

Lil Girl Big Boy Travels

An honest review of the countries, staycations and food places we visited

OTHERS, SINGAPORE

Oasia Hotel Downtown – a zen Phase 2 staycation



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I think we all agree by now that 2020 sucks big time, and there is no need to spell out the root cause of it all here again. With all hopes of travelling thrown out of the window, life has never felt more sterile. But, I also believe that every dark cloud has a silver lining, and all the events that have happened so far are meant to make us better appreciate the smaller things in life 😊 For example, I never knew that a small cup of bubble tea or a slice of cake can bring such immense happiness to oneself! And when the Singapore Tourism Board finally announced the re-opening of hotels for staycation in July, I was an elated bunny ^.^ Just in time for my birthday too! This was the first time I ever poured so much heart and soul into searching for the best staycation packages. Afterall, when will be the next time that we have so many fantastic hotel deals to choose from? In the past, whenever Mr J

suggested Christmas staycations, I will be like '*aiyo* why waste money again' or 'yeah, yeah, you go find the least expensive one *lor.*' But now, I am abashed to say that I am the one diving into all the TripAdvisor reviews and watching Youtube videos of our Singapore hotels. Yes people, that is how travel-deprived I am.



Image credit to [oasiahotels.com](https://www.oasiahotels.com)

Oasia Downtown, if you don't already know, is a 4 star business hotel located in Tanjong Pagar at the edge of the Central Business District in Singapore. It is really hard to miss this outstanding tall red building filled with green climbers when you exit from Tanjong Pagar MRT station. But why choose Oasia Downtown out of the numerous 5 star hotel/resort staycation packages out there?? I must admit that even I was not keen on the idea of staying here initially, because by doing so, it will be our 2nd consecutive stay immediately before and after Circuit Breaker (our first stay was during Christmas in 2019)! In fact, even the hotel staff were shocked when they knew it was our second time at the hotel. But I am glad that I made this decision, because our second stay enabled us to experience the full suite of services and facilities available here. And therefore I am able to create this list of reasons why I think Oasia Downtown is a good option for a Phase 2 staycation 😊

1. The zen resort ambience

Hotel lobby by the day.

True to its name, Oasia Downtown was an oasis of calm amidst the busy-ness of the financial hub. What left the deepest impression on me was how hard the hotel really strived to create a resort-like ambiance by designing pockets of natural spaces within the hotel building at the expense of having more rooms to generate revenue. Instead of the usual enclosed air-conditioned hotel lobby area, the 4-storey high open-air reception on the 12th floor is filled with comfy chairs that guests can use for chit-chatting and enjoying the breeze at night, and a sky terrace for yoga exercises. A zen background acoustic music fills the lobby and immediately calms the souls of those who walked by. The timbre panellings used throughout the hotel, together with the zen music, gave off a strong Japan hot spring resort vibe. Aww this really made me miss Japan!

Hotel lobby by the night

2. Exclusive club benefits

When we mention hotel club benefits, I am sure most of us would imagine having access to an *atas* room with free-flow food and beverages. Here in Oasia Downtown, the term “club benefit” is scaled up triple-fold, as Club room guests not only have access to the club lounge, but to an entire club floor that comes with its own private check-in reception area, an infinity pool and many cabanas, pool chairs and lounge seats to hang out in! Most importantly, this entire club floor is open to guests all day even during Phase 2 period!



Now, it is important for me to elaborate on the advantages of having access to such an exclusive club floor during a Phase 2 staycation. For Phase 2 staycations, guests are expected to make bookings (usually 1hr timeslots) for swimming pools, breakfast and happy hour. In other more popular hotels, you can expect stiff competitive for peak timeslots. However at Oasia Downtown, with an exclusive swimming pool for club guests only, you will not need to worry about making bookings for the pool at all. In fact, to my surprise, I hardly saw anyone in the infinity pool throughout my 2 nights stay, even though the hotel claimed to be full-house that weekend. Everyone seemed to enjoy hanging out by the pool instead. For pool lovers, this will be good news for you because it means that you can jump into the pool anytime (after registering yourself with the staff) as long as there are less than 10 people inside the pool. And based on my observation, this basically means the whole day!

Furthermore, with an entire floor dedicated to club guests only, you can be assured of plenty of space to laze around with your Bae, without being confined to your room only, while still adhering to the distancing measures. What this also means is that even if the club lounge runs out of space during happy hour or if you missed your breakfast timeslot (which happened to us once), you can still choose to have your cocktails and breakfast anywhere within the Club floor. Imagine lying on one of pool chairs sipping a glass of cocktail while watching the sunset. Haa, this is a luxury that is hard to find in other hotels during Phase 2!

Club lounge for happy hour, breakfast and all day refreshment.





You can continue sipping cocktails outside the lounge even after your Happy Hour timeslot.

You can choose to have breakfast in the lounge.

Or breakfast by the pool.

How about a cuppa hot chocolate too? 😊

Most importantly, since this club floor is totally sheltered and located on the 21st floor, you do not need to worry about the sun or mosquitoes at all (woohoo!), which are very true concerns in tropical Singapore. Just imagine this club floor as an indoor resort where you get free-flow drinks and refreshments, and you can use the facilities regardless of rain or shine. Needless to say, the club floor became my favourite place to hang out. I could stay here all day and even sleep here if Mr J allowed me to.

You can laze around the whole day.

And rock yourself to sleep at night.

3. The open concept bathrooms

There are 4 room types in Oasia Downtown: Superior Room, Deluxe Room, Club Room and Suite Room. Our first stay was in the Superior Room. Honestly, the only difference between the Superior Rooms and Deluxe Rooms is that the latter are located on the higher floors. Our room on the 15th floor is pretty much, well, a business hotel room. Decent size of about 23sqm, a rain shower, 48inch TV, and built-in speakers that are connected to the bathroom so you can hear the TV loud and clear even if you cannot watch it. The bath amenities used here are from THANN brand. And that is pretty much all there is to the room.





Our club room on the 25th floor, on the other hand, felt a lot more spacious comparatively at 28sqm. Perhaps it was because we were located on the higher floors which made the room appeared brighter and airier.

The highlight of the club rooms was no doubt the open-concept bathrooms which had sliding translucent walls with NO locks in replacement of hard concrete walls. You can open up the bathroom whenever you feel like it, resulting in a sense of spaciousness. Talk about having a romantic staycation! 😊 Now, I have heard of outdoor open-air baths, but an indoor open-concept bathroom? That is something special!

How the bathroom looks like from the bedroom when the doors are closed.

And how the bathroom looks like when the sliding doors are open 😊 The bathroom has another sliding door opposite the sink.



While you are inside the bathroom, you will get a bird's-eye view of whatever is going on in the bedroom. Now the built-in bathroom speakers finally make sense because you get to watch the TV while doing whatever you can be doing in the bathroom. Rest assured though, that the outside surface of sliding doors are as reflective as a mirror, so there is a 80% chance (depending on who your staycation partner is) that you will still be able to maintain your privacy 😊

This is what I mean by having a bird's-eye view of the bedroom from inside the bathroom.

4. Emphasis on a healthy lifestyle

Oasia hotel also places heavy emphasis on a healthy lifestyle. Instead of having complimentary mini bar comprising of soft drinks and chips, club room guests are provided with complimentary expensive sparkling water and coconut water.

A very small 24hr gym is available for all guests, but note that only 2 are allowed per 1hr timeslot during Phase 2. The waiting list was crazily long though, we called during the first night of our stay and could only make a booking for the second night! Seemed like everyone suddenly turned into fitness maniacs post-Circuit Breaker.

If the infinity pool is not enough to satisfy you, you will be happy to know that you also have a choice of 2 additional rooftop swimming pools on the 27th floor which are open to all hotel guests. A 1hr aquaspinning class is held here every Saturday at 10.30am with a cap of 5 pax per class.

Complimentary yoga classes are pretty much the norm in many hotels nowadays, including Oasia Downtown where 1hr yoga classes are held every Sunday mornings at 8.30am (with a limit of 5 guests during Phase 2). But to further encourage guests to exercise and not use the fitness classes or gym limit as excuses, one yoga mat is placed in every club room for your in-room exercise (if you do not find one in your room, you can certainly request for one). And so, I made sure to put this amenity into good use. *evil grin*

5. Food, food and more food everywhere!

At Oasia Downtown, access to food is absolutely not an issue. The hotel itself provides a fine dining Italian restaurant option, Oso Ristorante, on the 27th floor. Or you may opt for a comparatively budget-friendly option of Marmalade Pantry on the ground floor, which serves breakfast all the way to dinner. There are tons of food choices outside the hotel, with 100AM shopping mall (with Don Don Donki!) beside the hotel, a hawker centre just across the road, Japanese cuisine a few blocks away at Orchid Hotel, and plenty of Korean and western food options along Tanjong Pagar Road. In summary, the hotel's location is fantastic for lazy bums like me!

Marmalade Pantry, an all day dining, relatively wallet-friendly cafe at the hotel's ground floor.

Dinner from Don Don Donki in 100AM mall, which always have huge discounts for sashimi at night!

Food delivery from Kho Kho Na Ra, a korean fried chicken restaurant along Tanjong Pagar road.

6. Impeccable service

One method which I always use to judge the services of any hotels/restaurants before confirming my reservation is the speed and quality of their replies to my email enquiries (to date I swear by this method). Back in July when the hotels first opened up for staycations, I was skeptical that we would still be able to enjoy the facilities and amenities in the same way as before Circuit Breaker. Hence I started emailing nearly all the more popular hotel options that were opened, and was rather disappointed that some of the hotels seemed ill-prepared for staycations, or simply did not reply my emails. On the other hand, Oasia Downtown truly impressed me with the speed and warmth of their replies, no matter how silly my questions were. In fact, I was shocked to receive their response once at 12.40am when I replied their email at midnight! The hotel also had a Club welcome letter readily sent to me when I started enquiring about the Club benefits.

We were also impressed by the willingness of their staff to go the extra mile for their guests. For example, I noticed that there was a frozen yogurt machine in the club lounge which was no longer in use, and casually commented to the lounge staff that it was such a pity. Perhaps the staff sensed our great disappointment, and while we were lazing at the pool chairs that morning (albeit with all thoughts of frozen yogurts thrown aside), the staff suddenly appeared with two cups of frozen yogurts, and even brought us additional granula toppings from the lounge! I thought that the staff might have gotten leftover yogurts from somewhere within the kitchen, but Mr J insisted that the staff most likely bought the yogurts for us. Upon checking Google, indeed we found that a yogurt shop of the same brand was located just a few streets behind the hotel. Regardless of where the yogurt came from, this small gesture certainly became the highlight of our stay ❤️



Not to forget, the hotel also prepared a nice birthday setup and complimentary cupcake for me as a surprise!

Conclusion

Of course, the hotel is not without its cons. I wish that the quality of the food could be improved — the breakfast bagels do taste like rubbers. And that the swimming pool water could be much warmer. I was shivering with cold while swimming at noon, so much so that my body turned rigid and I lost all my swimming skills (no kidding). I highly suspect that this is the reason why the pools were so unused. But these are really all that cons that I can think of. If you are planning a staycation here, I have to emphasize that Oasia Downtown is still a business hotel despite its facade, so do tailor your expectations accordingly. And let me highlight this, the Club lounge really makes all the difference between our first and second stay. Always go for Club rooms in Oasia Downtown.

At this point in time, I believe the burning question that everyone has is “how much does a Club room cost?” Let me say it outright that I paid about \$370 per night including GST, which is really pricey in my opinion. And I am still feeling rather bitter about it because the initial price that I saw was a freaking \$307 (including GST) per night only! But because I was *hiam*-ing too much and delayed my booking, the price inflated by nearly \$130 within a few hours! #heartpain #onemoreliferegret. As if this is not enough of a blow, a few days after our staycation, Klook launched a staycation deal for Oasia Downtown club room at \$290! #%&\$#! I am not being sponsored to promote Klook (haa I wish I am), but I believe that good things must be shared. So here I am sharing my wisdom with you all. Don't say that I never say. You are welcome. #KThxBye

◀ CIRCUIT BREAKER ◀ OASIA HOTEL ◀ OASIA HOTEL DOWNTOWN ◀ PHASE 2
STAYCATION ◀ SINGAPORE ◀ STAYCATION

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