



TRAVELOGUE

Alternative 3-day itinerary in Singapore!

We love this country! These are the clean streets our dreams are made of, the stringent grasp over political affairs that are figments of our fantasies, the shopping malls that we would love to have at our doorsteps, and oh the beautiful security of life!

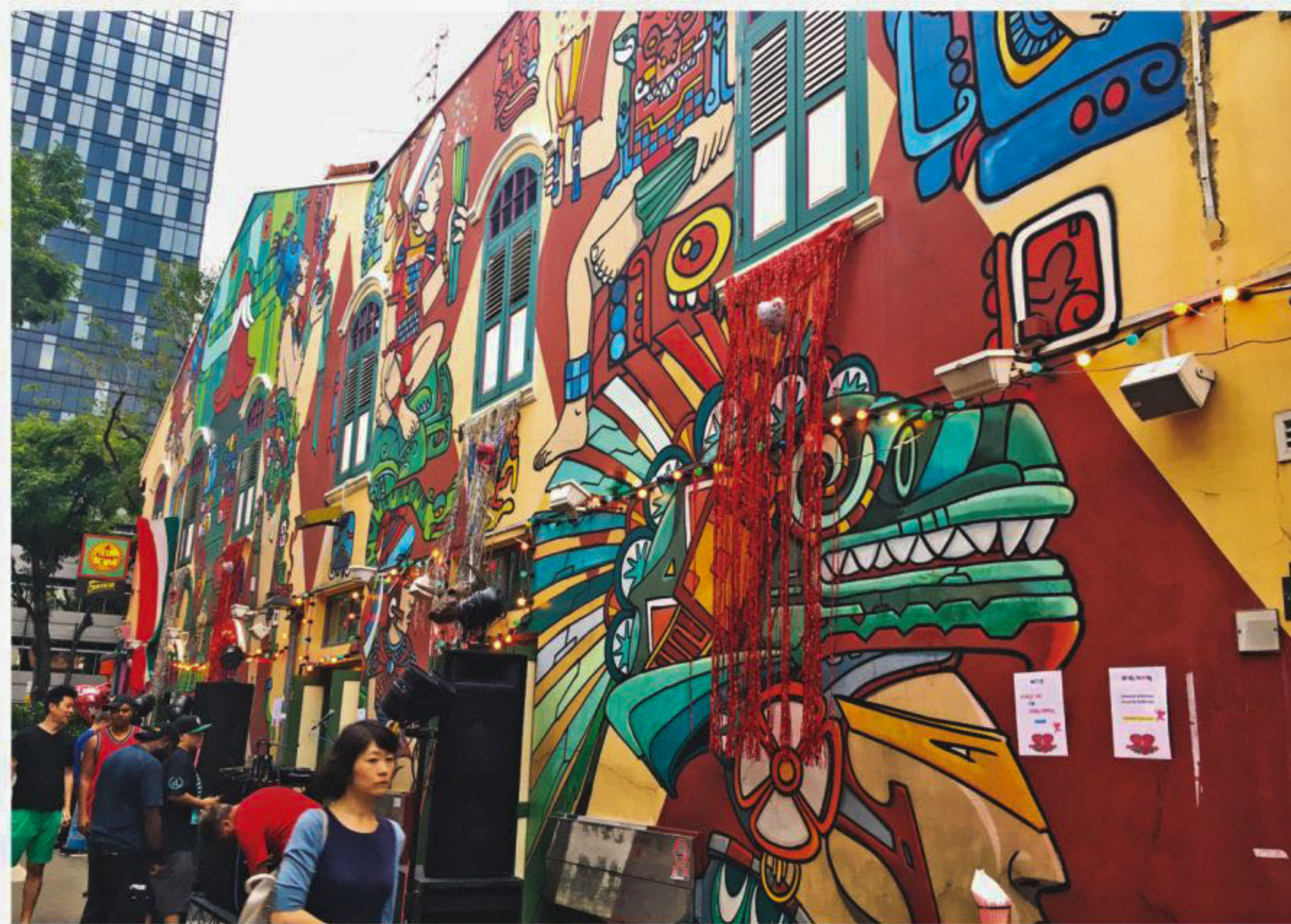
I remember a friend of mine had posted a photo on Facebook of a fellow passenger on the Singaporean rail, carrying her latest purchase of iPhone 6 off the side pocket of her bag pack nonchalantly! Something, most of us cannot even dream of doing, even in most first world countries.

Now, what else makes Singapore so great? And if you only had a short transit or weekend getaway, how would you spend your three days?

So let's say, you have arrived on a Thursday afternoon here – express delivery straight from your Dhaka office – where to head to witness that first sunset? I say Esplanade!

The Roof Terrace at Esplanade not only has the most majestic views of its architectural excellence, but also perhaps the quietest ways to enjoy it. I happened to have been in that spot on a Valentine's Day and the number of blessed couples hiding away in nooks and corners of the terrace also suggested it to be rather romantic.

Next head down to Clarke Quay's sister location Boat Quay for a cheaper and better dinner in terms of flavours! You have almost identical views of the water, but less touristy! There is of course Shiraz and Jumbo in Clarke that do offer beautiful ambience as restaurants but take any of the establishments along Boat Quay, and you are guaranteed a quieter time with yourself.



If you like it there, continue to enjoy the river sights by hopping onto a ferry for a little river cruise at night for a proper introduction to the Singapore skyline.

Waking up nice and early on the Friday morning, make your way to my most favourite neighbourhood in Singapore – Tiong Bahru. This is the only area where you stay in touch with the antiquities of life; take a step away from the glitz and glamour of the rest of the metro city. Enjoy the quaint little cafes and bookshops and do make a mandatory stopover at the famous Tiong Bahru bakery for that giddy dose of sugar!

How can you forego a trip to Singapore and not spend a good part of your day wandering aimlessly through the shopping centres on Orchard Street? There is

Robinson's that bears the icon of true-blue Singaporean shopping, but also a handful of Pradas and Louis Vuittons sprawled all over the place, sufficient to give you a heady experience.

Up and around Arab Street is where you should be next. The picturesque streets are reason enough but then there is the local stuffed bread dish called murtabak to try at Zamzam. If you are full already and still are in time to catch the sunset, head to the Marina Bay Sands hotel. Now you will have to revisit this establishment for several different reasons, however, the maiden one is called 'Gardens by the Bay'.

Drag your tired feet to the East side of Singapore now to the famous East Coast Park area for the view of its beaches and

probably the best seafood dinner this country has to offer!

If you are a brunch person, please find time to start your second morning in the leafy section of Robertson Quay. While you still have the water running right next to you, like the other two Quays, you have a selection of beautiful cafes and restaurants as well. Next, either head out to Sentosa (because what is a trip to the Lion city without it!) but also because this place has gone through massive developments through the years, and they are always adding newer attractions. However, if you have previously visited Sentosa, I would suggest being a bit of a daredevil and setting out to discover a little island called the Pulau Ubin, which is a slightly less talked-about location here, and an experience you would not expect to have in Singapore! There are alternative islands too like the Coney Island, St John's that are equally interesting if you decide to hop on a bicycle (and for the less fortunate riders like myself, guess what, they also have the tricycles!)

A staple item on your list should also be Lau Pa Sat for that quintessential hawker dining experience, and this is far more festive than the ones you commonly see in Kuala Lumpur, for example. Believe it or not, Singapore offers ample opportunities to get close to nature, and besides the more common night safaris or tours at the Singapore Zoo, why not let the metal walkways of the Mount Faber engulf you with the serene sensations of a Forest Walk, along the tree-tops?

By Naaz Fahmida
Photo courtesy: Naaz Fahmida

