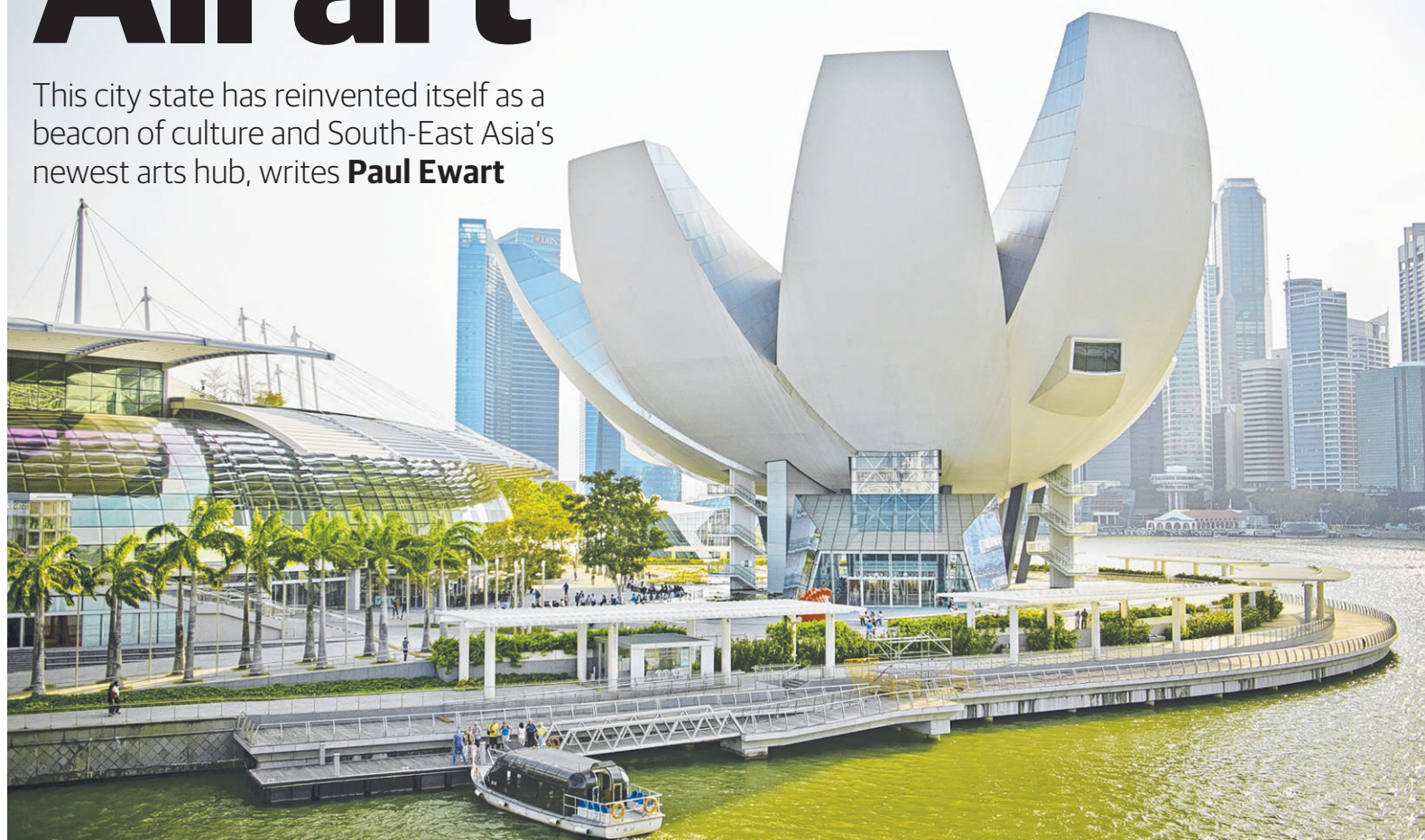


## SINGAPORE

# All art

This city state has reinvented itself as a beacon of culture and South-East Asia's newest arts hub, writes **Paul Ewart**



**CULTURAL CENTRE:** The ArtScience Museum in Marina Bay Sands hotel complex was designed to resemble an open lotus flower (main); and the National Gallery of Singapore, which houses the largest collection of modern art in South-East Asia (top right).

**F**ORGET the pristine, gleaming malls; the efficiency and the artifice – there's an image change afoot in the Lion City.

Thanks to a state-led effort – with the government pumping millions of dollars annually into the city's arts scene – this tiny island nation is being transformed from shopping haven into one of Asia's largest cultural centres.

Its metamorphosis began five years ago with the opening of the Art Science Museum and has since culminated in the newly unveiled, \$500 million National Gallery – the jewel in the city's creative crown. Now, there are more than 50 contemporary art galleries, alongside a bevy of museums and other cultural centres, with more slated to open in the coming years and this is only the beginning.

From contemporary works to art from Asian antiquity, there's a museum or gallery for all tastes – some old and some new. Here's our pick of the best.

## National Gallery of Singapore

New York has the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Paris has the Louvre and now Singapore has its own flagship arts space to rival these established, international powerhouses.

Opened last November, the gallery lays claim to housing the largest public collection of modern art in South-East Asia, in addition to holding the largest display of modern South-East Asian art in the world. It comprises two core spaces, which combined feature more than 8000 of the region's standout 19th and 20th century artworks.

Discover this land,  
like never before.

**Great vacations are made in Massachusetts.**  
This vibrant state is bursting with history, culture and natural beauty.  
[VisitTheUSA.com.au/massachusetts](http://VisitTheUSA.com.au/massachusetts)



Caught a fabulous Singapore snap? Share it with us on Instagram @escapesnaps



Alongside its permanent displays visitors can expect regular exhibitions in partnership with international centres, including the Centre Pompidou in Paris and London's Tate Britain. Art aside, the space is worthy of a visit for its impressive architecture alone with two landmark buildings – the former Supreme Court and the City Hall – enclosed under an impressive glass and steel canopy. See [nationalgallery.sg](http://nationalgallery.sg)

### Singapore Pinacothèque de Paris

Another new addition to the city's cultural scene is the Singapore Pinacothèque de Paris. Opened in May last year, it's the first Asian outpost of Paris's largest private art museum.

Loans from private collectors, including almost 50 masterpieces by the likes of Rembrandt, Picasso and Monet, make up the permanent collection, while a free-access Heritage Gallery pays tribute to Fort Canning (Singapore's oldest historical site) and displays artefacts from the region.

The Pinacothèque features interactive displays and an art academy. Visitors will also have free access to two corridors overlooking Fort Canning Green – the Garden Walk and the Graffiti Walk, which showcases works by graffiti artists from all over the world.

See [pinacothèque.com.sg](http://pinacothèque.com.sg)

### Asian Civilisations Museum

Occupying the stately Empress Place Building, the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) sits along the



Singapore River just beside the Raffles Landing Site. Here you can explore Asian and Singaporean cultural history with an array of pan-Asian artworks and treasures.

Named the top museum in Singapore and ranked in the top 10 of all museums in Asia in TripAdvisor's Travellers' Choice awards, the ACM – like so many of Singapore's other established cultural centres – has had a recent multimillion-dollar makeover. See [acm.org.sg](http://acm.org.sg)

### ArtScience Museum

In the Marina Bay Sands hotel complex, this museum represents the city's obsession with cutting-edge architecture and design. Featuring more than 20 gallery spaces across three levels, the museum has become a go-to venue for many of the world's major touring exhibitions and houses a constantly changing line-up of major international touring exhibitions. The shows have included sets and costumes from *Titanic* and *Harry Potter*.

## ESCAPE ROUTE

### SINGAPORE

#### GETTING THERE

Singapore Airlines flies direct to Singapore daily from Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane. See [singaporeair.com](http://singaporeair.com)

#### EATING THERE

Once the historic seat of Malay royalty in Singapore, Kampong Glam is the city's Arab quarter, but nowadays the area around Haji Lane has become a hipster haven, housing a raft of indie designer boutiques, cool bars and quirky brunch spots.

Brunch has been a big deal in Singapore for a few years and one of the frontrunners – and still one of the best – is Maison Ikkoku.

Here, homesick Aussie expats and visitors alike come to get their flat white and all-day brekkie fix. The house special of brioche eggs benedict

See [marinabaysands.com/museum](http://marinabaysands.com/museum)

### National Museum of Singapore

Following a \$118 million overhaul and name change, the National Museum of Singapore (formerly Singapore History Museum) offers a one-stop cultural history overview of the nation.

The largest and the oldest museum in the country, it's comprised of two main galleries – the Singapore History Gallery, which traces the history of

is a safe bet and there's an array of tempting desserts on offer too. See [www.maison-ikkoku.net](http://www.maison-ikkoku.net)

#### STAYING THERE

Nicely ensconced on the eastern fringes of Sentosa Island within the upscale residential Sentosa Cove, the W Sentosa Cove ticks plenty of boxes. Its 240 rooms and suites, are cool and slick, yet family-friendly.

Outside, the 1338sq m lagoon pool – complete with underwater music – offers respite from the humidity; and at the poolside Wet Bar, a resident DJ spins ambient chilled-out music.

Inside, the AWAY spa has several hydrotherapy pools, alongside an infra-red sauna and steam room.

See [wsingaporesentosacove.com](http://wsingaporesentosacove.com)

#### MORE

Facebook: [YourSingaporeANZ](https://www.facebook.com/YourSingaporeANZ)  
Instagram: [@Visit\\_Singapore](https://www.instagram.com/Visit_Singapore)

Singapore from its beginnings in the 14th century to the present day, and the Singapore Living Galleries, which focuses on food, fashion, film and photography. Look out for the popular "Under the Banyan Tree" outdoor screenings where the museum sets up a huge screen on its front lawn to show classic flicks. Best of all, it's free. See [nationalmuseum.sg](http://nationalmuseum.sg)

The writer was a guest of the Singapore Tourism Board. See [yoursingapore.com](http://yoursingapore.com)

# UK & Europe tours

## Book Now & SAVE 5%\*

Cosmos escorted tours include

Quality accommodation

Sightseeing with Local Guides

Services of a professional Tour Director

Deluxe air-conditioned motorcoach  
with complimentary Wi-Fi

Plenty of free time to explore

The Best  
of Spain &  
Portugal



13 DAYS Madrid to Madrid

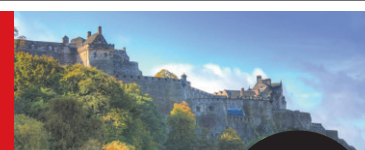
Madrid, Granada, Malaga, Lisbon,  
Oporto, Salamanca

Was \$2,055 Now from \$1,952

per person twin share (14/12/16 departure)\*

from  
**\$151**  
per day

The British  
Isles in Depth



24 DAYS London to London

London, Coventry, Newcastle, Edinburgh,  
Strathpeffer, Glasgow, Belfast, Sligo, Ennis,  
Killarney, Tramore, Dublin, Wrexham, Cardiff,  
Plymouth, Brighton

Was \$4,453 Now from \$4,230

per person twin share (13/10/16 departure)\*

from  
**\$176**  
per day

More ways to save

SAVE \$100

Per Couple  
Second Tour Discount\*

SAVE 5%

Repeat Traveller  
Discount\*

Order a brochure online today



To book, call **1300 230 234**,  
visit [cosmostours.com.au](http://cosmostours.com.au) or see your **Travel Agent**

# COSMOS®

\*Terms & Conditions apply: Limited spaces available. Prices, dates and itinerary are correct as of 16/02/16 and are subject to change. All care is taken to promote correct pricing at time of printing, is subject to tour availability and will be confirmed at time of reservation. Offers applicable to new 2016 Europe bookings made by 26/04/16. Advertised prices include 5% early booking discount. Second tour discount may be applied when multiple tours are booked at the same time for travel within the same calendar year. 5% Journeys Club repeat traveller benefit (must be a Journeys Club member and present member number at time of booking and before full payment is made). All discounts are based on land-only portion of core tour on twin share price, not including extra night accommodations, extensions, taxes/fees, tips and supplements/reductions. A non-refundable deposit of \$250 per person per tour is required within 14 days or by 26/04/16 (whichever comes first) to secure reservation. Full cancellation penalties will apply. Offer can be withdrawn or amended at anytime. Additional restrictions apply refer to the 2016 Cosmos Europe brochure or visit [cosmostours.com.au](http://cosmostours.com.au). Lic: No 2TA00637