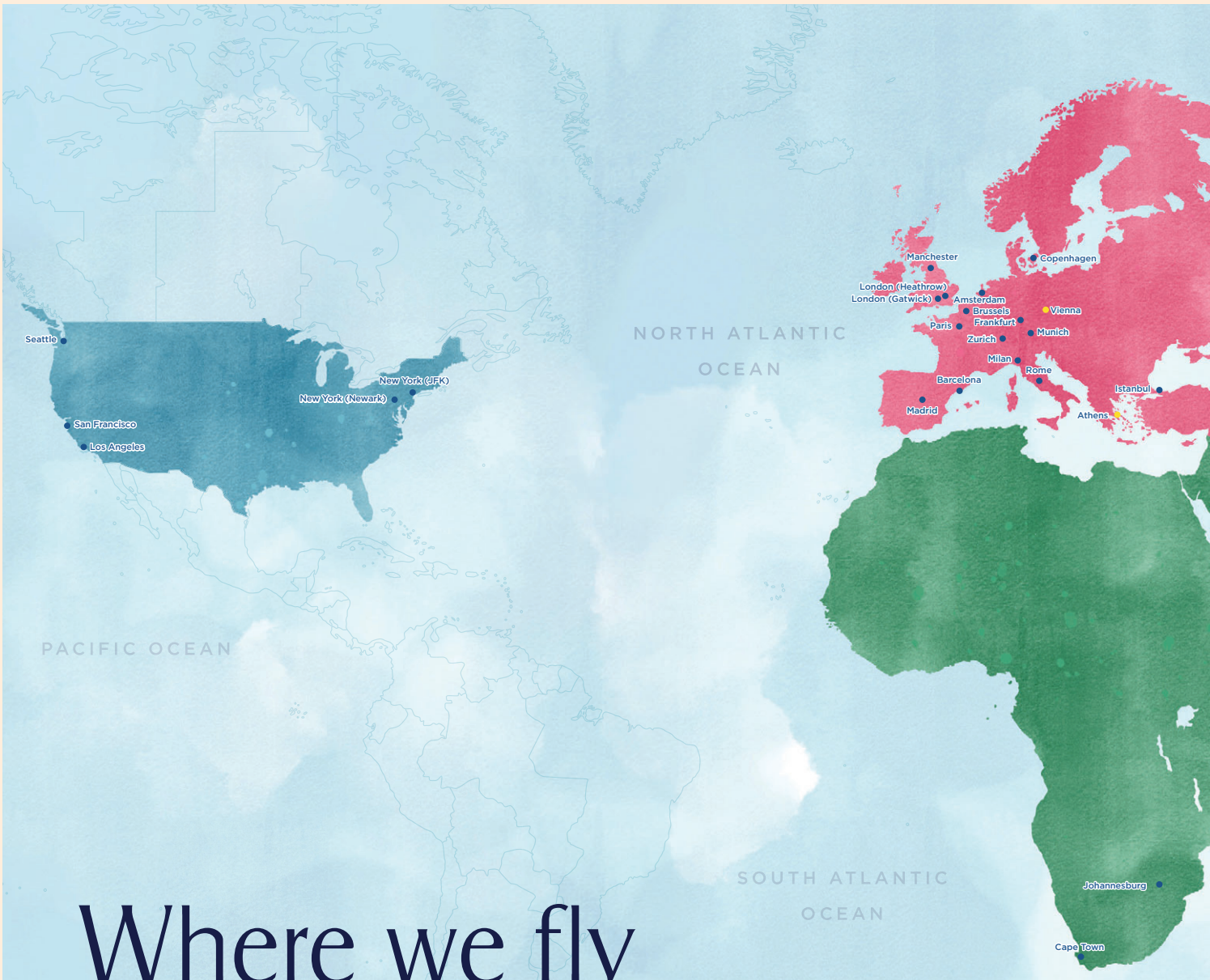
TOUCH

↑ In winter, the most invigorating way to warm up is to lace your skates up tight and push out across the ice. The rinks at Rockefeller Center and Central Park are more famous, but Bryant Park is especially picturesque from November to March. You won't get cold gliding in frictionless circles, but you may get pleasantly tired.

In the summer, do as New Yorkers do and head to the city's glorious beaches. Let the wind whip your hair on the one-hour ferry from lower Manhattan to the Rockaways, where you can extend your stay at The Rockaway Hotel. On the shore, feel the sand, sun and salt water on your skin. Above all, soak up your very own version of New York City.

Singapore Airlines flies directly to Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) seven times a week and to John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) 14 times a week, with a choice of non-stop flights or services via Frankfurt from Singapore.

IMAGES LAURA PERUCHI / UNSPLASH (TOP OF THE ROCK); CLAY WILLIAMS (KABAWA); SHUTTERSTOCK (TEMPLE OF DENDUR, NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN, ROCKEFELLER CENTER)



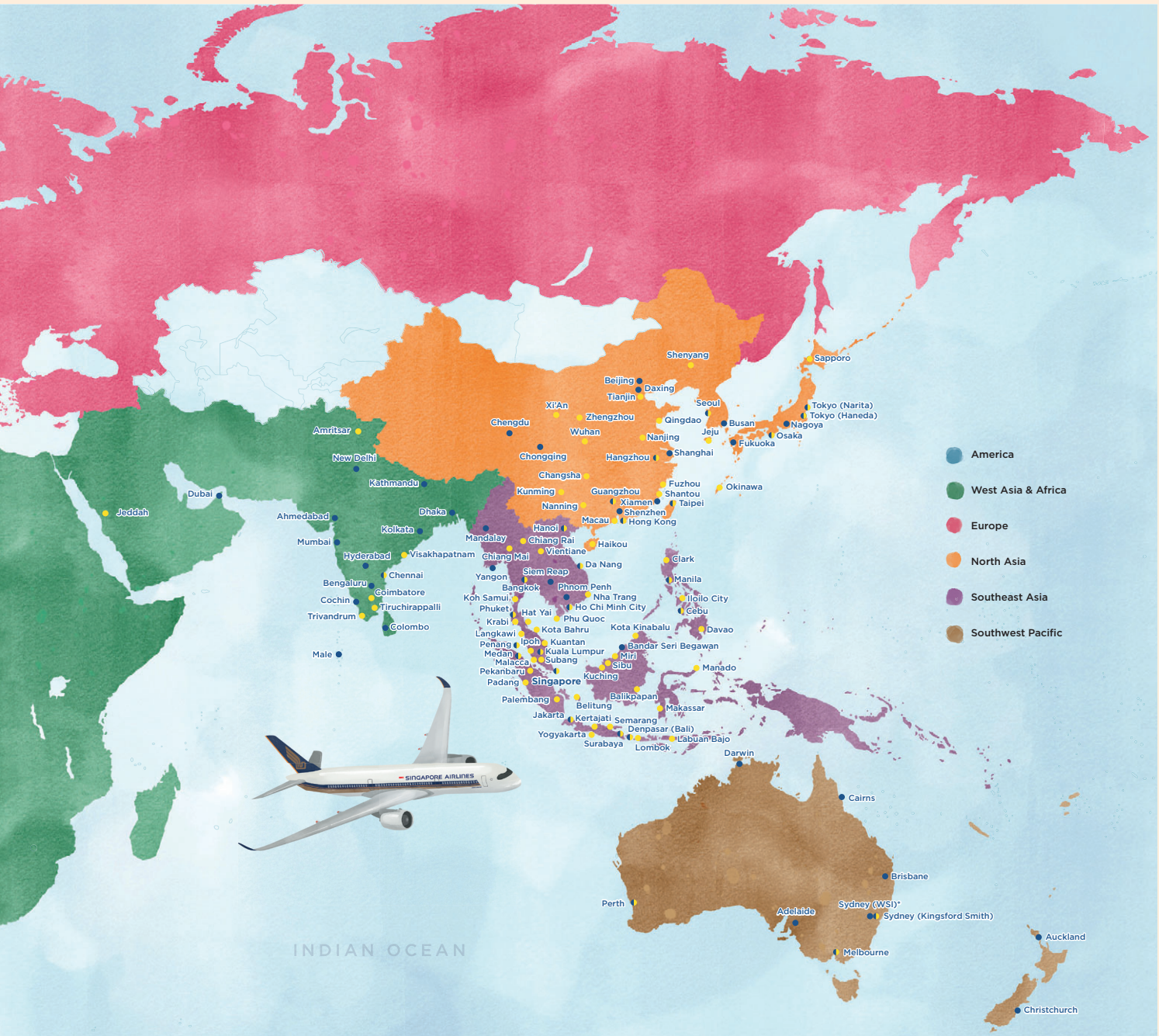
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ILLUSTRATION **CHERYL OWEN**



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THE EXCHANGE RATE

STORY _____ *David Ho*

Do we usher in 2027 in London or New York City? Here, we compare two of the world's most iconic New Year's Eve countdown destinations

LONDON		NEW YORK CITY
The classic way to greet the new year in London is by the River Thames. As the chimes of Big Ben signal the stroke of midnight, fireworks are launched, filling the sky with a dazzling display.		 New York City is famous for the Times Square Ball Drop, which began in 1907 after fireworks were banned for safety reasons. The tradition was inspired by the time balls that were once used to synchronise ship clocks.
FESTIVE TRADITIONS		
In London, the central riverside viewing areas along the River Thames, near the London Eye and Big Ben, are the best spots to view fireworks. Do note that access to these areas requires tickets, available on Ticketmaster.		 Each year, thousands gather around One Times Square for the famous ball-lowering ceremony. We suggest arriving at the intersection of Broadway and Seventh Avenue in the early afternoon to secure a spot in the viewing pens.
BEST VANTAGE POINTS		
Since many of London's celebrations take place along the river, you can also take to the water with a boat party. Companies like Thames Dinner Cruise and London Party Boats offer packages that include food and drinks.		 Venues around Times Square offer special celebratory experiences. The AMC cinema complex hosts a special party featuring live entertainment, dinner, drinks, and movies playing all night long.
CELEBRATING NEW YEAR'S EVE		
A visit to London would not be complete without exploring its museums. Check out the Natural History Museum, where you can enjoy live music and a silent disco, along with the chance to see the galleries after hours.		 New York City's Broadway shows are legendary. Combine the Broadway experience with your first celebration of 2027 at Acadia restaurant, where you'll be treated to performances by actors from *Wicked*, *Hamilton* and more.
QUINTESSENTIAL EXPERIENCES		

For more information on Singapore Airlines' flights to London and New York City, visit singaporeair.com.

IMAGES GETTY (BIG BEN, TIMES SQUARE, ONE TIMES SQUARE); SHUTTERSTOCK (AMC CINEMA, NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, RIVER THAMES); KEVIN HACKERT/UNSPLASH (LONDON EYE)

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