

Singapore

Business Guide

Compiled by:

Swiss Business Hub ASEAN / Singapore

Singapore, March 2018

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. 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
2018	1 January	Monday	New Year's Day
	16 February	Friday	Chinese New Year
	17 February	Saturday	Chinese New Year 2nd Day
	30 March	Friday	Good Friday
	1 May	Monday	Labour Day

29 May	Tuesday	Vesak Day
15 June	Friday	Hari Raya Pusa
9 August	Thursday	National Day
22 August	Wednesday	Hari Raya Haji
6 November	Tuesday	Deepavali
25 December	Tuesday	Christmas Day

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 = 1.41SGD (as of March 2018). 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) 6338 8585
Email: singapore-stamford@swissotel.com

Swissôtel Merchant Court
20 Merchant Road Singapore 058281
Tel: (+65) 6337 2288
Email: 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

Mandarin Orchard Hotel
333 Orchard Road Singapore 238867
Tel: (+65) 6737 4411
Email: 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 8.30am 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

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

c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Tanglin

Singapore 248163

Tel: +65 6379 8000

Fax: +65 6474 7885

Email: mfa@mfa.sg

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

Opening Hours

Mondays to Thursdays: 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. (closed for lunch: 1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m.)

Fridays: 8.00 a.m. to 1.00 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.

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

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 is required to support the contract.

Date: 31st March 2018
Author: K. B. Lim, Head of Swiss Business Hub ASEAN
Jane Ng, Trade Officer
Address: c/o Embassy of Switzerland, 1 Swiss Club Link Singapore 288162
Tel: +65 6468 5788
Fax: +65 6466 8245
Email: sin.sbhasean@eda.admin.ch
URL: <https://www.s-ge.com/en/company/swiss-business-hub-asean>