

# Singapore

## Business Guide

Compiled by:

### Swiss Business Hub ASEAN / Singapore

Singapore, August 2021

#### ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Visitor arrivals and departures are at/from 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 90 days, provided their passport is valid for at least 6 months and they have a confirmed onward/return ticket. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, Singapore has implemented Safe Travel Lanes to facilitate travel in and out of Singapore. Visitors are advised to check on the latest precautionary and border measures on <https://safetravel.ica.gov.sg/>.

#### LANGUAGES USED FOR BUSINESS

English

#### PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Year	Date	Weekday	Holiday
2022	1 January	Saturday	New Year's Day
	1 February	Tuesday	Chinese New Year
	2 February	Wednesday	Chinese New Year 2nd Day
	15 April	Friday	Good Friday

1 May	Sunday	Labour Day
2 May	Monday	Hari Raya Puasa
15 May	Sunday	Vesak Day
9 July	Saturday	Hari Raya Haji
9 August	Tuesday	National Day
24 October	Monday	Deepavali
25 December	Sunday	Christmas Day

## HEALTH AND INOCULATIONS

Health control requirements such as Covid-19 tests, Covid-19 travel insurance and self-isolation and segregation measures must be in place before travelling. As these measures are continually evolving, visitors are advised to check on the latest measures: <https://safetravel.ica.gov.sg/>

## 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

230V, 50Hz

## METHODS OF PAYMENT

The local currency is the Singapore Dollar (SGD). The exchange rate is approximately 1CHF = 1.48SGD (as of August 2021). Cash or credit cards are widely accepted in hotels, restaurants and retail shops. There are 500+ ATMs in the country, operated by local and global banks: DBS, OCBC and UOB, Citibank, HSBC, Standard Chartered, ABN Amro, Maybank and more.

International currencies are freely convertible and exchangeable at banks, major shopping centres and the airport. A transfer of more than SGD 20,000 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 business visitors include:

Swissôtel The Stamford  
2 Stamford Road Singapore 178882  
Tel: (+65) 6339- 6633  
Email: [singapore-stamford@swissotel.com](mailto:singapore-stamford@swissotel.com)

Swissôtel Merchant Court  
20 Merchant Road Singapore 058281  
Tel: (+65) 6337 2288  
Email: [singapore-merchantcourt@swissotel.com](mailto:singapore-merchantcourt@swissotel.com)

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

Mandarin Orchard Hotel  
333 Orchard Road Singapore 238867  
Tel: (+65) 6737 4411  
Email: [orchard@meritushotels.com](mailto:orchard@meritushotels.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 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 8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m., Monday to Friday. Certain companies and banks do operate half-day on Saturdays from 8.00am to 1.00pm, while retail shops are usually open daily, from 10.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.

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

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore in Geneva

Avenue du Pailly 10

1219 Châtelaine, Geneva

Tel: +41 22 795 0101

Fax: +41 22 796 8078

Email: [mfa\\_geneva@mfa.gov.sg](mailto:mfa_geneva@mfa.gov.sg)

Opening Hours

Mondays to Fridays: 8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. (closed for lunch: 1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m.)

Embassy of the Republic of Singapore

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Tanglin

Singapore 248163

Tel: +65 6379 8000

Fax: +65 6474 7885

Email: [mfa@mfa.sg](mailto:mfa@mfa.sg)

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

Embassy of Switzerland

911 Bukit Timah Road, Level 2

Singapore 589622

Tel: +65 6468 5788

Fax: +65 6466 8245

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

## Opening Hours

Mondays to Fridays: 9.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.

## 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 yourself 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.

Most companies in Singapore would have a corporate website. LinkedIn is the professional social media site used by many businesses to update their customers on activities and to network.

## BUSINESS PRACTICES

Business discussions are straightforward 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 is required to support the contract.

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021  
Author: Renee Koh, Head of Swiss Business Hub ASEAN  
Adela Tan, Trade Officer  
Address: Embassy of Switzerland, 911 Bukit Timah Road, Level 2, Singapore 589622  
Tel: +65 6468 5788  
Fax: +65 6466 8245  
Email: [singapore.sbhasean@eda.admin.ch](mailto:singapore.sbhasean@eda.admin.ch)  
URL: <https://www.s-ge.com/en/company/swiss-business-hub-asean>