

18 Did you know?

1. Singapore consists only of **one main island** and **63 other tiny islands**. Most of these islands are uninhabited.
2. Singapore is among the **20 smallest countries** in the world, with a total land area of only 682.7 square kilometres. The USA is about 15,000 times bigger. The main island measures about 42 kilometres in length and 23 kilometres in breadth.
3. Apart from Monaco, Singapore is the **most densely populated** country in the world, with 6,430 people per square kilometres.
4. Symbolism of the **National Flag**: Red symbolises universal brotherhood and equality of man while white signifies purity and virtue. The crescent moon represents a young nation on the rise and the five stars signifies the ideals of democracy, peace, progress, justice and equality.
5. The national flower of Singapore, *Vanda Miss Joaquim*, was first discovered in 1893 by Agnes Joaquim, an Armenian. The orchid is a natural hybrid between *V. teres* and *V. hookeriana*.
6. The **Merlion**, a half-fish, half-lion beast, is a fitting symbol of Singapore. The "Singa" or lion represents the animal that a Sumatran prince saw which resembled a lion, and the fish is a tribute to Singapore's history as "temasek", the ancient sea town.
7. **Singlish**, a Singaporean patois mixing English with the odd phrase of Chinese, Malay and even Tamil, has two entries – "lah" and "pai seh" – in the online version of the Oxford English Dictionary.
8. Although English is the official working language and the most widely used language in Singapore, the national anthem "**Majulah Singapura**" is actually sung in Malay.
9. Singapore is a stopover point for **thousand of migratory birds** travelling the East Asian Flyway.
10. The world's first night zoo, **The Night Safari**, is located in Singapore.
11. Despite being largely urbanised, Singapore is **the largest exporter of ornamental fish** (25% of the world market).
12. The **Bukit Timah Nature Reserve** in Singapore contains **more species of trees** than the entire continent of North America.
13. The highest natural point in Singapore **Bukit Timah Hill**, is only 164 metres tall (Singapore has a very flat terrain).
14. The **world's highest man-made waterfall**, standing at 30 metres, is located at the **Jurong Bird Park**.
15. The fastest selling book of all time in Singapore is *Hello Chok Tong, Goodbye Kuan Yew: The Untold Story*. Written and drawn by political cartoonist George Nonis, it sold 40,000 copies in two months.
16. Nearly 9 out of 10 Singaporeans live in public housing flats.
17. Singapore has **more than 3,000 kilometres of roads**. Stretched end to end, they can cover the distance from Singapore to Hong Kong.
18. The **Singapore Sling** was first served in 1915 at the Long Bar of the Raffles Hotel. The ingredients are gin, Cointreau, cheery brandy, Dom Benedictine, pineapple juice, Greenadine, Angoustura bitters and limes.