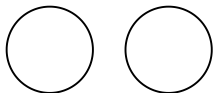


8 must-try experiences in Penang's Heritage Core

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Here's how to sink your teeth into some of George Town's best culinary, cultural and heritage experiences

In partnership with [Penang Tourism](#)

Penang is one of Malaysia's most heritage-proud states with a rich history that dates back to its entrepot status in 1786. Much of Penang's culture and heritage can be found in the capital of George Town, a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. In addition to a rich architectural inheritance, George Town is also home to a flourishing gastronomy scene and a unique cultural legacy that's easy to enjoy on foot.

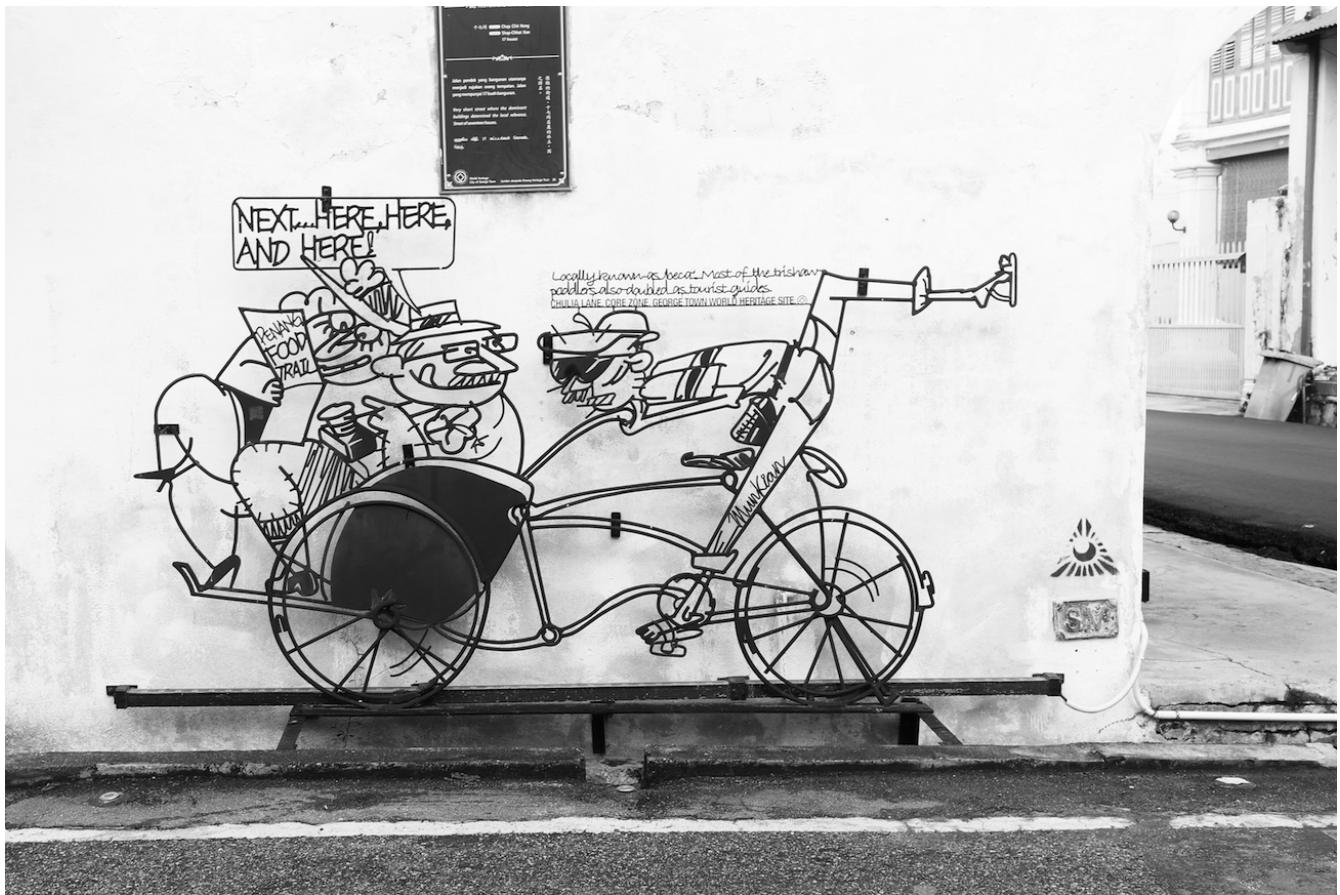
Here are some unmissable experiences to soak up in Penang.



Eastern & Oriental Hotel has been a mainstay since the 1800s

Stay in a colonial-era hotel

Step into Penang's colonial past at any of George Town's popular boutique and colonial-era hotels. Favourites include the sea-fronting **Eastern and Oriental Hotel**, a mainstay since the 1880s. You'll be wandering down the same halls that once welcomed many a famous face for afternoon tea and ice-cold pints – think Charlie Chaplin, author Hermann Hesse, the late Lee Kuan Yew and more. Or tuck yourself in at history-rich **The Edison**, formerly the home of popular business tycoons and an administrative centre during Japan's invasion of Malaya.



This trishaw sculpture is one of 52 steel-rod sculptures affectionately depicting life in George Town

Take the scenic route around George Town

Trishaws (or beca) were a ubiquitous sight in 1940s Penang. These days, they exist as tourist novelties all around George Town. Negotiate your prices before hopping on and enjoy the ride around some of George Town's best sights. You can also make use of the **LinkBike** bike-sharing facilities if you'd like some exercise while sightseeing, or ride the free **Central Area Transit** (CAT) Bus, which has scheduled hop-on, hop-off services around town. The CAT Buses run through several bus stops within walking distances of certain attractions such as the Chowrasta Market, Street of Harmony, Fort Cornwallis and more. You can then hop back on the bus and finish off the route.



Kapitan Keling Mosque is a stone's throw from a Chinese temple, a Hindu temple and a church

Celebrate cultural diversity

George Town's multi-cultural fabric is a source of identity and pride. Stroll down **Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling** – also known as the Street of Harmony – for a visual example; you'll see four different houses of worship sitting almost side by side – Kapitan Keling Mosque, Goddess of Mercy Temple, St George's Church and Sri Mahamariamman Temple. George Town is also home to various clanhouses and clan temples (also known as kongsi). These serve as community centres for members of the Chinese community with specific surnames. (There are 170 clans in Penang alone!) Each temple is unique to the clan that built it, and it's worth taking time to visit the **Khoo Kongsi**, the largest and most prestigious in George Town. A trip to the smaller **Ong Kongsi** will reveal registration records from 2,000 clans, original marriage certificates and other historical treasures.



Pinang Peranakan Mansion is a time-warp into 19th-century Penang

Take in Peranakan culture

Peranakan heritage is a unique amalgamation of Malay, Chinese and colonial British customs. Peranakan culture still commands a presence in George Town, and you can experience it through cuisine, fashion, architecture and even through delicate objets d'art. **Pinang Peranakan Mansion** unveils the community's language, cuisine and cultural influences, many of which are still practised today. This mansion is a recreation of a typical 19th-century residence that would've housed elite Baba and Nyonya families; it also doubles up as a museum with more than 1,000 antiques and collectibles. In the mood for more? A stroll down **Muntri Street** will show you why George Town deserves its UNESCO citation – the houses are some of the best-preserved examples of Straits Chinese architecture, Peranakan tiles and gorgeous Art Déco influences from the 19th century.



Descendants still live in the floating villages collectively called the Clan Jetties

Get a slice of life on the water

George Town's **Clan Jetties**, a series of seven rustic, over-water villages at Pengkalan Weld, are a major draw, as they are some of the last major Chinese settlements in Penang. These centuries-old floating villages are still occupied by the descendants of various Chinese clans, and each has its own amenities and temple. While the Lim, Tan and Yeo jetties are the oldest, the Chew jetty is the most visitor-friendly of the six. Come early in the morning and snap gorgeous shots for your socials.



Rattan weaving is one of Penang's enduring local crafts

Dip your toes into crafts and culture

George Town's nondescript alleyways often house an array of hole-in-the-wall businesses that still handmade local arts and crafts. Make a pitstop at Seang Hin Long to learn the art of weaving rattan baskets the old-fashioned way from veteran weaver **Sim Chew Poh**. You can also delve into *wayang kulit*, a centuries-old puppet shadow performance that's commonly staged by members of the Malay community with master puppeteer **Mohd Jufry Yusoff**. He'll teach you how to create your own leather puppet. Fancy a dabble in Chinese calligraphy? Step into **Tian Hua Arts & Antiques** for an introduction to calligraphy, painting and stone-engraving, and the opportunity to commission a personalised work of art.



I Want Bao by Ernest Zacharevic is just one of many murals in Penang

Go on a street art tour

Ernest Zacharevic is no stranger in Penang. After all, his works colour the walls of various shophouses and buildings around George Town. However, a leisurely gander around town will also reveal other snap-worthy murals and drawings from local artists. Highlights include Desmond Yeo's **The Awaiting Trishaw Paddler**; **Brother and Sister on Swing** by deaf-mute artist Louis Gan; and Tang Yeok Khang's **Cat and Human Happily Living Together**, which is part of a collaboration between Artists for Stray Animals group and local creatives. Don't forget to add **Marking George Town** to your list if you're going on an art hunt. Made by local artists Tang Mun Kian, Baba Chuah, Lefty and Reggie Lee, the overall display has 52 steel-rod exhibits scattered throughout George Town. Each one is designed to reflect a piece of life in the idyllic state and are shaped to look like comical cartoons.



Street food is one of Penang's greatest charms

Eat your way through local delights

Penang's diverse food scene packs a hefty punch, and you'd be wise to bring your appetite. Savour heritage cookies and desserts at **Teels Heritage** and Peranakan cuisine at restaurants such as **Auntie Gaik Lean**, **Ivy's Nyonya Cuisine** or the **Kebaya Dining Room**. But where Penang's culinary claim to fame lies is in George Town's buzzing street food scene, and you'll be missing out if you don't sample some of the island's best dishes at the various hawker centres and food squares here. Must-tries include **Mee Sotong** **Hameed Pata** at the Esplanade Park Food Court and the affordable laksa and nasi lemak at the Sri Weld Food Court. Hit up **Northam Beach Café** in the evenings for finger-licking-good seafood at the ocean-facing tables, or go to **New Lane Hawker Centre** for generous servings of char koay teow, chee cheong fun and Chinese congee.

For more information on exciting places to experience in the state of Penang, please visit [Penang Tourism](#)

