

Flashy Lights and Gorgeously

By NAZRI NOOR

Singapore's a fantastic destination all year round, but these last few months of the year bring additional seasonal incentive to visit. We here at InSites received a very warm invitation to come and see the sights they have in store for Christmas, and we're quite positive that you'll be ready to pack your bags and leave the dog with the neighbours when you see what the season has in store for Singapore.

Christmas in the Tropics 2009 involves a tremendous number of events and promotions happening in Singapore over the next few weeks. This very nearly overwhelming string of spectacles kicked off with an appropriate bang just last weekend with a series of light-ups at three of its most attractive precincts.

Orchard Road received a makeover with "A Christmas All Decked Out", drawing on the area's thriving shopping essence to express the spirit of the season through fashion. Classic Christmas icons such as reindeer, snowmen and Santa Claus have been literally decked out in unique getups and strewn about Orchard Road in a cleverly colour-coded number of zones. The mall's facades glow with spectacular vibrant lights, and a walk down Orchard Road almost feels like taking a stroll through an electric rainbow.

The Marina Bay's "A Glitzy Christmas by the Bay" takes inspiration from the story of King Midas, with a theme that plays on the precinct's aquatic location and coating oceanic elements such as waves and a bejewelled clam with a glittering dusting of gold. "Christmas by the Singapore River" transforms the entertainment and nightlife precinct into the very picture of the season's joy, complete with dazzling displays and a variety of Christmas-themed music, dance and ice-skating performances.

The combined beauty of the precincts' displays is breathtaking to say the least, and tourists would do well to book a seat on one of the buses that offer tours around the area in the evening. What better way to enjoy the lights and sights than from the vantage of a double-decker bus that's blaring Mariah Carey Christmas carols? We'll admit to feeling silly for singing along at first, but we're certain that this particularly potent combination of dazzling Christmas lights and cheerful music is enough to set a smile on even the most adamant scrooge's face.

What's truly interesting about Christmas in the Tropics 2009 is the willingness of Singapore's corporations and entities to cooperate in bringing about a majestic celebration, making it easier and cheaper for you to come and partake of all the fun. The Celebrations Hotel Deal offers a free third night's stay for every two nights booked, and a 2-Plus-2 Attractions Promotion gives two free tickets with every purchase of two adult tickets at a number of participating attractions, including the Singapore Flyer and sunny Sentosa.

The area of entertainment also offers plenty of options for all, with events guaranteed to please everyone from theatre-goers to party people. The renowned Vienna Boys Choir will be in town to perform at the Esplanade, and the Singapore Repertory Theatre will feature performances of *The Jungle Book* and *Charlotte's Web*. Alternatively, celebrate Christmas with Singapore's own masters of dance music at ZoukOut, an all-night beach party, followed by a New Year's celebration at Sentosa's Siloso Beach Party.

Singapore is seriously chockfull of fun for the entire family this Christmas, and it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that you won't run out of events to attend and sights to see this December. For more information on Christmas in the Tropics 2009, visit www.visitsingapore.com/celebrate2009.

CHRISTMAS in Singapore

