

SINGAPORE

A MONOCLE GUIDE

A profile of the vibrant nation, from technology to logistics, culture to design. Plus an in-depth guide to the hospitality and travel stars and attractions.

MAP

A reference for your journey across some varied terrain

TRANSPORT

The ports, aviation players and engineers on the move

INNOVATION

Witness the city-state's transition into a technology hub

DESIGN

Your introduction to the creative class defining a new identity

DINING

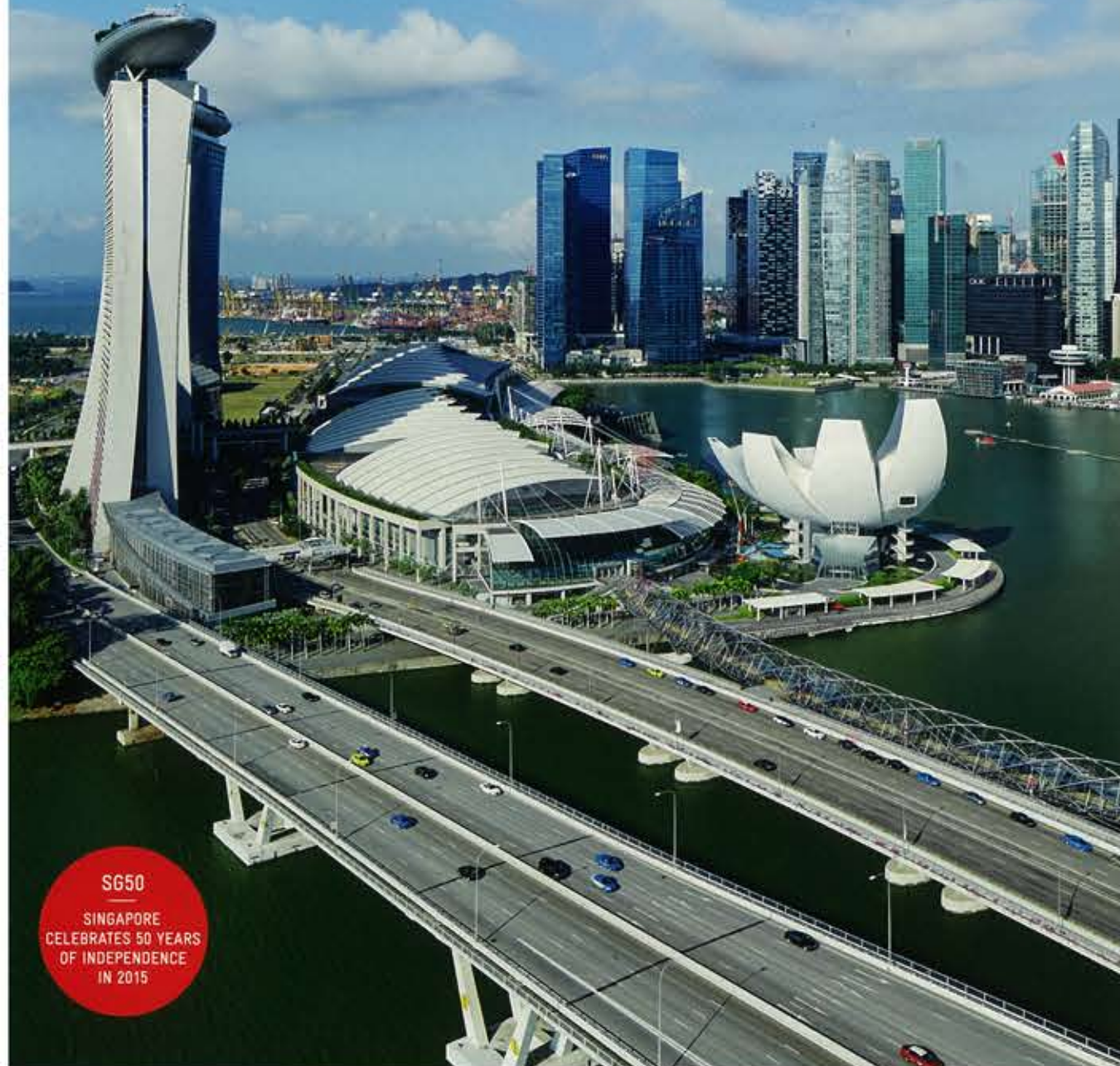
Eat and drink your way through an extensive national menu

ATTRACTIONS

Remember the past and imagine the future at inspiring locations



Monocle
Special
Edition



SG50
SINGAPORE
CELEBRATES 50 YEARS
OF INDEPENDENCE
IN 2015

3 ARCHITECTURE

To house a growing population on a dwindling stock of land, Singapore's architects are pioneering radical approaches.

THE OVERVIEW

Thinking space

Singapore has always envisioned itself as a "garden city" even from its earliest years of nationhood. As it celebrates its mid-century mark, it is reinterpreting what that term means. Looking beyond merely having parks and gardens, Singapore's architects and urban planners have been adopting state-of-the-art practices to push the boundaries of the nation's infrastructure while ensuring that growth is achieved in an environmentally sustainable way. Faced with an ever-growing influx of new residents and a scarcer amount of land for development, they are working on new approaches to accommodate everyone while maximising available civic space.



3 Marina Barrage

Water works

Access to fresh water is a serious matter here. But this doesn't mean solutions to storing this scarce resource can't be fun. The Marina Barrage was constructed in 2008 to form Singapore's largest reservoir; at 10,000 hectares it is a sixth of the country's size.

As well as storing fresh water it's also an architectural wonder and a beautifully executed civic space. You can fly a kite or rent a kayak to row on the reservoir's tranquil waters, while the breezy green roof, which spans the equivalent of four football fields in terms of size, boasts a panoramic vista of Singapore's skyline. pub.gov.sg/marina

1 SUTD

Things to come

The National University of Singapore has teamed up with renowned American university the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to create the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD). This collaboration draws on their combined expertise to produce future architects, engineers and urban planners.

The campus, located on the eastern end of the island, officially opened this year and the architecture echoes SUTD's mandate. Its masterplan by UnStudio and DP Architects incorporates sustainable elements, taking into account the tropical climate. sutd.edu.sg



4 Sky Greens

Growth sector

In densely populated Singapore, "building up" refers to human habitation – and vegetables. Conceived by Jack Ng in 2009, Sky Greens applies green technology to the farming process, yielding about 10 times as much fresh produce as traditional farming techniques.

The vegetables are grown in a nine-metre tall farming frame, which holds 38 levels of growing troughs. These troughs are rotated to ensure the seedlings receive the right amount of sunlight. Because the rotation is fuelled by flowing water, each tower only requires 40 watts. "We want to be a solutions provider to meet the challenge of sustainable food production," says Ng. skygreens.com



2 The Pinnacle@Duxton

People's palace

Proving that public housing doesn't have to be a grim affair, the Pinnacle complex spans seven blocks linked by sky bridges on the 26th and 50th floors. Singaporean architecture firms Arc Studio and RSP spearheaded the design. Built on the site where the first two government housing blocks were constructed, the Pinnacle is a symbol of how far the country has come. pinnacleduxton.com.sg



6 CleanTech Park

Green cycle

Mooted in 2011 as Singapore's test bed for cutting-edge environmental and sustainable technology, the government-led CleanTech Park is a 50-hectare eco-business hub that will be completed in three phases by 2030. CleanTech Park One was opened in 2013. More than 37,000 sq m of offices and laboratories are spread out across six floors and two towers located next to Nanyang Technological University. In the space of two years, it has housed 16 projects ranging from water-recycling solutions to innovative uses of solar energy.

CleanTech Park Two also welcomed its first slate of four projects at the start of this year. Functioning as the premise's "green lungs" is the Jurong Eco-Garden. Besides being a tree conservation park with nearly 140 plant and animal species, it includes a holistic stormwater management system that stores rainwater for uses such as irrigation. jtc.gov.sg



5 Gardens by the Bay

Dome city

Even from afar, it's impossible to miss the row of tall sci-fi "super trees" and glasshouse domes of Gardens by the Bay. Comprising two main segments – Bay East Garden and Bay South Garden – and taking up over 100 hectares of reclaimed land, the gardens were orchestrated by UK-based designers Grant Associates and Gustafson Porter after they won an international competition in 2006.

Highlights include the biggest columnless glasshouses in the world. The giant sculptural trees belong to the Supertree Grove, which comes alive at night in a spectacular light show. A skywalk allows visitors to explore the trees' canopies. gardensbythebay.com.sg

Q & A

Jason Pomeroy
Architect

Jason Pomeroy, a Cambridge University-trained, London-born architect, has chosen to base himself in Singapore, where he runs his eponymous design firm Pomeroy Studio.

What are some of the latest trends in green architecture in Singapore?

Lush trees, flora and fauna situated on gravity-defying decks in between or at the top of buildings have become a familiar sight. They are no longer just the reserve of high-end hospitality developments. The government is continuing to promote the role of skycourts, sky gardens and vertical greenery as alternative social spaces.

Is building upwards always the answer for a dense city? It's easy to lose the sense of neighbourhood and community that is fostered in the coffee shops and shophouses at street level. The value of public open space is starting to be considered for its social and cultural importance and these are now often



prerequisites to new urban development projects.

What's unique about architecture in Singapore?

We can wax lyrical about greenery-infused skyscrapers but I think the colonial era left two distinct building types: the black-and-white bungalow and the shophouse. Surviving examples of the former, built in the late 19th century, show an Asian tropical responsiveness that provides indoor and outdoor living via the generous open-air verandas. Shophouses were the original mixed-use developments of their time, blending trade and retail at ground level with residences above for multiple families living under one roof. pomeroystudio.sg

7 Punggol Eco Town

Model living

In 2007, as plans were being drawn for one of Singapore's new towns, the Housing Development Board (HDB) decided Punggol was going to be Singapore's first "eco-town". Cutting through the area is a 4.2km-long artificial waterway that creates opportunities for waterfront buildings.

Meanwhile, HDB estate Treelodge@Punggol, masterminded by Surbana

