

Watering Holes

Raise a Glass at Singapore's Best Lounges and Bars

by Jennifer Williams

Southbridge

Quintessential Singapore Sundowners

I sometimes think Singapore is contending in a “best rooftop bar” competition, so a rooftop bar here has to be something really special to warrant a return visit. For me, Southbridge at Boat Quay is that stand-out spot.

Southbridge’s view captures the best of Singapore’s city landscape, encompassing the Singapore River, the CBD, the Asian Civilizations Museum and the Parliament and Justice Buildings, while Marina Bay Sands and the Singapore Flyer are visible just around the river’s bend. The website, The Rooftop Guide, rates Southbridge as the fifth best rooftop bar in Singapore (out of 20 contenders).



Southbridge's Signature Gin and Tonic

Perched above the often touristy vibe of Boat Quay, the bar has created an “oasis above it all,” according to The Rooftop Guide. At just five stories above street level, the bar is high enough to be set apart but not so high as to be separate from the city. Poised on your bar stool, sipping one of their signature gin cocktails or champagnes, you can watch the tour boats traversing the river and the light fading on Singapore’s landmark buildings. As the sun goes down, the city lights take over, the Singapore Flyer shines and Marina Bay Sands beams its lights towards the city.



The View From Southbridge

Perhaps in a nod that this is “the” place for sundowners, Southbridge only opens at five o’clock in the afternoon. Finding the entrance is an adventure in itself. You can show off your knowledge of the city to friends and out-of-town guests, or really make them wonder if you know where you’re going, as you pass all the activity of Boat Quay and turn into a cluttered alley behind the river strip. Just past a cramped 7-Eleven, is a narrow door and an elevator. The entrance may seem dubious but as you ascend in the glass elevator, views of the river emerge and the doors open onto what The Rooftop Guide describes as “one of the most cozy and intimate Singapore rooftop bars...with a great and soft vibe and friendly service.”

On a recent, warm Saturday evening, I enjoyed Southbridge’s Yuzu Express bubbly cocktail while my friends ordered The Cuban, a rum-based cocktail. We shared the Green Olive and the Balsamic Borettane Onion bar snacks and watched the sun go down and the lights of Singapore come up. We chatted about life as only friends who have been together on a small, tropical island for the last two years can. The company was the best, the cocktails were “moreish” and Southbridge’s beautiful view made it the quintessential spot to spend an evening with two of my favorite Singapore friends.

Jennifer moved to Singapore with her husband, three boys and two dogs in 2019. A life-long lover of books and writing, she became Editor-in-Chief of the AWA Magazine in 2021.

