

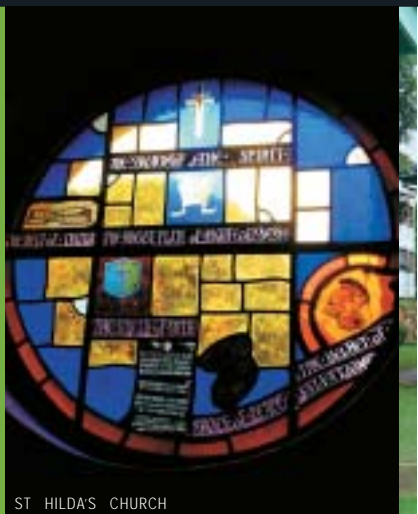
The very mention of the name Katong evokes a warm nostalgia, especially among the older generation of Singaporeans. Even today, the area continues to weave a spell over Singapore's psyche. In the 1930s, the island's wealthy would retreat to its version of the Riviera and spend weekends in their bungalows along the beach. Today, as other areas plunge headlong into their quest to modernise and throw up gleaming condominiums, Katong has



KOON SENG ROAD

katong

retained a hold on its past, revelling in its incredibly rich Peranakan and Eurasian heritage and architecture and soaking in its great charm.



ST HILDA'S CHURCH



east

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TAN SEN BOH BUNGALOW

explore

Entire books have been written about Katong and long-time residents wax lyrical about the laid-back sense of self, the bounty of food to be found on every street corner, and the general atmosphere of colour and history. Start your explorations in the area bounded by Dunman, Tanjong Katong and Mountbatten Roads.

The streetscape here is replete with prime examples of finely-conserved old shophouses and landmarks. Film buffs should make a beeline for **Hollywood Cinema Building** (Tanjong Katong Road next to Yock Eng Secondary School): from 1959 to as late as 1995, this cinema was famed for its screening of Chinese movies.

Today, the building houses a supermarket. Other sites of note along Tanjong Katong Road are the **Katong News Agency**, **Tanjong Katong Post Office** and **Chung Cheng Coffee Shop**. Then move eastwards towards the Greater Katong and Joo Chiat areas.

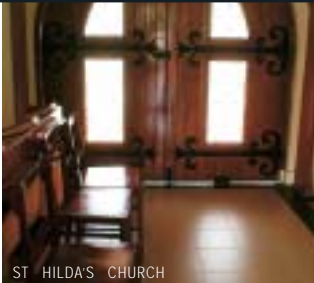
For a sample of how the wealthy used to live, drop by the **Tan Sen Boh Bungalow** (16 Ceylon Road), a grand old mansion, now somewhat dilapidated, but still recalling a more genteel era. While you're on Ceylon Road, take in the performances at the Indian temple **Sri Senpaga Vinayagar** at No. 19 or indulge in a respite from the heat at the Spanish-inspired **St Hilda's Church** at No. 41.



EAST COAST ROAD



EAST COAST RD/JOO CHIAT RD



ST HILDA'S CHURCH



EAST COAST ROAD

shop

Shopaholics in the know will tell you that Katong is a great place to pick up funky pieces of contemporary furniture, often costing less than similar shops in Orchard (check out **Av Interior Design** at 252 Tembeling Road). And for antiques, in particular Peranakan pieces, Katong is a shopper's paradise.

Katong Antique House is a must-visit (208 East Coast Road). Run by long-time resident Peter Wee, the two-storey fully-restored shophouse has been decorated in full traditional Peranakan splendour. Meanwhile, the old



katong

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Katong Shopping Centre (865 East Coast Road) holds an Aladdin's Cave of fabric shops, tailors and seamstresses selling genuine Nonya kebayas, handbags and beaded shoes.



eat

Katong is peerless when it comes to food. From the lushly-thick laksa (there're numerous stalls to choose from along East Coast Road), chicken rice and pies to the salt-baked chicken (97 East Coast Road), roast ducks, durians and curry fishheads, it's a gourmand's version of heaven on earth. Our advice is to follow your nose and look for large crowds. The main drags are Joo Chiat Road and East Coast Road, both of which positively glorify gluttony with their intoxicating blend of kitsch (**Porridge Club**, 39 East Coast Road) and spellbinding

Katong Bakery and Confectionery (75 East Coast Road), which continues to bake its luscious cream puffs, sponge cakes and curry puffs daily.

If you have a hankering for authentic Peranakan fare (and how could you not, seeing as you're smack in the middle of Peranakan territory?), book a table at **Casa bom Vento** (467 Joo Chiat Road), **Peranakan Inn** (210 East Coast Road) or **Guan Hoe Soon Restaurant** (241 Joo Chiat Road).

By nightfall, Joo Chiat turns into a gaudy but fascinating blend of



EAST COAST RD/JOO CHIAT RD

authenticity (**Kway Guan Huat** at 95 Joo Chiat Road still produces its legendary *popiah* skins by hand!). Then take a break in the iconic red-bricked

fine dining, garishly-lit karaoke lounges, *kopitiams* churning out endless cups of fragrant hot coffee, *al fresco* dining and pubs. East Coast Road in particular has a great number of cafés and pubs, a perfect spot to wind down in the evenings.





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KATONG BAKERY & CONFECTIONERY

getting there

The nearest MRT Stations are Eunos and Kembangan. Bus nos. 15, 16, 33, 155 take you to Joo Chiat Road and Joo Chiat Place; nos. 10, 12, 14, 32, 40 and 155 service East Coast Road.

trivia

In keeping with its almost maniacal devotion to food, several roads in Katong are named after tropical fruits and seafood. During your walks, you might chance upon Rambutan Road, Chiku Road and even Jalan Sotong.

“ Joo Chiat is a fine example of what conservation can do for preserving old world charm. Some of the shops in the area have focused on trade that is reminiscent of its past — there are shops selling tandoori, nasi lemak, bicycles, popiah skin, mackerel otah, durian puff, etc. Not every place needs to be a Holland Village to succeed. ”

– Mdm Kwok, Victoria School teacher



EAST COAST RD/JOO CHIAT RD

katong

what the area could be

A number of the pre-war shop-houses along Joo Chiat Road, Joo Chiat Place and East Coast Road have been marked for conservation. These buildings were built in different eras, creating a snapshot of a richly-

textured past. There are also plans to allow commercial uses for some of the shophouses, thus creating a livelier buzz. To complement this, improved car parking is being studied.



- 1 City Satay
- 2 Katong News Agency
- 3 Chang Cheng Coffee Shop
- 4 Katong Post Office
- 5 Katong Shopping Centre
- 6 Famous Iaksa stall
- 7 Porridge Club
- 8 Sri Serpaga Vinayagar Temple
- 9 St Hilda's Church
- 10 Katong Bakery (Red House Bakery)
- 11 Eateries
- 12 Durian puffs
Chocolate Cake Shop
- 13 Katong Antique House
- 14 Peranakan Inn
- 15 Chin Mee Chin Bakery

