

groups being Malay (15 per cent), Indian (6.5 per cent), and European (1.5 per cent). There are four official languages: Malay, Chinese (Mandarin), English, and Tamil. The national language of Singapore is Malay, but English prevails as the language of government and business. The population of Singapore is young, with approximately 34.4 per cent under the age of 20. Of the total population, approximately 76 per cent over 10 years of age is literate.

Local Customs

Smoking is discouraged and prohibited in public places such as cinemas, public transport, elevators, and government hospitals. There is a \$500 (S) fine for littering, and it is an offence to jaywalk.

General Information

Climate. Singapore's climate is tropical with little seasonal variation. The average temperatures range from a maximum of 30.6°C (87°F) during the day to a minimum of 24° C (75°F) at night. There is no distinct wet or dry season in Singapore: rain falls throughout the year. The highest average monthly rainfall is from November to January while the month of July has the lowest average rainfall.

Holidays. The periods immediately before and after the Chinese New Year are usually very busy weeks in Singapore and are not a good time to visit. The following is a list of official public holidays in Singapore:

New Year's Day — *January 1*

Chinese New Year — *Between late January and mid-February*. Officially two days but some companies give up to five days.*

Good Friday — *March-April**

Labour Day (Singapore) — *May 1*

Vesak Day (Buddhist) — *Usually in May**

National Day — *August 9*

Hari Raya Puasa (Muslim) — *August-October*

Deepavali (Hindu) — *October-November**

Hari Raya Haji (Muslim) — *October-December**

Christmas Day — *December 25*

* Date set by lunar calendar.