

GEYLANG,
Si Paku
GEYLANG

**THIS FAMILIAR
MALAY FOLK SONG
SPEAKS OF AN AREA
IN SINGAPORE
KNOWN AS
GEYLANG. HERE ARE
THREE FASCINATING
PLACES IN THIS
DISTRICT THAT ARE
WORTH EXPLORING.**

**Geylang Serai
Market &
Food Centre**

**1 Geylang Serai,
Singapore 402001**

There has been a market located opposite Joo Chiat Road since the 1930s. The current two-storey building



features architectural elements borrowed from Malay kampung houses. This is not surprising, as this market, due to its proximity to the now demolished Kampung Melayu (Malay Village), has long been viewed as a ‘Malay’ market. In fact, this area was home to one of Singapore’s oldest Malay settlements.

As this is one of the biggest and busiest wet markets in Singapore, it is a vital social hub, especially on the second level, which features plenty of cooked food stalls specialising in Malay and Indian cuisines. Come here to get your fill of outstanding versions of *asam pedas stingray* (tangy and spicy stingray broth), *beef rendang* (beef braised in coconut milk and spices), and *goreng pisang* (banana fritters). The ground floor houses the wet market and sundry goods stalls.

Despite its reputation as a social hub for the Malays, the Geylang Serai Market & Food Centre is patronised by the wider community of multiracial and multicultural Singapore.

DID YOU KNOW?

A widely recognised folk song in Singapore, ‘Geylang, Si Paku Geylang’ is written in the traditional Malay *pantun* (poem) style. The song pays homage to a time when life was simpler.



Geylang Serai Heritage Gallery

**Wisma Geylang Serai, 1 Engku Aman Turn,
#01-05, Singapore 408528**

Before delving into the individual places of interest that Geylang offers, start your exploration by visiting this

gallery, which gives an overview of the area's history and heritage, from the 19th century to the present day, through the use of archival materials and historical objects. It is curated by the Malay Heritage Centre, with support from the Malay Heritage Foundation. The Gallery opening hours are 10am–6pm (last admission is at 5.30pm), Tuesdays–Sundays.

The gallery comprises three sections: The first section, 'Geylang Serai: At the Crossroads of History and Memory', presents the transformation of Geylang Serai from an area with plantations to a bustling centre of commerce as well as a residential suburb, and 'Living in Geylang Serai' traces the increase and improvement of public and recreational amenities to meet the needs of a growing suburban population. Finally, 'Our Geylang Serai: Community and Heritage' showcases artefacts that are important to the local community for social events such as weddings and cultural performances.

The former Geylang Fire Station

29 Paya Lebar Road, Singapore 409005

Geylang Fire Station opened in 1929 — making it the second-oldest fire station in Singapore — and shut operations in 2002. It served the eastern part of Singapore and, in its latter years, was renamed Paya Lebar Fire Station. While most people associate the station with the two-storey structure facing the main road, the address comprises a second three-storey building set further back from the road.

Built with Art Deco (a style noted for its geometric motifs, curvilinear forms, sharp outlines, and bold colours) flair, the station's rather plain front holds a protruding balcony on the second storey decorated with a railing held up by closely spaced supports. The building also boasts adaptations — a big roof with extended eaves, louvred windows, tall ceilings — to provide shelter from sun and rain, dissipate heat, and enhance natural ventilation. It was awarded conservation status on 18 April 2007.

Located at the junction of Sims Avenue and Paya Lebar Road, and just a stone's throw from Paya Lebar MRT Station, the station's eye-catching bright-red doors and French windows still attract photography and architecture buffs. It is now a commercial and industrial office complex known as Paya Lebar Office Centre, but you can still drop by for a visit.

