



HERITAGE TRAIL BUKIT TIMAH

MAP & SUGGESTED ROUTES

The Bukit Timah Heritage Trail is part of the National Heritage Board's ongoing efforts to document and present the history and social memories of places in Singapore. We hope this trail will bring back fond memories for those who have worked, lived or played in the area, and serve as a useful source of information for visitors and new residents.

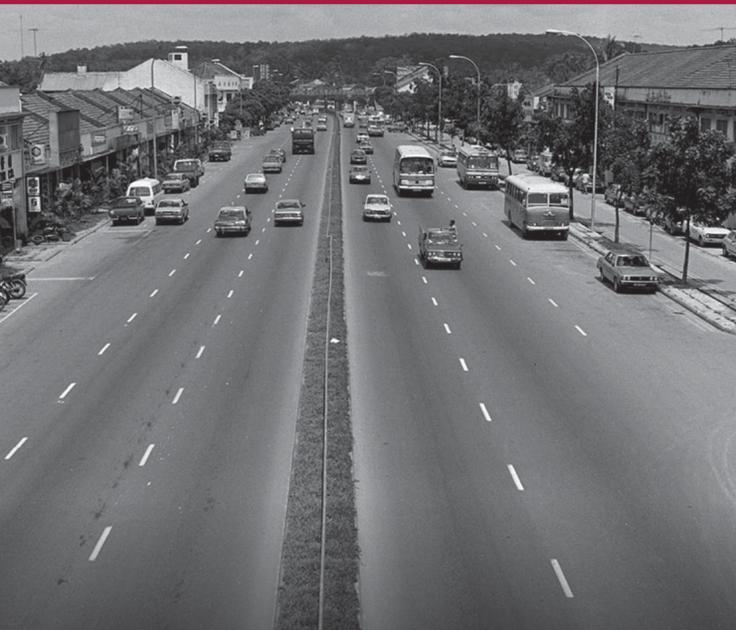


National Heritage Board

Supported by



Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth



Upper Bukit Timah Road, 1982
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SUGGESTED SHORT TRAIL ROUTES

Located at the heart of the island, Bukit Timah was at the centre of many momentous events in Singapore's history over the centuries. Covering different segments along Bukit Timah Road, the three thematic trails below explore the buildings, structures, religious institutions, communal spaces and sites of natural heritage that make up the area's rich and varied history.

Leisure and Learning Trail (2 hours; on foot)

Bukit Timah consists of a number of social and leisure landmarks that are well-loved by its residents and Singaporeans. This trail covers some of these landmarks including popular eating destinations, Singapore's first UNESCO World Heritage Site as well as vital centres of research and education.



Begin your journey at the Botanic Gardens MRT station (exit A) and walk a short distance down Bukit Timah Road to **Cluny Court** which comprises a row of shophouses that houses cafes and other businesses. Built in 1928, these shophouses are conserved by the Urban Redevelopment Authority and feature ornate decorative elements, including fluted columns, bas-relief and patterned tiles which are distinctive of shophouses from 1900 to 1940.

Next, cross Bukit Timah Road to reach **Adam Food Centre** which opened in 1974. The centre started as a gathering of open-air food stalls before the hawkers were relocated to its present-day location to make way for the construction of a flyover. Here you may wish to sample the delicious *nasi lemak* ("coconut milk rice" in Malay), *sup tulang* ("bone marrow soup" in Malay) and Indian *rojak* dishes (a dish consisting of deep fried fritters and other ingredients) which this food centre is well-known for.



From Adam Food Centre, walk down Dunearn Road towards the junction intersecting Kheam Hock Road. Cross Dunearn and Bukit Timah roads, and you will reach the Bukit Timah campus of the National University of Singapore. These were the grounds of the former **Raffles College** which was established in 1928 as Singapore's second institution of higher learning.

The buildings within the campus reflect a panoply of architectural styles including Neo-Classical and International Modern, and have been gazetted collectively as a National Monument.



The former Raffles College grounds adjoin the **Singapore Botanic Gardens** which is the last stop on this trail. Established in 1859, the Gardens is Singapore's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. Through the years, the Gardens played significant roles in botanical science and conservation, and served as the springboard for economic and environmental change across the region. Within the Gardens, you can explore the large diversity of trees and plants in the Rain Forest, or take a stroll around the serene Swan Lake, constructed in 1866. You can also visit the many conserved buildings within the Gardens, including the 1868 Burkill Hall. This two-storey bungalow is the only example of an Anglo-Malay plantation-style house left in the world.



WWII Legacy Trail (1.5 hours; bus and walk)

During World War II (WWII), Bukit Timah was a key target for the Japanese as the British supply depots, reservoirs and the strategic Bukit Timah Hill were all located in the area. This trail explores WWII-related sites as well as places that carry the memories and legacies of the Japanese Occupation.



Start your journey at the **Bukit Timah Nature Reserve** which is accessible via Hindhede Drive. The reserve, established by the British in the 1880s, contains the largest tract of primary rainforest in Singapore, and also harbours a diverse range of plant and animal species. Within the reserve is the 163-metre-tall **Bukit Timah Hill**, which made Bukit Timah a key target for the Japanese during WWII as the hill provided a tactical vantage point for the invading forces. Despite Allied attempts to defend the hill, it was captured by the Japanese on 11 February 1942. A heritage marker near the Visitors' Centre provides more details of some of the battles fought in this area.

From the reserve, take a bus down Upper Bukit Timah Road to the former **Ford Factory**. The factory had been the Ford Motor Company's first automobile assembly plant in Southeast Asia, before becoming Japanese Lieutenant-General Yamashita Tomoyuki's temporary headquarters during the invasion of Singapore. It was here that the British surrender to the Japanese in 1942 took place, marking the start of the Japanese Occupation. In 2017, a permanent exhibition titled *Surviving the Japanese Occupation: War and its Legacies* was launched and it showcases the events and memories surrounding the war and the Japanese Occupation.



Take a bus back down Upper Bukit Timah Road to Beauty World Centre. This shopping mall was completed in 1984 to house hawkers and stallholders from the former **Beauty World**, located

across the road. The former **Beauty World** was a market and entertainment hub that was established during the Japanese Occupation as the **Tai Tong Ah Sai Kai** ("Greater East Asia World" in Cantonese) amusement park. The Japanese authorities allowed and encouraged gambling activities at the park as a means to combat currency inflation and divert resistance to their rule. After the war, **Tai Tong Ah** was renamed **Beauty World** and became a market for Bukit Timah residents, housing over 160 market stalls, a cinema and a Chinese temple. After being ravaged by fire on five separate occasions, **Beauty World** finally closed in 1983.



You have now come to the end of the trail! If you are hungry, you may wish to make your way to **Cheong Chin Nam Road**, which houses a string of eateries. This road and a number of connecting roads are named after **Cheong Chun Tin** and his family members. **Cheong** was the first certified dentist of Chinese descent in Singapore and had set up his dentist practice at South Bridge Road in 1869. The **Cheong** family later went on to establish the **Pearlie White** toothpaste brand.



Kampong Life Trail (1 hour; bus and walk)

Buildings and institutions that were once part of Bukit Timah's kampong past can still be found in the area today. This trail features a former railway station as well as houses of faith that were once central to the religious and social lives of kampong residents and now serve the same function for their respective congregations.



From **King Albert Park MRT station** (exit A), walk west down Bukit Timah Road towards the railway truss bridge. There is a path near the bridge that leads towards the former **Bukit Timah Railway Station**. Constructed in the 1930s, the station was part of a former railway line connecting Singapore and the Malay Peninsula. This single-storey station was built in a style reminiscent of traditional European country cottages and comprised an open platform with six structural bays, a stationmaster's office, waiting areas and a signals office. The railway line ran alongside and sometimes bisected a number of settlements, including **Kampong Quarry** and **Fuyong Estate**. For children playing by the train tracks or residents used to the sounds of the trains, the railway was part and parcel of everyday life.

Make your way back towards Bukit Timah Road, where you can catch a bus or the MRT to Sixth Avenue. Walk down Sixth Avenue towards **Jalan Haji Alias**, and head towards **Masjid Al-Huda**. Built in 1925, the mosque was central to the community life of Muslim villagers in the area, which was previously dotted with kampongs until the 1980s. These kampongs included **Kampong Coronation** (or **Kampong Tempe**) and **Kampong Holland**. In the mosque, you can find a heritage gallery that showcases the heritage of the mosque.

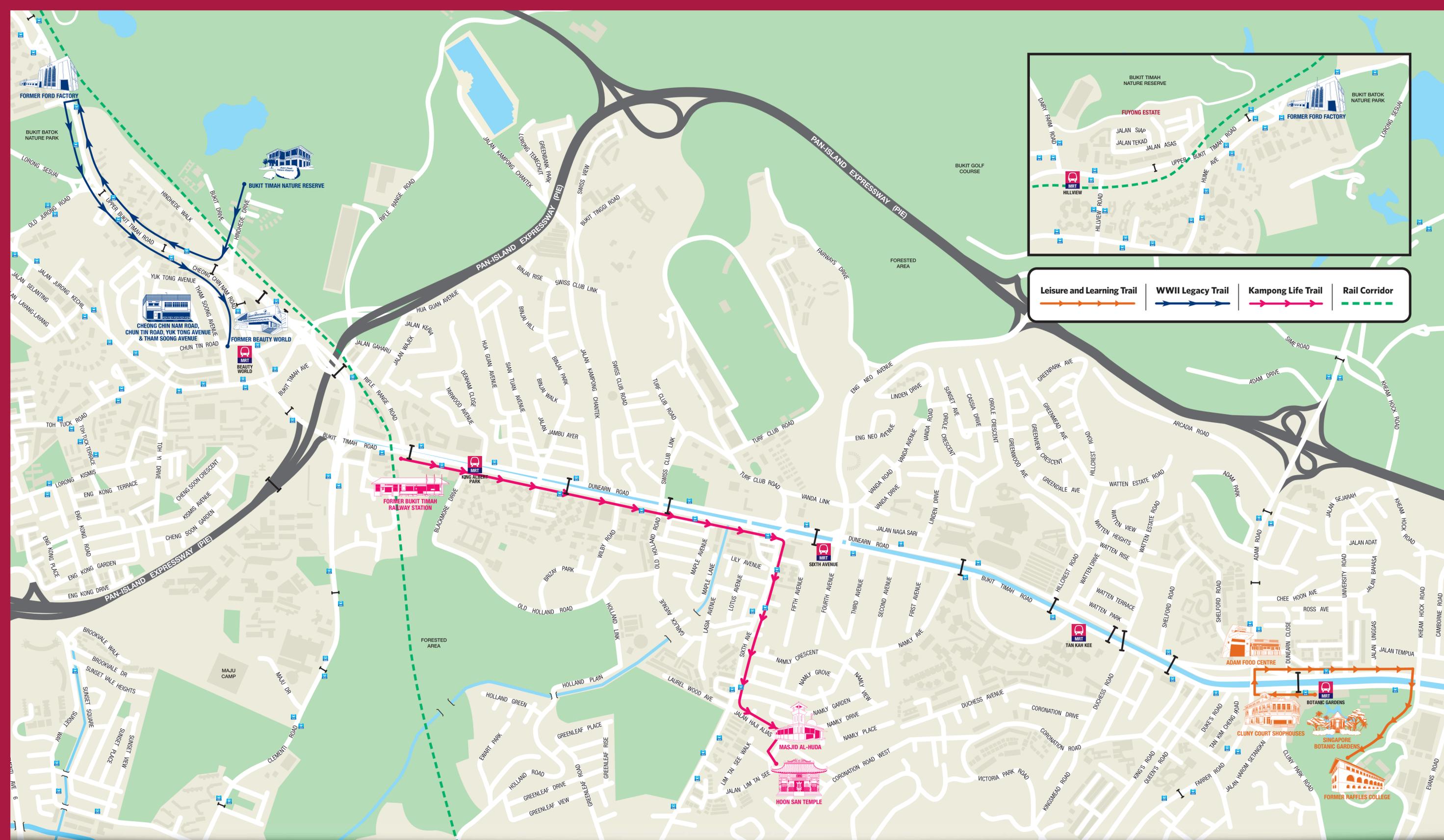


The last stop on this short trail is **Hoon San Temple**, which is just a street away from **Masjid Al-Huda**. Built in 1902 by immigrants from **Jiazhou** village in Fujian, China, the temple enshrines the deity **Lim Tai See**, whose name is reflected in the road **Jalan Lim Tai See**. **Hoon San Temple** features interlocking wooden beams which were constructed in the **Hokkien** style, as well as intricate frescos and murals themed on filial piety and traditional Chinese culture. Until the 1980s, performances were held regularly on a permanent *wayang* ("street theatre" in Malay) stage near the temple and drew crowds of spectators from nearby villages.



Optional: If you would like to explore the kampong past of Bukit Timah further, head down Upper Bukit Timah Road via bus or follow the Rail Corridor on foot to **Fuyong Estate**. Built in the 1950s, this estate was developed by philanthropist **Lee Kong Chian** to provide affordable modern housing during Singapore's housing shortage. It was located next to the former **Kampong Chamar** which is known for being the childhood home of singer-songwriter **Ramli Sarip**, father of the Malay rock movement. Here, you can also explore another railway truss bridge spanning Upper Bukit Timah Road, or grab some refreshments at the nearby **Rail Mall**.

*The area around the former **Bukit Timah Railway Station** will be closed for the installation of water pipes until end 2018.



HERITAGE SITES IN THE SUGGESTED SHORT TRAIL ROUTES

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BUKIT TIMAH NATURE RESERVE
- 
CHEONG CHIN NAM ROAD, CHUN TIN ROAD, YUK TONG AVENUE & THAM SOONG AVENUE
- 
FORMER BEAUTY WORLD
- 
FORMER FORD FACTORY
- 
FORMER BUKIT TIMAH RAILWAY STATION
- 
HOON SAN TEMPLE
- 
MASJID AL-HUDA
- 
ADAM FOOD CENTRE
- 
CLUNY COURT SHOPHOUSES
- 
FORMER RAFFLES COLLEGE
- 
SINGAPORE BOTANIC GARDENS

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