

# Singapore

## Business Guide

Compiled by:

### Swiss Business Hub ASEAN / Singapore

Singapore, March 2015

#### ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Visitor arrival and departure at Singapore Changi International Airport (located in the eastern part of Singapore). Swiss citizens do not require a visa to enter Singapore. They are permitted to stay for an initial period of up to 30 days, provided their passport is valid for at least 6 months and they have a confirmed onward/return ticket. If they need to extend their stay beyond 30 days, they can apply for a Business Visit Pass to stay up to 90 days with the Immigrations & Checkpoints authority. In any case, visitors are advised to check on the latest applicable terms on <http://www.ica.gov.sg/>.

#### LANGUAGES USED FOR BUSINESS

English

#### PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Year	Date	Weekday	Holiday
2015	1 January	Thursday	New Year's Day
	19 February	Thursday	Chinese New Year
	20 February	Friday	Chinese New Year 2nd Day
	3 April	Friday	Good Friday

	1 May	Friday	Labour Day
	1 June	Monday	Vesak Day
	17 July	Friday	Hari Raya Puasa
	7 August	Friday	SG50 Day
	9 August	Sunday	National Day*
	24 September	Thursday	Hari Raya Haji
	10 November	Tuesday	Deepavali (tentative)
	25 December	Friday	Christmas Day
<b>2016</b>	1 January	Friday	New Year's Day
	8 February	Monday	Chinese New Year
	9 February	Tuesday	Chinese New Year 2nd Day
	25 March	Friday	Good Friday
	1 May	Sunday	Labour Day*
	21 May	Saturday	Vesak Day
	6 July	Wednesday	Hari Raya Puasa (tentative)
	9 August	Tuesday	National Day
	12 September	Monday	Hari Raya Haji (tentative)
	30 October	Sunday	Deepavali (tentative)
	25 December	Sunday	Christmas Day*

\* The following Monday will be a public holiday

## **HEALTH AND INOCULATIONS**

No special health papers or inoculations are required for Swiss coming from Switzerland.

## **TIME ZONES**

GMT +8 hours

## **TIME DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND SINGAPORE**

Singapore is 6 hours ahead during Daylight Saving Time, and 7 hours ahead during Local Standard Time

## **ELECTRICITY SUPPLY**

220V, 50Hz

## **METHODS OF PAYMENT**

The local currency is the Singapore Dollar (SGD). The exchange rate is approximately 1CHF = 1.40 SGD (as of March 2015). Cash or credit cards are widely accepted in hotels, restaurants and retail shops. There are 500+ ATMs in the country, operated by 8 banks: Citibank, HSBC, Standard Chartered, ABN Amro, Maybank, DBS, OCBC and UOB.

International currencies are freely convertible and exchangeable at banks, major shopping centres and the airport. A transfer of more than SGD 30,000 in or out of Singapore needs to be declared under Singapore Customs.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Taxis are abundant, metered, inexpensive and air-conditioned. All drivers speak English. In addition, an exceptionally clean, efficient subway and bus system connects the island country.

## **HOTELS**

There are over 200 business hotels in Singapore. Popular hotels with foreign visitors include:

Swissôtel The Stamford  
2 Stamford Road Singapore 178882  
Tel: (+65) 6338 8585  
Fax: (+65) 6338 2862  
Email: [singapore-stamford@swissotel.com](mailto:singapore-stamford@swissotel.com)

Swissôtel Merchant Court  
20 Merchant Road Singapore 058281  
Tel: (+65) 6239 1730  
Fax: (+65) 6438 1887  
Email: [singapore-merchantcourt@swissotel.com](mailto:singapore-merchantcourt@swissotel.com)

Shangri-La Hotel  
22 Orange Grove Road Singapore 258350  
Tel: (+65) 6737 3644  
Fax: (+65) 6737 3257  
Email: [sls@shangri-la.com](mailto:sls@shangri-la.com)

Mandarin Orchard Hotel  
333 Orchard Road Singapore 238867  
Tel: (+65) 6737 4411  
Fax: (+65) 6732 2361  
Email: [mandarin.tms@meritus-hotels.com](mailto:mandarin.tms@meritus-hotels.com)

## **COMMUNICATION**

The international dialling code for Singapore is 65. To call Switzerland from any telephone line in Singapore, dial +41, (area code), (telephone number). All hotels provide their own international calling services.

Internet services are widely available in hotels, internet cafes and selected wireless hotspots. Access to websites is mostly unrestricted, except to pornographic sites which are filtered by the Media Development Authority of Singapore.

## **CELL PHONES**

Prepaid SIM cards are available for purchase to use in mobile phones. Prepaid SIM cards from the three telcos – Singtel, M1 and Starhub, can be purchased at Changi Airport and/or convenience stores with proof of identity (passport).

## **BUSINESS HOURS**

Most businesses operate a 5-day working week, where business hours start from 8.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday. Certain companies and banks do operate half-day on Saturdays from 8.30am to 1.00pm, while retail shops are usually open daily, from 10.00 am to 9.00 pm.

## **ADDRESSES AND OPENING HOURS OF THE EMBASSY OF SINGAPORE IN SWITZERLAND**

Permanent Mission of Singapore to the United Nations in Geneva

Avenue du Pailly 10

1219 Châtelaine, Geneva

Tel: +41 22 795 0101

Fax: +41 22 796 8078

Email: [singpm\\_gva@sgmfa.gov.sg](mailto:singpm_gva@sgmfa.gov.sg)

Opening Hours

Mondays to Fridays: 8.30 am to 5.00 pm (closed for lunch: 1 to 2 pm)

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore to the World Trade Organisation in Geneva

Avenue du Pailly 10

1219 Châtelaine, Geneva

Tel: +41 22 795 0101

Fax: +41 22 796 8078

Email: [singpm\\_gva@sgmfa.gov.sg](mailto:singpm_gva@sgmfa.gov.sg)

Opening Hours

Mondays to Fridays: 8.30 am to 5.00 pm (closed for lunch: 1 to 2 pm)

Embassy of the Republic of Singapore

c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Tanglin

Singapore 248163

Tel: +65 6379 8000

Fax: +65 6383 1806

## **ADDRESSES OF THE SWISS EMBASSY AND CONSULATES**

Embassy of Switzerland

1, Swiss Club Link Singapore 288162

Tel: +65 6468 5788

Fax: +65 6466 8245

Email: [sin.vertretung@eda.admin.ch](mailto:sin.vertretung@eda.admin.ch)

Opening Hours

Mondays to Thursdays: 8.00 am to 5.00 pm (closed for Lunch: 1 to 2 pm)

Fridays: 8.00 am to 2.00 pm

## TIPS FOR INITIATING BUSINESS CONTACTS

While it helps to have local business associates facilitate business introductions to potential partners, it is widely accepted in Singapore to do “cold calling” and introduce you directly. Do note however, that if the other party finds no relevance or interest, he/she would likely give a direct decline or interrupt to cut short the contact. Meetings are short and focused, without overindulgence in courtesies and small talk.

Always address the other party by his/her family name unless he/she asks to be addressed by first name. As in most parts of Asia, the family name is placed first – in front of the first name, in name-cards. However, people with Western names e.g. Peter, George, Anne etc, would place their family names last – after the Western name.

There is no professional discrimination against women in Singapore. So do not be surprised to meet senior high-ranking female business contacts. A simple handshake would suffice when introduced to female business contacts. Do not attempt to give them a friendly hug or kiss to female business contacts unless you are very familiar with them and know they would not mind.

Be dressed appropriately when meeting local business contacts. For men, it means shirt with tie (jacket is optional). For ladies, it means office attire. Hand out business cards with both hands, with your card details facing them in the right direction. It is acceptable but not standard practice, to provide introductory gifts at the first meeting. Usually, any item from Switzerland or your company would be appreciated.

Printed advertisements are placed in the local newspapers – Straits Times, Business Times, New Paper and Today. For outdoor advertising, kindly contact service providers, e.g., JC Decaux, through the Yellow Pages search directory.

Most companies in Singapore would have a corporate website. Facebook is currently the most popular social media and is also used by many businesses to update their customers on activities.

## **BUSINESS PRACTICES**

Business discussions are straight forward and no-nonsense. English is widely spoken and most business people are skilled and technically knowledgeable. The sanctity of signed contracts is respected and parties involved are expected to deliver their part as stated in the contracts.

Corruption is virtually non-existent, with stiff penalties imposed on government officials found guilty of accepting bribes. As a WTO member, Singapore's government procurement framework process is open to international tenders. However, local content are required to support the contract.

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015

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URL: <http://www.s-ge.com/de/country/Asean>