

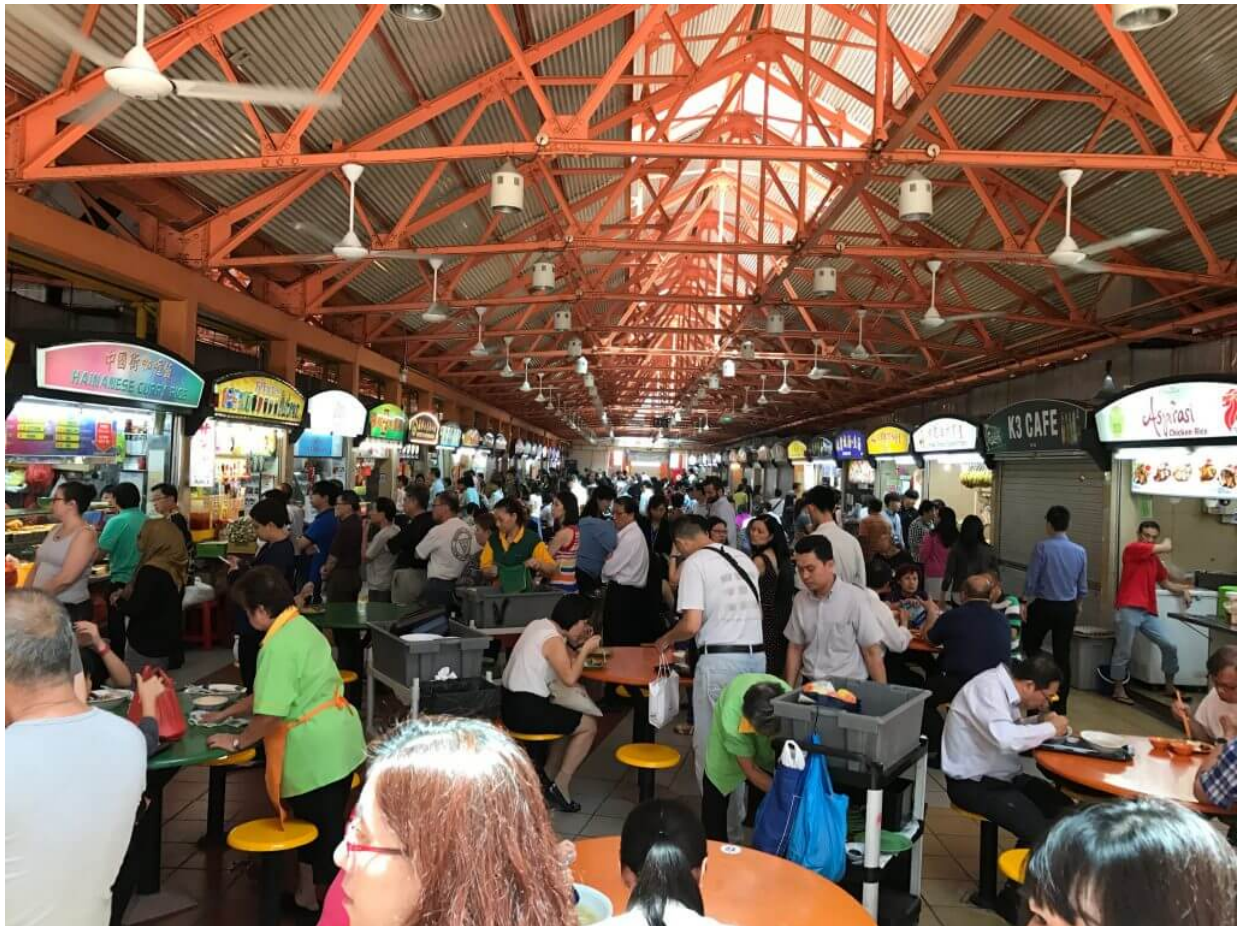
# 24 Hours in Singapore: Quick and Concise Guide to do it right!

So you have found yourself in Singapore, on a layover, because well – that happens quite a lot.

I found myself at the airport wondering what I could do in such a short period of time, not wanting to miss out on everything that this metropolis of a City-State had to offer so I googled articles furiously, only to find that many of them were either outdated or featured way too many things to accomplish in a short period of time. I ended up enlisting the help of the VERY knowledgeable concierge at the Four Seasons Singapore (where they had graciously put me up), and referenced a local friend of mine, and ended up with a much more concise list which you can find below. There is no reason to do any of these in any particular order, but this is the order in which I did them. You won't be rushed, but you'll certainly have a great time exploring Singapore in a single day! I also have made no assumptions about what part of the day you've had 24 hours to spend, so you might want to start and end at a certain spot, but just know that Singapore is more or less a 24 hour city so many things are open late except for some of the parks!

1. HAWKER MARKETS: So there are quite a few of these, and by hawker market, they mean markets where people "hawk" items. In Singapore, the most famous of these are the food hawker markets. Now it just so happened that the one I wanted to go to initially was closed (The Tiong Bahru Market). Luckily, there are many more – and the one which I ended up in was the Maxwell Food Centre

Hawker Market. This is one of the more famous ones, with over 100 stalls, and is centered right in Chinatown. You might ask, should I walk around Chinatown? My answer is – no – if you’ve been to one Chinatown, you probably know what you’re gonna see in another one. However, the Maxwell Food Centre Market had some of the most delicious and cheapest noodle soups I have ever had. Don’t wait in line for the “famous” chicken and rice here, because the truth is, there’s a ton of places around Singapore that you can get this famous dish and there’s no reason to waste your precious 24 hours with 30-45min in line here.





2. TIONG BAHRU BAKERY: So you want pastries? Well, I'm not particularly a pastry type of person, but then I came here. Known for their caffeinated concoctions along with their incredible croissants and Kouign Amann's, this place is a must drop by spot. There's not much to say except for, have a pastry, get one to go if

you must, but don't skip this bakery, they make some incredible concoctions. I thought that a croissant was a croissant was a croissant, until I came here. Keep in mind they have THREE locations, so just choose the one closest to you, knowing that one of them closes later than the other two.



This is carb heaven

3. THE GARDENS BY THE BAY: I usually love museums, but many times one can get burnt out going to them, because unless you are deeply attached to the exhibit, things can get dull very quickly (all you Art History majors/buffs please don't hate mail me on this). The Gardens by the Bay is a great exception. There are actually multiple exhibits here but the two which I believe are worth your time are the Flower Dome and Cloud Forest. The Flower Dome is really a quick walkthrough of an incredibly intricate (and really great smelling) indoor flower garden, while the Cloud Forest is Singapore's rendition of a vertical forest. You're going to want to spend some time in the Cloud Forest, because there's a fun walkway that takes you through the interior and exterior of the vertical growth as you

explore all the exhibits hidden throughout the zig-zagging path. There's really nothing quite like it and out of everything in Singapore, this probably "wow'ed" me the most.



It's exactly what they call it, a forest in the clouds, and its pretty darn impressive

4. RAFFLES CITY (Plaza): So you've heard of Raffles City, named after the famous Standford Raffles who had the vision to put Singapore on the map as a mercantile trading capital of the world. Raffles City and the nearby Plaza is a mix of modernity and history, with some really cool architecture that is a pure throwback to the colonial days, mixed in with newer hotels and office spaces. It is certainly a great place to just stroll and take in Singapore, with a mix of restaurants nearby (if you still happen to be hungry). Of course it's worth stopping by to have a cold concoction at the original home of the Singapore Sling at the Raffles Hotel, but DO NOT actually order the Singapore Sling. It's a jumbled mess of pure sugar with no complexity or

redeeming value, and overly priced at that.



The Colonially Famous Raffles Hotel

5. THE MARINA BAY SANDS: Not quite sure what kind of architectural statement the developers of the Marina Bay Sands were trying to make, but one thing is for certain, up close the hotel is pretty awe-inspiring. It resembles a ship on stilts, or a bauhaus designed flower planter. It's definitely worth checking out this hotel and having high-noon tea at the restaurant upstairs. The view is worth the price of admission alone, and being such an iconic part of the skyline – the Marina Bay Sands should be on every visitor's list. There's a pool and two bars upstairs, but most of it is inaccessible except for hotel guests, but don't let that stop you from visiting the bars and enjoying the glass balconies and the views they impart.



It's an iconic building, so go see it!

I'm sure I have missed a thing here or there, and there will always be some degree of argument about what bakery or hawker market is best, but let's just say after visiting a few failed spots from some other lists, this one did me good on my quick excursion into Singapore.

Oh, and if you're wondering about transportation, I recommend taking taxis or Ubers, because as great as the public transportation is, it's just that much quicker to taxi from spot to spot.

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# Do Ubud Bali in ONE day! Three must sees!



Lush, Green, and Peaceful. Ubud is a world in itself.

Sure, you could spend a whole week in the lush rainforest region of Ubud in Bali, but sometimes you are just wanting to see everything else on the island, Seminyak, Uluwatu, Nusa Dua, the list goes on. I recently spent two weeks in Bali, and if I had to narrow it down for you and distill Ubud into one day, these are it!

## **MONKEY FOREST**

You've heard of this one before, and there's a lot of youtube videos regarding the monkey forest, but here are the tips you'll need.



- Be sure to NOT buy bananas at the sanctuary, and do not come with food anywhere on you. This includes drinks in cans or bottles. These monkeys have a sixth sense. They will come up and bite or scratch you if you have any food or drinks. Now, if you REALLY must have a picture of a monkey on you, then go ahead and buy some bananas and feed them, but don't say I didn't warn you!
- Be sure to keep everything buttoned up, or hidden in a backpack/purse. These monkeys will hop around and go through your stuff. I saw more than one person get robbed by these funny little guys monkeying around.



These guys love to monkey around.

## **RICE FIELDS OF UBUD**

There's something deeply satisfying about rice fields terraced just perfectly. They're infinitesimally green and well manicured, and they're just plain cool to look at.

- There's a lot of peddlers who set up shop in the middle

of these rice fields trying to charge you just to walk around them, you don't have to pay them, but bring a few small coins with you just in case. It's not worth an argument over a few cents.

- Bring your walking (or hiking shoes), because walking up and down these terraces can be relatively slippery and the last thing you want to do is fall into a rice paddy.
- There's quite a few nice restaurants up overlooking the rice paddy's. It gets really hot in the fields so i'd recommend having one of the many refreshing Balinese drink concoctions. These are pretty unique, and are made of local herbs and young coconut water blended up



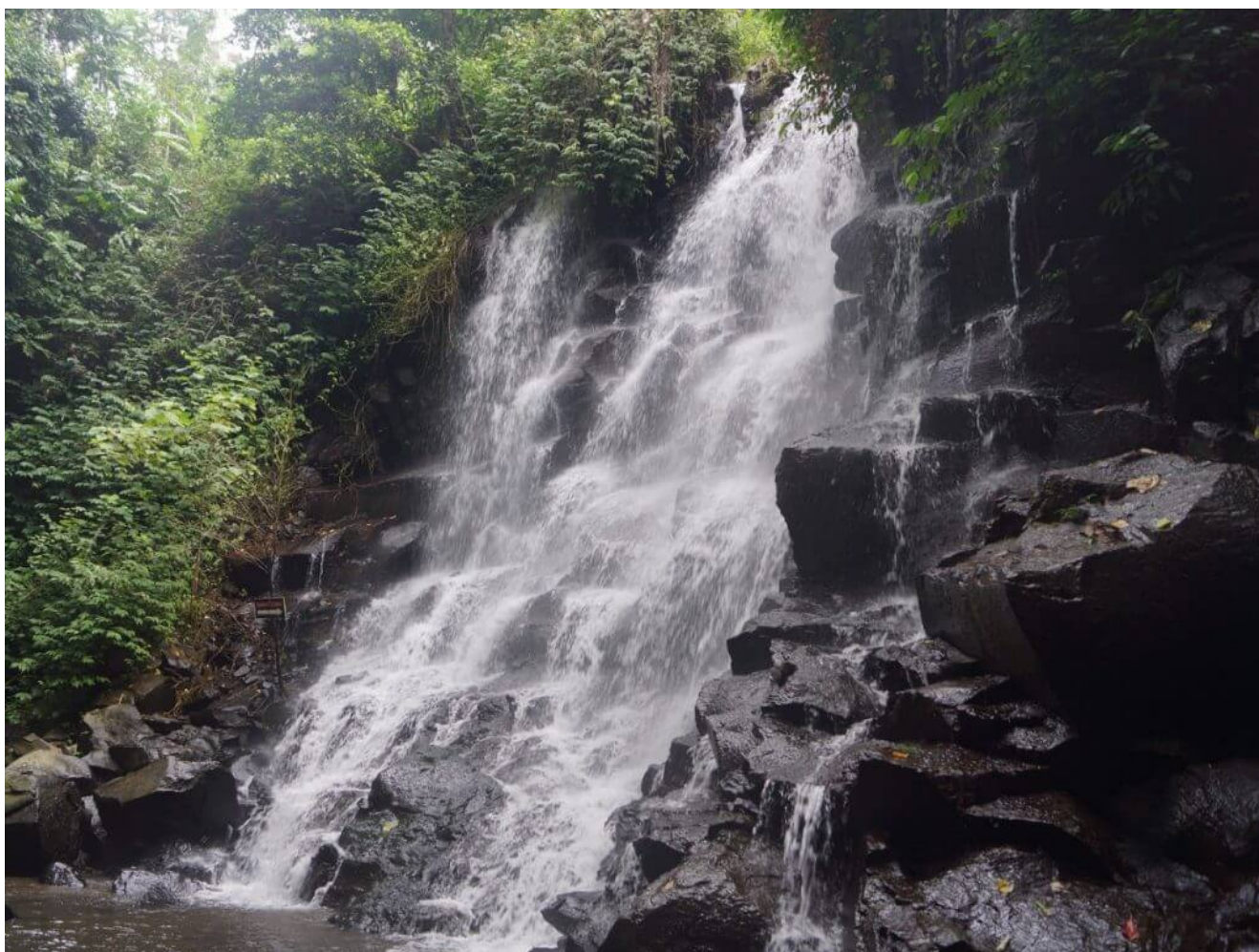
Stunning to look at, semi-difficult to hike, but well worth it.

### **KANTO LAMPO WATERFALL**

Sure, there are a LOT of waterfalls to check out in Bali, and around Ubud, but the problem is the majority of them have become so touristy that it's hard to get a good photograph of just you and the waterfall unless you plan on going there at 4AM. Furthermore, if you just want to enjoy yourself, instead

of hanging out with 300 other people, this is THE waterfall to go to. Now, I know that by telling people on the internet about this place i'm going to inevitably make it busier, but hey, you heard it here first!

- This is a VERY easy waterfall to get to, so unlike many of the other ones, its a short three minute walk from your car or motorbike to the falls
- There's also another fall that is not too far down the river from the main Kanto Lampo waterfall, check it out!



This may not be the prettiest waterfall in Bali, but it's relaxing and really deserted most of the time, which is nice if you're trying to relax.

So there you go! Three things you can do in Ubud, Bali, in less than a day. There are tons more things to do in Bali, so

if you want to check out 22 Awesome things click on that link and check out my friend's blog!

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# REVIEW: FOUR Restaurants you HAVE to try when visiting Los Angeles

Food is an integral part of travel. Every time I travel to a new destination I feel that the best way to learn about the locals and the culture is to immerse yourself in the cuisine.

That being said, Los Angeles is a melting pot, being a metropolis with over 12 million people from every corner of Planet Earth. Truthfully, there are almost too many great restaurants in Los Angeles to narrow down to just four, so rather than doing that, i've narrowed it down to four CATEGORIES of which i've given a few suggestions in each. Being a foodie and having ate at almost every single "top restaurant" in Los Angeles as rated by the Zagat List, i've had the pleasure of experiencing most of what the city has to offer. Sure, you could go on Yelp and look for restaurants, but sometimes those reviews just aren't accurate. Hopefully my experiences will help you choose where to grub in the delicious city of Angels. Without further ado, here goes my list:

## ASIAN FOOD

- **Din Tai Fung** – This one is a local dumpling house, with other sister locations around the world. It's been

rated by many chefs such as Anthony Bourdain as one of their favorite restaurants in the **world**. Of course, you have to get the pork xia-long-bao. They're little morsels of juicy pork goodness steamed in their own broth in thin-skinned dumpling shells. Although there's locations in Orange County, Washington state, and Japan, China, and Taiwan, if you're in Los Angeles you should definitely check this place out.



They're pockets of heaven

- **Genwa Korean BBQ** – Coming to Los Angeles and not experience Korean BBQ is like going to ..well, China, and not having Chinese food. Los Angeles hosts the largest population of Korean expats outside of Korea, and their food is absolutely phenomenal. Genwa is an upscale version, and as is the case with all Korean BBQ,

the highlight are the small appetizer plates which come with every meal, things such as kimchee, egg stew, sweet and sour potato. The meats are freshly cut and butchered in the back, and cooked for you on a hot plate with seasoned onions and garlic.



Korean bbq yumminess

- **Sugarfish** – This is one of my favorite sushi spots in Los Angeles. It's been rumored that California actually has more sushi restaurants than all of Japan. I wouldn't doubt this, and on any drive around LA you'll

notice that there are dozens of Japanese sushi restaurants. Sugarfish happens to be a Los Angeles based chain, and they're known for their incredibly affordable prix fixe menus, served with impeccable service. Sure, there's a LOT of other sushi options, but you WONT find anything close in quality to Sugarfish for reasonable prices of \$25-40 a person (that includes usually 8-12 pieces of sushi and a few handrolls).

## NEW AMERICAN

- **Providence** – This is a Los Angeles staple, and showcases everything you want to love about seafood. It's a michelin star restaurant with a 20 something course menu and some of the most innovative and delicious seafood you'll find in town. Make sure to plan a 3-4 hour course here as it takes a while. It's certainly one of the best places to check out Los Angeles fine dining.



Providence's decadent Uni dish

- **INK** – Michael Voltaggio's restaurant has enough press to make any restaurateur jealous, and it's all well

deserved. Innovative dishes such as the aromatic salt covered charcoaled potatoes served with a side of reduced vinegar, or the luscious brown butter cooked egg filled gnocchi all make for a hedonistic meal. This is widely regarded as the vanguard of great cuisine in Los Angeles



They look a bit funky, but they certainly don't taste funky

## MEXICAN FOOD

- **Leo's Tacos** – Any visit to Los Angeles is incomplete without dropping by a taco truck. These are staples of the food community and Leo's is particularly delicious. There's TWO Leo's in Los Angeles, and the better one has been in the Eagle Rock neighborhood for well over 20 years (It's just 10 minutes north of Downtown Los Angeles), and the difference between their



tacos/burritos and the rest is that they cook them “El Salvadorean” style, which is to say with a bit more moisture in the meat. The food is authentic here, and like all taco trucks, you order at the stand, then they serve it to you on a plate that you quickly finish on the side of the street. Yes, it’s not tableside maitre’d but it sure is delicious!

I hope you all enjoyed this article, and visit these amazing establishments!