

lonely planet

# Singapore



CITY GUIDE



<i>kecap</i>	soy sauce, pronounced 'ketchup' (we got the word from them, not the other way around)
<i>kepala ikan</i>	fish head, usually in a curry or grilled
<i>kueh mueh</i>	Malay cakes
<i>lontong</i>	rice cakes in a spicy coconut-milk gravy topped with grated coconut and sometimes bean curd and egg
<i>mee siam</i>	white thin noodles in a sourish and sweet gravy made with tamarind
<i>mee soto</i>	noodle soup with shredded chicken
<i>nasi biryani</i>	saffron rice flavoured with spices and garnished with cashew nuts, almonds and raisins
<i>nasi minyak</i>	spicy rice
<i>pulut kuning</i>	sticky saffron rice
<i>o-chien</i>	oyster omelette
<i>rojak</i>	salad made from cucumber, pineapple, yam bean, star fruit, green mango and guava, with a dressing of shrimp paste, chillies, palm sugar and fresh lime juice
<i>sambal</i>	sauce of fried chilli, onions and prawn paste
<i>soto ayam</i>	spicy chicken soup with vegetables, including potatoes
<i>tempeh</i>	preserved soya beans, deep-fried

## PERANAKAN

As descendants of early Chinese immigrants who married Malay women, the Peranakans (see p14) also developed a unique cuisine that blends Chinese ingredients with Malay sauces and spices. It is commonly flavoured with shallots, chillies, *belacan* (Malay fermented prawn paste), peanuts, preserved soybeans and galangal (a gingerlike root). Thick coconut milk is used to create the sauce that flavours the prime ingredients.

In the past decade there has been a resurgence of interest in Peranakan cuisine, which was once confined to the home, with a number of restaurants now specialising in this unusual blend; see Eating (p100) for some good examples.

## COOKERY COURSES

If you fancy trying out some local dishes for yourself, then there are several cookery courses visitors can join. The best are offered by **At-Sunrice** (Map p230; ☎ 6336 3307; www.at-sunrice.com; Fort Canning Centre, Fort Canning Park; Dhoby Ghaut MRT).

These half-day courses start with a guided tour of the park's spice garden and then move into the teaching kitchens for hands-on experience making local dishes such as laksa, chilli crab and chicken rice. The featured cuisines vary from week to week. A two-component course, consisting of two morning classes in which chefs demonstrate various dishes, costs \$60. A three-component course, featuring a hands-on cooking class with lunch, costs \$100. The tutors are excellent and you'll get to enjoy your efforts at the end with a meal on the centre's terrace. There are kids' classes in the school holidays, and for those who are professionally inclined, a three-week full-time Asian Culinary Arts course costs US\$3250.

**Raffles Culinary Academy** (Map p230; ☎ 6412 1256; www.affleshotel.com/dining/culinaryacad.php; 2nd level, Raffles Hotel Arcade; City Hall MRT) offers a wide variety of day-long cookery classes for groups of up to 20 people costing \$70 to \$90 per person. Very few are hands-on, but you will get lunch or dinner at the end.

The Asian fusion restaurant **Coriander Leaf** (Map p230; ☎ 6732 3354; www.corianderleaf.com; 3A Merchant Ct, River Valley Rd, Clarke Quay; Clarke Quay MRT) also runs courses, where keen cooks can learn a mix of South Asian, Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and fusion dishes and cooking techniques.

Popular classes tailored for enthusiastic beginners are offered by **Cookery Magic** (Map p236; ☎ 6348 9667; www.cookerymagic.com; Haig Rd, Katong; Paya Lebar MRT), run by the amiable Ruqhana, who teaches a huge range of popular Indian, Malay, Indonesian, Chinese and Singaporean classics to small groups in her own home. Classes cost \$50 to \$60 per person. She also runs special weekend classes, kids' cooking classes and market tours – and even special kampong cooking trips to the island of Pulau Ubin.