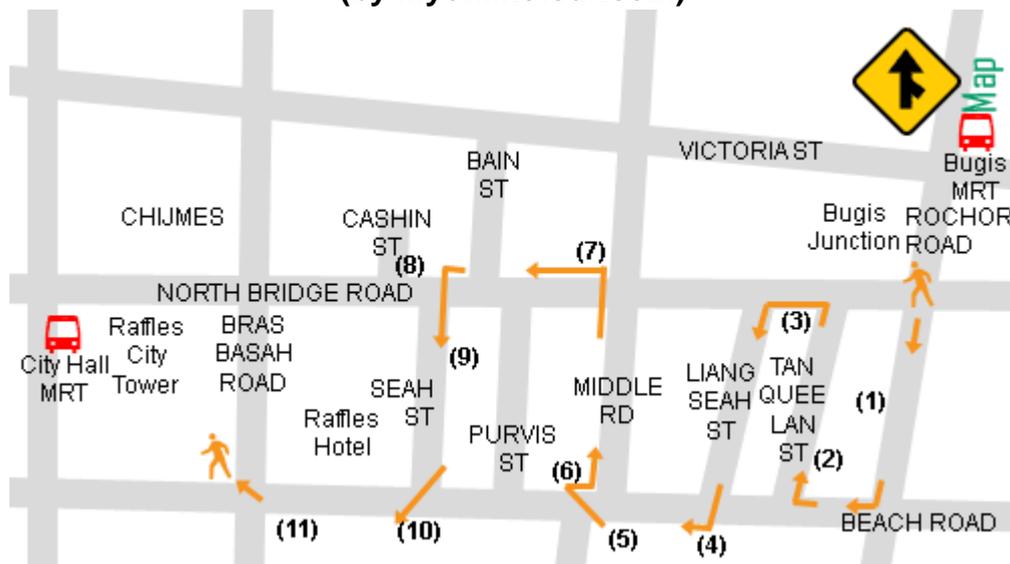


# Beach Road Walkabout

(by myonlinetour.com)



Built in 1953, the **New 7<sup>th</sup> Storey Hotel (1)** is not what its name suggests. It actually has nine storeys with 38 rooms to cater to the budget conscious traveler. It has a spiral staircase and a lift that can still be operated manually. In the 70's, the pub in the hotel was one of the hottest nightspots in town. It is also known as the leaning hotel of Singapore as it tilts. Built by the late property magnate Wee Thiam Siew, who also owned the Ban Leong Group that distributed 555 Brand cigarettes, the top floor once offered panoramas of the seascapes. On Jun 26 2008, the hotel needs to vacate by year end 2008.

**The DHL Balloon (2)**, former location, allows you to enjoy panoramic views of the Singapore skyline with the world's largest tethered helium balloon. Began 27 April 2006, this \$2 million French balloon was inflated on 19 April 2006 by 2200 hrs. Requiring 6,500 cubic metres of helium, it took more than 12 hours and 40 crewmembers to inflate. Jointly operated by Aerophile Balloon (S) Pte Ltd and Vertical Adventure Pte Ltd. The Balloon can carry a maximum of 29 passengers. Open daily from 11.00 am to 10.00 pm. Flight time is approximately 10-minutes and passengers will be floating 40-storeys high. Closed on 30 Sep 2008.

**Icon @ Bugis Point (3)**. Opened on New Year's Eve 2006. This seven-storey building consists on five levels of Hongkong/Harajuku-styled fashion retail outlets. There are about eight shops on each floor, all not much bigger than the hall of a three-room HDB flat.

**Beach Road Police Station (4)**. In the early 1900s, Singapore grew rapidly and the crime rate rose with the city's expansion. Harold Fairburn – the Inspector – General of Police from 1925 to

1935 – realised that the Police needed a programme of modernization and expansion. As a result, police stations like the Beach Road Police Station were built around the 1930s.

There was an older police station with a fire engine at this site. This was before the Central Fire Station at Hill Street was built, and fire-fighting outfits were decentralized in this manner. When the new Beach Road Police Station was constructed in the early 1930s, it consisted of the site of the older police station and a Chandu (opium) shop with a petrol pump.

Completed in 1931, the new Beach Road Police Station was a typical government-designed building of pre-war years. This police station ceased operations in 2001.

*More information at on-site storyboard.*

This is the location of the famous **Alhambra Cinema (5)**. Alhambra Cinema was built in 1907 by motion picture industry pioneer Tan Cheng Kee, building renamed Gala Theatre owned by Cathay Organisation), next to it was the Marlborough Cinema, and alongside it, the original "Satay Club" at hoi How Road, which was also the bus depot for the No. 1, red and black colour bus of Tay Koh Yat Bus Company. Alhambra Cinema was nicknamed "Hai Kee" (by the sea) due to its proximity to the sea. This theatre was one of the pioneer cinema halls in the early 1930s. The Alhambra became the first Singapore cinema to have air conditioning and played films like Errol Flynn's Robin Hood to packed sessions. The Alhambra Cinema eventually made way for Shaw Towers in the 1970s.

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**Kheng Chiu Building (6)**, built in 1963, which incorporated parts of an old temple accessible through the main entrance. The building belongs to the Singapore Hainan Hwee Kuan dating back to 1857.

The **National Library Building (7)**, opened to the public on 22 July 2005, at 100 Victoria Street is the largest library in Singapore. The building consists of two 16-storey blocks linked by 'sky bridges' on every level. The New National Library Building is a marriage of two libraries: the Central Lending Library (where books can be borrowed) is on Basement 1, and the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library (where materials are for reference within the library only) occupies Levels 7 to 13. Look out also for Permanent Exhibitions (Levels 5 and 11). This site had old buildings which were demolished in the 80s. Holloway Lane and Lorong Sidin were also lost. There is a Library's guided tour, please enquire at the Reception Desk in the Main Lobby to join the tour. Guided tours to help the public get acquainted with the National Library are conducted free-of-charge every Friday at 6 pm and Saturday at 11 am.

**Bras Basah Complex (8)** houses an array of art, book and music shops with its five stories. Under the urban renewal plan, Bras Basah Complex was built in 1980 as a 25 storey high building, with the 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> storeys being utilized for commercial purpose and the rest for residential flats. The other name for Bras Basah Complex is "City of Books". Beside Bras Basah Complex is Cashin Street. Cashin Street used to be a very busy little street, with a concentration of bookshops and all types of hawkers selling delicious food. Memories of Cashin Street includes The Student Bookshop was established in Cashin Street in 1954; the little alley had a public water tap on the road side and many hard-working women used this tap to provide laundry service to earn some extras; at the corner of Cashin St, nearer to Odeon Theatre, was the famous "Ye Lanting Café"; Shanghai Book Store.

The **Mint Museum of Toys (9)** showcases a world class collection of toys that spans more than 25 countries and over 100 years. Many toys are extremely rare and in mint condition, often displayed with their original packaging. Opening hours 9.30am to 6.30pm daily. Adult: \$10.00 & Child 2 to 12 years old and Senior citizens: \$5.00. We also like to thank Mr. Richard Tan who took us for a tour.

**People's Defence Force Camp (10)**. The origins of the People's Defence Force (PDF) can be traced to the formation of the Singapore Volunteer Rifle Corps (SVRC) on 8<sup>th</sup> July 1854 to assist the local constabulary during colonial rule. Built in the 1930s. PDF name came into existence from the volunteer unit with Singapore's Independence in 1965. The State flag was lowered for the last time at Beach Road Camp on 18 Feb 2000 at the handing-over ceremony and official closure of the camp. With the Camp's closure, 2 PDF Command moved to Clementi Camp.

*More information at on-site storyboard.*

**The Singapore Armed Forces Warrant Officers and Specialists Club (11)**. Originally used by the British Armed Forces and was named the Britannia Club. Built in 1949, the clubhouse served as a recreational club for its members. When the British pulled out in 1969, the Singapore Government negotiated with NAAFI in 1972 and purchased the property. It was originally allocated to the National Sports Promotion Board to be used as a public facility. When the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) Club was formed in 1974, it occupied the building from then onwards. The Club also housed the SAF Enterprise (SAFE) Superstore that offered affordable merchandise and payment schemes for the NCOs. In 1994, the SAF NCO Club was renamed the SAF Warrant Officers and Specialists (WOSE) Club. With the expansion of the membership base and the allocation of land for redevelopment, the Club moved to Jurong East. THE CHEVRONS, as it is now known, was officially opened in February 2002.

*More information at on-site storyboard.*



Mint Museum of Toys – 26 Seah Street.