

Context

SINGAPORE bio-data

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| Location: | Tip of the Malaya Peninsula, Southeast Asia |
| Population: | 4.1852 million (2003) |
| Ethnic mix: | 76.2% Chinese, 13.8% Malay, 8.3% Indian, 1.7% other |
| Religion: | 42.5% Buddhist (Chinese), 8.5% Tao, 14.9% Islam, 14.6% Christian, 4.1% Hindu, 0.6% other, 14.8% no religion |
| Average temperature: | 26°C (79°F) to 31°C (84°F) |
| Average humidity: | 84% |
| Annual rainfall: | 2,345mm with increased rainfall from Nov to Jan |

Sources: www.singaporemirror.com.sg and www.sg

Located in the tropical belt of South East Asia, Singapore has its historical origins as a trade colonial port serving the Straits between the Indian and the Chinese South Sea. In the last 40 years a successful free trade policy has led the city-state to an extraordinary rise in the standard of living and economic growth, with a population expansion of 4 million people.

Singapore is today one of the busiest ports in the world, one of the major oil refining and distribution centres, a main supplier of electronic components and a key financial centre in Asia.

It is a modern, progressive and well-off island city-state where change and redevelopment of the built environment is unavoidable as it evolves its national strategy to cope with the new global challenges.

Since the island became an independent Republic in 1965 innovative measures were adopted to overcome the natural limitation and the geographical constraints (680 square kilometers island, absence of natural resources). The Urban Redevelopment Authority, a government body created for the island expansion, is responsible for planning and constructing on the greater part of Singapore's land. As a result Singapore presents a dense ever-changing urban texture with a mix of tropical and high-tech landscape.